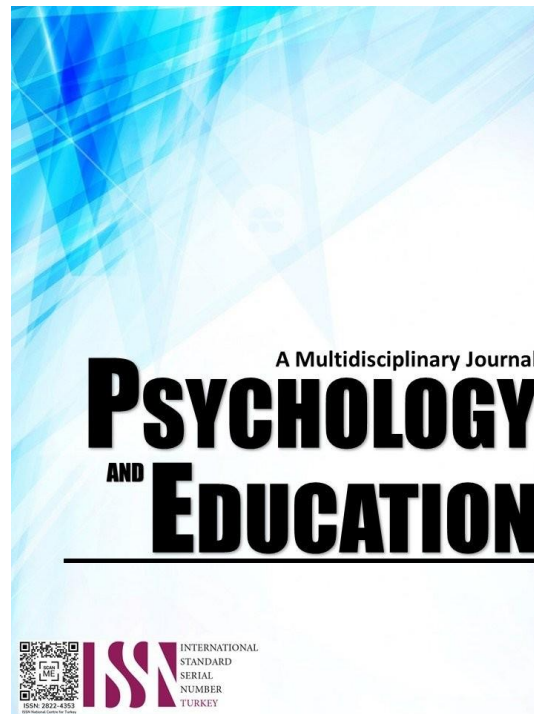


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Unravelling the Challenges and Resiliency of Student Moms Amidst Full Implementation of Face-To-face Class

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Abstract

This qualitative research draws on the personal narrative experiences of three single student mothers studying in the Senior- High of the Division City of Kabankalan. Semi-structured interviews and survey questionnaires were conducted to collect data. The data was analyzed thematically. Participants were identified using purposive sampling and guided by the following criteria: (1) Currently enrolled in the school year 2021-2022, (2) a senior high school student, (3) a student mother, (4) willing to be interviewed, and (5) willing to share their challenges and experiences of becoming resilient student mothers. Results show that the main common challenge and resilience among the participating student mothers is the lack of time to manage the dual role of being a student as well as a nursing mother. This leads to shyness, restlessness, absenteeism, failing some examinations, and failing to join social groupings. Despite these, their children play a crucial role in motivating them and empowering them to persevere and pursue their education for the betterment of their children's future, as well as to regain the respect of their parents. Furthermore, having a support group on campus for student mothers reduces their feelings of isolation and provides a space where they can express their fears and concerns about their experiences both on and off campus. The researchers admire the student-moms for their ability to maintain persistence as students and be good mothers, while fully embracing and experiencing all aspects of their lives.

Keywords: *qualitative research, challenges, resiliency, student moms, face-to-face class*

Introduction

Education is an essential issue in one's life, and it is the key to success in the future and to having many opportunities in life (Al-Shuaibi, 2014), this is what the student's mom believed in. It was stated that Single mothers are the fastest-growing student demographic in the United States (The Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, Report to Congress, 2012; Freeman, 2015; Threlfall, 2015). According to the Philippines Statistics Office, most births to mothers aged 10 to 19 from 2016 to 2020 were first-order births, accounting for more than 80% of the total adolescent births in the country each year. Despite the drop in the number of live births of teenage mothers (aged 10 to 19) from 203,085 to 183,000 in 2019, the Philippines still has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy among the ASEAN member states (Ordinario, 2022). According to the National Demographic and Health Survey (2022) In terms of age groups within this range, the highest percentage of pregnancies was found among 19-year-old women, with a rate of 13.3 percent as of 2022. This was followed by 18-year-old women with a rate of 5.9 percent and 17-year-old women with a rate of 5.6 percent. As expected, the lowest percentage of women in the 15 to 19-year-old category who have started childbearing was observed among those who were 16 years old, with a rate of 1.7 percent, followed by 15-

year-old women with a rate of 1.4 percent.

The strain and insufficient resources for parenting student mothers can be enormous and negatively impact outcomes at all levels of scholastic enterprise (Vyskocil, 2018). Dankyi, et al. (2019) found that most student moms go through academic struggles such as inability to attend face-to-face lectures regularly because of tiredness, sickness of a child, taking a baby to child welfare clinic and lack of lactating for breastfeeding of babies. Furthermore, Ferrer and Sevilla (2018) agreed that students' moms must deal with society's judgment regardless of generation, and they have done their best to make the most of their circumstances.

Teenage pregnancy and soon-to-be student mothers have been a global issue that needs to be addressed to reduce maternal childbearing, especially in third-world countries (Mann et al., 2020). An ever-increasing body of statements made by the national nutrition council of region IX, 2021 says that childbearing student mother may result in poor health outcomes and may be a threat to the country's economic growth. Pregnant students are less likely to complete their higher education and have lesser ability to earn more income over the course of a lifetime, causing economic losses to the country.

Among the 143 grade 12 females enrolled in Bantayan

NHS senior high school, there were 14 or (9.8%) identified as student moms and number 1 in District IV for having numbered childbearing as on conceive, soon to be mother. This study aimed to disclose the standpoint of student moms amidst the ongoing full implementation of a face-to-face class. Moreover, With the data from the literature and school data the researcher was inspired to conduct this study.

Research Objective

This research study aimed to explore the point of views of teenage moms attending the ongoing implementation of full face- to -face class in one of the Senior High Schools in the Schools Division Office of Kabankalan using the Personal Experiences Narratives. Specifically, the objective of this study was to identify the challenges and sources of resilience, including point of view on life and aspirations of student mom amidst ongoing full implementation of face-to-face class.

Literature Review

Challenges Faced by Student Mom

Vyskocil (2018) study Provides new insights into the number of women in higher education has been increasing, the experiences of single mothers in academe have been underexplored. Where Single student mothers are the largest and fastest-growing student demographic in higher education institutions, but their experiences and challenges are not well understood. And their role as a single mother pursuing degrees while raising children is essential in developing means of support that are not government-dependent and in providing role models for their dependents.

Research has shown that pursuing their studies can have both positive and negative impacts on single mother. On the other hand, balancing the responsibilities of raising children while pursuing a degree can negatively impact the level of parenting that single parents can provide. Single mothers in higher education also face challenges such as financial struggles, time management issues, a lack of support, and stigma and stereotyping. In the study by Vyskocil, (2018) it was found that almost all respondents sometimes need to decide between being present at moments that would ensure the best results in both categories of competing identities and attending events at school and with their families. Student parents found it challenging to execute to their full potential in

any key area of personal or professional achievement because they were required to switch between numerous roles and identities. This conflict was experienced by respondents. Finally, student mothers' discourses revealed that they believed their forced choice situations that caused them to miss class, be late for class, or be unable to participate in a group negatively impacted others' perceptions of their in-class performance, class standing, and professional trajectory of their achievement.

Cited by Ramirez,et.al.(2021), Dankyi, J., Dankyi, L., & Minadzi, (2019) Research has shown that academic challenges faced by student mothers include difficulties in attending school and lectures regularly due to fatigue, caring for sick children, scheduling regular baby check-ups, and inadequate facilities for breastfeeding on campus. In addition, student mothers also encounter challenges during exams as they juggle caring for their child while trying to effectively learn and study for their exams. Financial struggles also play a significant role, with student mothers facing the cost of childcare, transportation expenses, and expenses related to printing and photocopying learning materials.

Moreover, Taukeni (2014) studied five single mothers who attended one of the University of Namibia's campuses and were enrolled in classes. The study's findings indicate that the primary issue facing the participating student women is a lack of time to balance their responsibilities as parents and students. Anger, loneliness, restlessness, and skipping lectures are among difficulties faced by student mothers. In order to reduce loneliness and some of the stress that comes with juggling parenthood and academic obligations, recommendations call for the establishment of support groups on campus.

Resilience of Student Mom

Research has found that teenage mothers, despite facing many challenges, were able to persevere to continue and complete their education. These young women were able to overcome the obstacles and setbacks that may have hindered their academic progress by using self-motivation, as well as receiving support from their schools and families. Additionally, the support received from their schools and families likely provided a sense of encouragement and reassurance, which helped them to stay on track and achieve their educational goals (Mukuna & Aloka, 2021). Same with the research finding of Haruna,F.A, Kuranchie,A. & Addo,A.O. (2022) states that continuing education after giving birth is not an easy

process and comes with various socio-emotional challenges. While teenage mothers are able to overcome these challenges and remain resilient in pursuing their education, it is important to acknowledge that it is not an easy feat various factors that can help teenage mothers to overcome these challenges, such as social support from family, friends, and school staff, as well as access to resources like childcare and financial assistance.

Aceret, et.al., (2022) claims that Despite the challenges and difficulties they encountered as both mothers and students, the participants displayed remarkable determination and resilience in pursuing their goal of completing senior high school and obtaining a basic education diploma, even in the midst of the pandemic. Consequently, the real-life experiences of student mothers have provided valuable data that can serve as a foundation for the development of educational programs and support services tailored to meet the specific needs of student mothers during the pandemic.

Additionally, the young mothers unknowingly embarked on a journey of self-discovery, discovering their inner strength, and believing they could manage anything, according to Ferrer and Sevilla (2019). As a result, they are not viewed as being squandered as a student's mother because they are courageous enough to take on a significant duty on their own and because their life did not end when they became parents.

Methodology

This research study used the Qualitative Research design using the Narrative Analysis. Narrative research aims to unravel powerful stories of people's lives as told by them in their own words and worlds (Ntinda, 2019). According to Hassan (2022) a qualitative research technique called narrative analysis includes closely analyzing texts to understand the narratives they contain. A text's narratives can shed light on the culture, principles, and worldview of those who wrote it. It is a means of comprehending how individuals interpret and derive value from their experiences. These tales may be recorded verbatim or in writing.

They can be shared with loved ones, friends, or total strangers. They may be personal or public. In line with this, the Personal Experience Narratives of young student mothers who attended the full ongoing face-to-face classes was focused on in this study. With these, the researcher took their experiences narratively based on the belief that personal interviews would best

capture how participants interpreted their experiences, the factors they viewed as challenges, and the factors to which they attributed their reliance to pursue their study. In addition, the researcher adopted a critical theorist perspective with the hope that "walking a mile in another's shoes" would increase awareness, change societal perceptions, and influence further research on the educational experiences of student mothers.

Specifically, this study adopted the Story Analysis Model used by Akinsanya and Bach (2014) which was cited by Esparar, Sabidalas and Peralta (2022), who described how each component could be used to examine narrative patterns and spot recurrent themes and ideas. This model may also represent the narrative structure of this study, which consists of a series of questions. In a nutshell, what is the subject of this story? Who, when, and where are the experiences happened? What complicated action was done? What followed? What made this study interesting? What ultimately transpired—as a resolution? Finally, the coda which contained the lessons learned from the participants' narratives.

Participants

The participants of this study were three (3) student moms enrolled in one of the Senior High Schools in the District IV of the Schools Division Office, Kabankalan City. The criteria for selecting the informants were as follows: (1) currently enrolled in the school year 2021-2022. (2) a grade 12 senior high school student, (3) a student mother, (4) willing to be interviewed, and (5) willing to share her challenges and experiences of becoming a resilient student mother. The researcher personally visited the respondents to give the Individual Interview Form.

Instruments of the Study

The research study used the Written Interview Form (WIF) and in-depth interviews with participants (IDI). In this research, the participants delivered their stories through written and in-depth interviews to the researcher. The research instrument gathered the narratives of the participants that gave a clear view of the challenges they encountered and how each of them became resilient despite the struggles they have experienced.

Procedures

The researchers prepared the letter approved by the superintendent through Planning and Research. Upon the approval of the letter, the researchers approached

the school principals regarding the conduct of the study. The researcher asked the principal's approval for her to distribute the written interview form containing in-depth interview questions for the identified student participants who were selected based on the inclusion criteria. The data were gathered from the participants through a WIF. The written narratives were analyzed and interpreted based on the Discussion Model of Akinsanya and Bach (2014) cited in Esparar, Sabidalas and Peralta (2022). A confirmatory interview was conducted to the participants to confirm the summary of the stories to check the validity of their responses.

Aside from the WIF, the researcher invited the informants for a 30-minute sit-down face-to-face interview during their vacant classes twice a week to learn more about them. This was conducted in a conventional classroom where there was privacy. The area was well-ventilated and a spacious, making it very conducive for interview purposes. During these sessions, they recapitulated their experiences as well as their resilience despite the challenges they faced as a student mom during this ongoing full implementation of face-to-face. The flow of the conversation was so smooth because the informants were so at ease. They freely and confidently tell their stories of how they got to this situation. As their narrative is being processed through the theme, it shows that their personal experiences are similar.

Specifically, Akinsanya and Bach's Discussion Model consisted of the following:

Factor 1 (Abstract). The abstract is the first component of Akinsanya and Bach's narrative paradigm. The narrative's introduction contains a summary of the entire story. The abstract offers an understanding of the nature and events of the story; however, some linguists contend that the abstract can also be found in the story's title with one or two clauses that convey the essence of the narrative in the first sentence.

Factor 2 (Orientation). In this factor a character's time setting name and orientation clause are all included in an orientation clause along with information about how they act at first. The orientation provides information about the timeline, character's environment, and context of the story while it is being told. The orientation is mentioned in the past progressive. It explains what occurred prior to the incident being narrated and asserts that free clauses at the beginning of the complexity typically make up the orienting portion the story's setting.

Factor 3 (Complicating Action). The complex action refers to the actual events in the novel which advance the plot and keep readers interested. The narrative sentences that make up the story framework describe the subsequent events in response to the question and then what happened.

Factor 4 (Resolution). One of the elements of the Akinsanya and Bach's narrative model is resolution. It is described the part where the complexities described in the personal narratives were resolved.

Factor 5 (Evaluation). This factor describes the purpose or justification for which the story is deemed worth telling. Additionally, it is a supplement to the main narrative that emphasizes attitudes or commands the listener's attention at crucial moments by highlighting the relative importance of some narrative units in comparison to others. Akinsanya and Bach (2014) described evaluation as that component of the narrative which indicates the narrator's attitude feelings during the time the story happened.

Factor 6 (Coda). Coda clauses are used to denote the conclusion of stories. A coda enables the author to tie the story's conclusion to the present.

Results and Discussion

The narratives were revealed and expressed by three (3) teenage mom students who offered their insights and their experiences on the challenges they encounter and their resilience as student moms in the on-going full implementation of face- to -face class.

Abstract

In their personal narratives, the participants discussed the difficulties they had as student mothers, including the criticism they faced from the public and the pressure to strike a balance between their two responsibilities. Also, they were traumatized by their community and family. Their unwanted pregnancies were an act of defiance against their parents, and they also did it to protect their relationships with their young lovers, whom they were afraid of losing. When they gave birth, their own fathers did not support them. They are extremely susceptible because of their erratic family income. Despite their situation, they were resilient and continued to study for their children's future and to win back their parents' respect.

Orientation

Their narratives started when face-to-face classes started last November 2, 2022. Students need to attend classes based on class attendance, but some students are hesitant to attend face-to-face including these three (3) informants were among them. When they were told that they were to attend the face-to-face classes, they requested for exemption and asked permission to continue having lessons through modular instruction but their request was denied due to the DepEd order #44, s 2022. Because of the denied request, they confessed that they had children to take care of; it would be very difficult on their part.

Complication Action

All three (3) participants experienced being judged or ridiculed because of their situation. They felt insecure and ashamed.

In one of the written narratives, Participant young mom 2.0 shared her feelings. She wrote *"I feel stressed like I could be a better parent when I study, complete my assignments, or attend classes instead of devoting all my time and energy and focus on my kids. I miss out on many of their school activities and group practices. When I do take time to participate in school activities, some of my classmates as well as some of my subject teachers look at me as a slacker and a poor student who is underperforming when I come late, have not completed an assignment, or have to miss class. This costs me my grades. I also could not participate in study groups and social events because I felt ashamed. But I need to, for my child's future."*

Young mom 2.1 likewise shared her experience. She said *"I often must attend class instead of taking care of my daughter. This makes me feel guilty for missing out on being a nursing mother. However, when I miss class, my teachers don't think I am taking my education seriously. There are times when I cannot participate in social activities in school because I have a child that needs to be taken care of because no one can be left to. This makes me feel isolated from other students who are not parenting. I am also usually preoccupied with thinking of my child's well-being. It's hard to focus sometimes because I have so much on my mind. To my teachers, I come across as irresponsible or unreliable. Sometimes I come to class late (more than other students) or do not come at all. I procrastinate, feel overwhelmed, and sometimes need help to keep up with the workload and study load."*

Young mom 2.2 revealed how she felt. She said *"I did not feel good because I was afraid of what other people would say about me because of being a young mom. That's why I asked the school administrator if I could take many subjects modular like in pandemic time. However, It was not good news. Even for my family, it was not easy. Even some people, especially boys in other sections, were laughing at me."*

Resolution

Despite the challenges encountered by the participants, they did not give up. Young mom 2.1 said *"I need to be strong and to be resilient so that I can regain my parents' trust, which I broke a year ago, and for my baby's welfare in the coming years."*

Young mom 2.2., on the other hand, did not mind the ridicules she experienced from the boys in her class. She said *"but I did not worry so much about them. I was not affected by the boys' remarks. I just ignored them because I went to the class, and I knew that boys were always like that. The first two months took work... It was not easy to come out of the room. It was not easy at all. I did not attend classes. I chose to be in the room because I was angry—also, other students when they saw you, would like to gossip about you. When you saw someone looking at you, you would think, what was this person saying? That kind of feeling. It was not easy at all. I need to overcome all of this, or else I will be lost. Every time I look into my child's eyes, I feel guilty that I could not give him a better life someday. Furthermore, I want to regain the respect of my family. Every day I need to be strong and swallow all the unfair treatment because I believe I will succeed if I can finish my studies."*

Evaluation

The impressive narratives of these three (3) students as they narrated the challenges that they experienced and their being resilient student moms in the ongoing full face to face class are simply awe-inspiring to others particularly on how they are balancing everything. They never imagined that at their young age, they have become responsible for the lives that they have brought into the world. They are expected to feed, to clothe, to nurse, and to educate these young lives that they have produced. Becoming a mother at a young age was very difficult for them. Sometimes it crosses their mind that they could hardly believe the circumstances that they were in. For being so

inexperienced, they felt shamed and ostracized in their neighborhood as well in school but then they just did not mind. Though they are tired with all the tasks given to them in school, they still have the strength to take care of their child when they arrive at home. The expression in their eyes and the conviction felt in their statements showed passion and commitment. To them, being student moms at an early age is not a joke at all as the struggles they encounter seemed endless – from waking up in the morning taking care of their children and, after that preparing to go to school. At night, before they sleep, they have to nurse their children first until they fall asleep. When their children are asleep, they will do their assignments and study their lesson to cope with the missed lesson.

Moreover, when they are in school, they encounter emotional problems due to the way they are being treated inside the classroom in addition to the different tasks given by the subject's teachers. All of these give them the feeling of being lonely, drowsy, restless, wanting to skip classes, especially when they are failing some examinations because they are unprepared in taking the exam as well as failing to join social groupings for, they need to go home immediately after the class.

Coda

The Personal Narrative Experiences of the student moms were grouped into three (3) general codes: (1) Being a mother and student work-life blend, (2) The supple being of student moms, and (3) The astonishing insights from the Personal Experiences. Under the first code, the narratives about the challenges of being a mother on the one hand and a student on the other hand. It shows how they divide their time from waking up in the morning to attending to their child's needs and fixing and preparing themselves for school after that. Attending classes and participating in whatever task given to them after schooling; going home early to take care of their children before going to sleep; and doing their assignments and reviewing their lessons when their children are asleep. All these dual tasks involve challenges, which can hinder their performance as a student or as a mother. These findings were supported by the study conducted by Vyskocil (2018), which sought to understand the difficulties, needs, and experiences at the intersection of parenthood and student hood for single-parent student mothers and explore ideologies of what it means to be a "good parent" or "good student." The second code talked about the student moms' positive, flexible, supple, rugged, and resilient behavior as they are determined to manage every situation with hope

and a positive mindset. The last code entails the student moms' self-contemplation, reflections, and discernment obtained from their personal experiences.

Conclusion

This study can lead to a renewal of the concept of student moms within the community and school, despite the challenges they face in managing the dual aspects of their lives. It contributes to the advancement discourse regarding the importance and value of education for student moms in completing their studies despite the struggles they encounter. This study emphasizes the significance of recognizing the resilience of student moms in the face of challenges. Their children play a crucial role in motivating them and empowering them to persevere and pursue their education for the betterment of their children's future, as well as to regain the respect of their parents.

However, student mothers encounter numerous challenges that hinder their academic success and performance. With the assistance of subject teachers who provide motivation and support, they can overcome these difficulties. Additionally, home visitation is encouraged to gain a better understanding of the young moms' actual life situations and provide appropriate interventions. According to Taukeni (2014), having a support group on campus for student mothers reduces their feelings of isolation and provides a space where they can express their fears and concerns about their experiences both on and off campus. This support group instills hope and resilience in them, enabling them to pursue their goals further.

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