Lived Experiences of Parents and Teachers in Module Distribution and Retrieval: The Untold Story

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Abstract

This study explored the lived experiences of parents and teachers in module distribution and retrieval. The researchers utilized a qualitative phenomenological research design. A total of seven (7) teachers and four (parents) served as the participants. A series of themes were formed such as teachers' preparation in module distribution and retrieval, and the reason for the delayed submission of modules. Teachers' coping mechanisms, and realization and possible solutions are also identified by the teachers. Moreover, the researchers identified themes such as parents' experiences and difficulties in module distribution and retrieval, difficulty in handling learners at home, instructional strategies, motivation, and rewards in facilitating learners at home for the lived experiences of the parents in module distribution and retrieval. While the challenges and problems experienced by the parents in module distribution and retrieval, parents coping mechanisms for the challenges experienced, and realization of the parents in modular distribution and retrieval are identified as additional themes. Therefore, the research found out that lived experiences of the teachers shared the same sentiment that in this set-up, it is found difficult to address the needs of the learners immediately due to geographic location. Meanwhile, the parent-participants responses show that parents experience the need to follow the schedule, learned to manage time, and some parents' experiences leaving their work for the sake of getting the modules in school. The module distribution and retrieval made the teacher develop their intrapersonal skills and grow professionally and become considerate, flexible, patient in every situation, and the need for cooperation between parents and teachers.

Keywords: Lived Experiences, Module Distribution And Retrieval,Phenomenology, Parents And Teacher

Introduction

The COVID 19 brought devastating effects on local and international scenes. It has caused a wide-scale suspension of operations in every aspect of the society, economy, private and government functions, and certainly, in the field of education.

On March 18, 2020, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) released an advisory placing the entire island of Luzon under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), pursuant to President Rodrigo R. Duterte's Proclamation No. 922 "Declaring a State of Public Health Emergency throughout the Philippines (DILG, 2020). Relatively, the city government of Puerto Princesa and Palawan declared class suspension in all levels within the city and province for a week. However, because of the worsening situation, the suspension was extended until the closing of the school year 2019-2020.

In the Philippine setting, where classes are largely done through physical face-to-face interaction with the students, distance learning is such a big challenge. Students, parents, and teachers are confronted with a learning setup that is entirely different from what they are accustomed to. Everyone declares their apprehensions as to how they are going to withstand this kind of learning arrangement. Though, given the situation, every family, educator, and teacher find ways to be prepared to ensure that learning will still happen amidst the COVID pandemic.

The modular approach is the use of learning modules either printed or online. Sadiq and Zamir (2014) have proven the effectiveness of this approach and recommended the wide use of it at various levels of education. The DepEd has been developing and using distance learning modules since it has provisions for Open High School Program (DepEd, 2006). Currently, nationwide development and production of self-learning modules are in progress as one of the DepEd's responses to new normal education (DepEd, 2020).

Self-learning modules are prepared, printed, and arranged for distribution. And here begins the indispensable role of parents as partners in educating their children. They are the ones who will get and return the modules to the school and the ones to assist their children in accomplishing the self-learning modules. This matter provokes the researchers to undergo a study that intends to describe the experiences of teachers and parents in modular distribution and retrieval as they embrace the transition from the normal to the new normal setting of education.

Research Questions

This study will determine the lived experiences of parents and teachers in module distribution and retrieval.

Specifically, this will seek answers to the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of teachers and parents in module distribution and retrieval?
2. What are the challenges experienced by the teachers and parent in module distribution?
3. How do teachers and parents cope with these challenges?
4. What are the realizations of teachers and parents from their experiences?

Methodology

The researchers utilized the qualitative phenomenological research design. The phenomenological design describes the interpretation of the participants from their own experiences. Furthermore, Agaton et al., (2021) cited that qualitative research is the most appropriate design of the study as it seeks to have a contextual understanding of phenomena, explain behavior and beliefs, identify processes, and understand the context of participants' experiences. The researchers choose to utilize a qualitative phenomenological research design to describe the individual experiences of the teachers and parents in the distribution and retrieval of learning modules. The participants of this study were the 7 elementary teachers and 4 parents of Banbanan Elementary School in Taytay Palawan. The data gathered from the interview were transcribed appropriately. Coding from the gathered data were done to identify themes, sub-themes and employed manual thematic and content analysis.

Results

After a thorough review of the data gathered, the following themes were identified for teachers lived experiences such as teachers' preparation in module distribution and retrieval, and the reason for delayed submission of modules. The budgetary requirements

and parents' commitment and academic dishonesty are the challenges and problems experienced by the teachers in module distribution and retrieval. Teachers' coping mechanisms, and realization and possible solutions are also identified for teachers.

Moreover, the parents' experiences and difficulties in module distribution and retrieval, difficulty in handling learners at home, instructional strategies, motivation, and rewards in facilitating learners at home for the lived experiences of the parents in module distribution and retrieval. The challenges and problems experienced by the parents in module distribution and retrieval, parents coping mechanism in the challenges experienced, and realization of the parents in modular distribution and retrieval.

Lived Experiences of the Teachers in Module Distribution and Retrieval.

Theme 1: Teachers Preparation for Distribution and Retrieval.
Modular distance learning, as stated by one of the teacher participants, is a learning modality already practiced in some nations but is newly implemented here in the Philippines due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, way back in early 2020. Participants understand that this modality involves self-learning modules for the learners, as they heard or seen it from different authorities or different forms of media. But because this is the first time that this is widely implemented in the country, a participant uttered *"ang hirap niyang i-implement nung una" (P7) ("The implementation is difficult at first…")*

Nonetheless, as teachers who are mandated to continue the delivery of education despite the pandemic, the participants must prepare themselves for the learning modality applicable in their stations. In the case of the participants of this study, they prepared themselves for modular distance learning. Among their preparations were:

Prepared oneself physically, emotionally and spiritually (P6);
Inquired about what is and how modular distance learning is implemented (P7);
Having an open mind regarding modular distance learning (P6);
Advance printing of modules (P1, P3, P4, P5); and
Solicited and shared personal funds to meet other needs (P2).

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Theme 2: Reasons for delayed submission of modules

For the safety of the learners, particularly those at the elementary level, their parents are tasked to get and return the self-learning modules from and to the school. In this situation, the direct engagement is between the parents/guardians and the teachers, particularly, the class advisers. At first, teacher participants agreed that things were going smoothly. The day of module distribution is also the time that teachers will retrieve the modules from the parents/guardians. Also, the teacher participants take this opportunity to ask the parents/guardians how they are doing, as well as the learners. However, as the school year progresses, more and more parents/guardians failed to come to school as scheduled, to return and get a new set of modules.

"*Hindi pa raw natatapos*" (*Not yet done in answering the modules*)
"*Tamad ng sumagot, pagod na daw...*" (*Tired to finish answering the modules*)
"*Malayo ang bahay sa school.*" (*The learner's house is far from the school*)

These were the common responses of the participants when asked as to the reasons why modules are not returned to them on time, resulting to having bulks of unfinished and unreturned modules. In this case, a participant stated, (P3) "*Kailangan po talaga na maging mahaba ang pasensya at pang-unawa.*" (*Patience and understanding are needed.*) There were even instances where the parents were the ones answering the modules, as evidenced by their handwriting (P5) Most of the participants shared the same sentiment that in this set-up, it is difficult to address the needs of the learners, especially, that they are handling elementary learners.

Challenges and problems experienced by the Teachers in Modular Distribution and Retrieval

Theme 1:Budgetary Requirements and Parents Commitment

The teacher shared their experiences in various challenges and problems in the module distribution and retrieval. it is evidenced as participants express this way.

The module distribution and retrieval are the most difficult task of a teacher (P1)
Lack of budget for mass reproduction of modules (P2)
Lack of support from the parents (P2)
Because of the distance of home from school that is why they did not follow the schedule P1-7)

Delayed submission of modules (P1-7)
Lack of time management (P7)
I need to reach out the learners and deliver the modules at home to be able to cope with the lesson (P1,2,5).

The above statement affirmed that the budget for mass reproduction of self-learning modules is the primary concern. To gain support from parents, distance of home to school, delayed submission of modules, and lack of time management are the challenges and experiences of the teachers during the module distribution and retrieval.

In a report published by Rappler, the mode of module distribution and retrieval set by the DepEd was described wherein modules will be released to the parents or will be made available to certain designated pick-up points. Accomplished SLMs will be retrieved by teachers from parents. This kind of setup, however, poses risks. Teachers and parents raised concerns over using the modular learning approach due to fears of contracting the coronavirus.

It can be noted that teachers encountered challenges in module distribution such as returned modules were not fully accomplished, a teacher did not receive any message or call from parents for assistance, parents did not follow the schedule of module distribution and retrieval, and some lessons cannot be finished in the allotted time, and a child did not want to answer the module and insisted that the ate should do it.

Theme 2: Academic Dishonesty

One of the major problems in the implementation of this modular approach is the academic dishonesty as the participant mentioned that:

Facilitating learning at home made them to be impatient (P1)
Parents are the ones answering their learners' modules (P2&5)

Based on the participants' responses, it is assumed that parent is impatient in facilitating learning at home. And because of this situation, the parents are the ones who answered the modules for them to be able to return the Self-Learning Module to school. It implies that academic dishonesty which deprives quality of learning.

Coping Mechanism of Teachers in Modular Distribution and Retrieval

Theme 1: Teachers' Coping Mechanism towards

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their challenges in handling module distribution and retrieval According to P1 & P2, mentioned that module distribution and retrieval is the most difficult task done by the teachers in this pandemic due to different reasons such as – the *geographical location of the learners living in the island as well as those learners living in the mountain near the barangay*; and to those *learners living near the school results in complacency is the common issue*. To cope with those challenges, according to all participants they have given *importance and opportunity to talk with the parents and know their reasons or kamustahan, sending a text message reminding them of the scheduled module distribution and retrieval, chat those who have Facebook account, technical assistance was given by the school head to run smoothly the module distribution and retrieval and strict monitoring of each grade level using weekly monitoring form*.

In addition, P4 and P5 mentioned that it is *better for them to hand in the modules house to house*. To *have time to talk with the parents or guardians of the learners*. For *those learners delayed in the module, they still encouraged them to get the modules on time the next time around*.

Realization of Teacher in Modular Distribution and Retrieval

Theme 1: Teachers' realization towards module distribution and retrieval
Majority of the participants stated their realization on how they encountered challenges and problems in module distribution and retrieval that made them mature personally and grow professionally by being considerate, flexible, patient in every situation, and the need for cooperation between parents and teachers.

Theme 2: Teachers' possible solution in module distribution and retrieval
According to the participants, they suggest sending the modules ahead of time for them to make more meaningful activity sheets for the learners aside from the modules. Then, most of the participants prefer to have a face-to-face class rather than module distribution and retrieval. The participants' possible solution is to strictly follow the schedule of module distribution and retrieval.

Lived Experiences of Parents in Module Distribution and Retrieval.

The parent shared their experiences and narrated their untold stories in the implementation of module distribution and retrieval. Different themes emerged after the interview. These are the following.

Theme 1: Parents' Experiences and difficulties in Module Distribution and Retrieval

The first theme identified was the parents' experiences and difficulties in the module distribution and retrieval which is evident in the participants' responses.

Parents need to strictly follow the schedule of the module distribution and retrieval (P1)
I need to manage time and make scheduling of tasks (P3 &4)
Difficulty on my part because I need to leave my work (P3)

The participants' responses show that parents' experiences need to follow the schedule, learned to manage time, and some experiences to leave their work for the sake of getting the modules in school. However, most of the participants responded this way about module distribution and retrieval.

I am happy because it helps the learning development of my child (P4)
Smooth implementation of module distribution and retrieval (P3)
I do not have concerns or problems regarding the school distribution and retrieval. (P1 & 2)

Parents express that they do not have any concerns regarding the distrbution and retrieval of modules, because the school ensured the smooth implementation of the program.

The above results conformed to the study of Cahapay M. B. et al. (2021) who cited the distribution and retrieval system of the instructional materials and identify that the geographical location from home to school is a major concern, especially in the delivery of instructional materials. Teachers implemented a retrieval system involving stakeholders. Also, requested the PTA and homeroom officers to help us facilitate the distribution and retrieval of the modules.

Balolong, M. P. (2022), cited that a less effective SLMs distribution and retrieval system results in more complex academic problems such as module tracking, students' progress monitoring, and validation of outputs among others which produces more work for both the teachers and students.

Moreover, the study of Anoda (2022), posited that parents have been balancing their time between work and assisting their children's learning at home. Teachers on the other hand went through a lot of adjustments in delivering learning instructions through different learning modalities and managing time from handling heavy workloads.

However, he identified that both teachers and parents play a crucial role as educational partners in delivering worthwhile learning experiences to the learners and finding alternatives regarding the issues found in the different learning modalities being used in the New Normal.

Theme 2: Difficulty in Handling Learners at Home
Another theme identified was difficulties experienced by the parents in handling learners at home. These are evident in the participants' responses which say:

I have difficulty handling learner's behaviors (P1)
My child most of the time wanted to play games. (P1-4)
I and my child have trouble answering learning activities. (P1 &2)
I see a lack of motivation in answering the activities (P1-4)
Sometimes, the module of my child was not completed due to lack of knowledgeable learning facilitators at home (P2)

The results show that majority of the parents in the locality have been experiencing difficulties in facilitating learning at home. The result proved the study of Bhamani S. et al. (2020) that parents have adapted quickly to address the learning gap that has emerged in their children's learning in these challenging times. Measures should be adopted to provide essential learning skills to children at home.

Theme 3: Instructional Strategies, motivation, and rewards in facilitating learners at home.
The parents learned to employ various strategies on how effectively facilitating learning at home. The researchers identified strategies in facilitating learners at home as other themes as the participants responded this way.

I used instructional materials like blackboards while guiding my grandson (P1
I need to guide my child in answering their modules (P1&3)
I am able to facilitate my child in accomplishing their

task (P3)
I ask for the assistance of the teachers in cases that I do not have ideas about the topic (P4)
I applied strategies in facilitating learning at home (P3&4)
I am helping my child to learn (P3)
I learned to monitor my child's learning progress (P1)
I always submit modules on time (1,3&4)
I am providing motivation and rewards for my child to answer his module (P1-4)

The collaboration of parents and their children in learning activities promotes bonding between parents and children and increases the time they spend together.

Such instances allow parents to become a source of comfort in easing pain and worry and engage in conversations with their children to help them in alleviating their anxiety. It has been recommended that parents should be taught interventions on how to provide emotional support to children at times of uncertainty (Wang, Zhang, Zhao, Zhang, & Jiang, 2020).

Moreover, Anoda (2022), since the shift to distance learning modality that mostly occurs in the comfort of their home another major problem is that majority of the parents who are lack of skills in facilitating learning at home. It is cited that "skills should be taught by an expert like teachers who are really trained for this area". It also added that "parents as facilitators of home-based learning are not so capable to teach due to lack of education and training". There are "parents who tend to withdraw or refuse involving themselves in receiving the printed modules because they are not capable of assessing their children due to their educational background".

Challenges Experience by the Parents in Module Distribution and Retrieval

Theme 1: Challenges and problems experienced by the parents in module distribution and retrieval
Parents experience challenges and problems in module distribution and retrieval of modules. These challenges are evident in the participants' responses.

The distance of travel from home to school (P1)
Lack of knowledgeable facilitators at home (P1&2)
The mode of transportation and the weather (P1)
Safety of modules while traveling by sea travel (P1)
I was not able to complete my high school which is why I lack knowledge of the content and topics in

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modules (P1-3)
I need to work for my family (P2)
Lack of motivation on the part of the learners resulting in delayed submission of modules (P2&4)
Stressful and endured in parents' health condition (P1-2)
I need to pay the tutor of my child. This is very difficult on my part as a parent. (P2)
Causes of misunderstanding between parents and learners. (P4)
Absence of commitment of the learners in answering the modules (P1&4)

According to Anoda (2022) distance of houses delays the delivery of instructional materials. Most of the applicable modalities to the socioeconomic context is the print modular distance learning the problem of geographical proximity of houses to school causes a delay in the delivery of instructional materials. Some of the parents are not able to get the instructional materials on time and the instructional implementation includes the distribution of modules. Some pupils live far away from school, so they receive the module late and retrieve them late too.

However, participants mentioned that:
"I need to give up the work for me to get the module of my child (P3),
I am aware of my obligation in module distribution and retrieval (P3),
Modules are difficult and stressful (P1-3),
I got angry when the child did not understand the lesson (P1,3&4),
learners are not following their parents (P1-4)

Moore (2022), parents revealed young children's challenges with remote learning and the multiple strategies families took up to support their young learners, including many forms of managing and facilitating online work, several forms of communicating to seek support, information, or changes, and multiple forms of motivating their child(ren) to stay engaged and complete activities.

Furthermore, she posited that parents also shared the tensions that arose with more unfettered access to their child(ren)'s online classrooms, teachers' variation in communication, and families differing levels of participation due to multiple responsibilities.

Coping Mechanism of Parents in Module Distribution and Retrieval

Theme 1: Parents; Coping Mechanism in the Challenges Experience

Every parent in the implementation of the module distribution and retrieval experiences challenges and problems. This is evident in participants' responses.

I encourage my child to complete the module before the retrieval and distribution (P1)
I motivate my child in answering their modules by providing rewards (P1-4)
I set an arrangement with the learners in answering modules.
I enforced discipline (P3)
Practicing time management (P4)
Asking for the learning assistance from the teachers (P4
Provide enough time in answering the modules (P1-3
Encouraging learners to do well and complete their tasks (P3-4
Asking the assistance of her brother and neighbor (P2)

Moore found out that families employ creative strategies to reinforce their child(ren)'s remote learning, and they inform teachers and school personnel of the importance of developing continued recalibration of communication, family support, and family input on home learning experiences when young children cannot engage with in-person learning.

Realization of Parents in Modular Distribution and Retrieval

Theme 1: Realization of the Parents in Modular Distribution and Retrieval

In the time of Implementation of modular distance learning and module distribution and retrieval, many parents' experiences challenges and problems which were also addressed using their own mechanism. It was resulted to the realization that even this time of pandemic we can continuously deliver education to our learners using self-learning modules. This is truly evident as the participants responded this way.

I need to instill in the learners to work hard to learn (P3)
I need to become patient in facilitating learning at home (P4)
My motivation is my dream for my child (P3)
I need to ensure that my child's education will continue despite COVID 19 pandemic (P1-4)

Discussion

Considering the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:*Teachers:* (1) The teacher-participants made necessary preparations for modular distance learning. (2) Delayed submission of modules was noted due to identified reasons. (3) Module distribution and retrieval are challenged in terms of: (3.1)budgetary requirements. (3.2) parents' commitment and academic dishonesty. (3.3) distance of home to school. (3.4) delayed submission of modules; and (3.5) lack of time management. (4) The challenges were coped by the participants through: (4.1) kamustahan time with parents. (4.2) constant communication through texts and social media. (4.3) reminders on the scheduled module distribution and retrieval. (4.4) technical assistance provided by the school head; and (4.5) strict monitoring of learners. (5) The participants realized that (5.1) by mere module distribution and retrieval, the needs of the learners are difficult to address; (5.2) their interpersonal skills are developed, they grow professionally, and become considerate, flexible, and patient; (5.3) there is a need for cooperation between parents and teachers; and (5.4) having face-to-face classes is preferred over module distribution and retrieval.

Parents: (1) Parent-participants experienced difficulties in module distribution and retrieval as well as facilitating learning at home. (2) Instructional, motivational, and rewarding strategies were developed by the participants in dealing with module distribution and retrieval. (3) Among the things experienced by the participants were following the schedule, managing time, and sacrificing work just to return and get modules to and from school. (4) Modules caused stress and caused parents to become impatient in facilitating learning at home. (5) Participants learned to encourage, motivate, practice time management, and seek assistance to accomplish activity sheets.

After reviewing the results of this study, the following recommendations were made: *Department of Education:* (1) Conduct actual needs assessments to have concrete bases for the appropriate technical assistance and support to be extended to schools. (2) Initiate crafting of policy brief intended to help address issues and concerns about module distribution and retrieval. (3) Encourage schools to comply the requirements for the reopening of face-to-face classes. (4) Expedite the downloading of funds intended for the reproduction of the Self-Learning Modules

School Administration: (1) Prepare and implement an action plan to address school issues and concerns regarding module distribution and retrieval. (2) Conduct capacity building for teachers to be more equipped in dealing with this situation. (3) Conduct benchmarking activities. (4) Initiate programs, projects, and activities for adult learning that will serve as the facilitating learning at home. (5) Strengthening home-school-community partnership. (6) Conduct regular monitoring and encourage active participation in module distribution and retrieval. (7) Comply with the requirements and subject to validation for the reopening of face-to-face classes (8) Continue the provision of Learning Action Cell, Performance Monitoring, and Coaching. (9) Conduct reorientation on Blended Learning in the New Normal.

Teachers: (1) Conduct action research to specifically understand the school's situation and contribute possible solutions to the current situation. (2) Craft and implement a program that will intensify the partnership between parents/stakeholders and teachers. (3) Be an instrument for addressing learning gaps in modular distance learning. (4) Conduct reorientation of parents in the classroom the effective ways of facilitating learning at home.

Parents: (1) Strengthen the partnership of school and parents and stakeholders (2) Always participate and cooperate in the implementation of the DepEd and school program, project, and activities.

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