Parental Involvement of Children with Special Educational Needs on Distance Learning: A Narrative Research Inquiry

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Abstract: *Research was conducted to determine parental involvement among parents who are using distance learning. Parental involvement refers to the level of involvement a parent has in his or her children's education. Parental involvement in a child's education has been found to be consistently related to a child's academic performance. The current study used a sample of five parents who have children with special needs to conduct an online interview to determine the challenges and current experiences encountered by the parents during distance learning. The findings revealed a significant relationship between parental involvement and a child's academic performance. All the parents are in favor of distance learning, in which the setup does not require or demand that they attend school in person. Most of the parents of a child with special needs have seek and have their child evaluated or diagnosed by specialized doctors. Parental involvement has a significant role in the improvement of the academic performance of the learners. Clemente's framework is based on how distance learning is satisfactory in the learning process despite the problems in the delivery of distance learning among students with special needs and is still the same as the delivery in a traditional classroom.*

Keywords: Parental Involvement, Special education, online learning, face-to-face learning
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1. Introduction

In the Philippines, education is highly valued. Filipinos have a great interest in education. It is recognized as an essential component of national development as well as a primary source of career advancement. As a result, the right of every Filipino to a good basic education is being protected, as stated in the 1987 Philippine Constitution: "The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to a good basic education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make education accessible to all.*" As cited in Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees every child the right to education and mandates States to establish educational systems that are accessible to all, which aim to provide the holistic development of a child to her or his fullest potential. Article 29 of the Convention further emphasizes the message of child-centered education: that the key goal of education is the development of the individual child's personality, talents, and abilities, in recognition of the fact that every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and learning needs. The essential and interrelated features of the right to education are Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability, and Adaptability. The pandemic, it has changed the face of education here in the Philippines.*

1.1 Background of the Study

The studies cited and formulated in this chapter contain the different concepts, ideas, prognoses, opinions, experiences, and understanding of the study related to the parental involvement of children with special educational needs enrolled in distance education. This chapter served as the researcher's springboard in developing the study.

According to Bartolome et al. (2017), parental involvement refers in the amount of involvement a parent has in his or her children's education. Some schools encourage positive parental involvement, but some parents are hesitant to participate in their children's education. It has wide support in Western countries. There is, however, a body of literature that examines the significance of social and cultural influences, as well as the effects of parental involvement in and expectations of their children's development and learning. Because there are differences in when, why, and how parents from various backgrounds participate in their children's education, it is critical for schools to recognize the existence of cultural variations in parent involvement. Moreover, the conceptual importance of effective home-school partnerships is supported by Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory for understanding child behavior and individual differences in development. The ecological theory provided a conceptual framework for parental involvement and parent training in the educational process. Analyzing various settings in which children and their caregiver's function, provided a framework for predicting parenting processes and child outcomes. Factors within the broader 'ecology' of the environment in which children are raised that have been linked to child mental health outcomes were also considered, according to Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework. His ecological theory of the human development model tried to describe markers of adolescent development influenced by interpersonal, social, and environmental multi-systemic influences.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

This paper presents a Framework model that shows the Involvement of parents of children with special needs during distance learning mentioned in the framework are the scuffles and lived experiences of parents. The paper reports on the findings of parental involvement in school during distance learning. The study's findings and conclusions imply that increasing parental involvement in children's education is beneficial. should be prioritized as a technique for addressing achievement gaps. Parental involvement, in particular, can be viewed as a technique for achievement gaps.

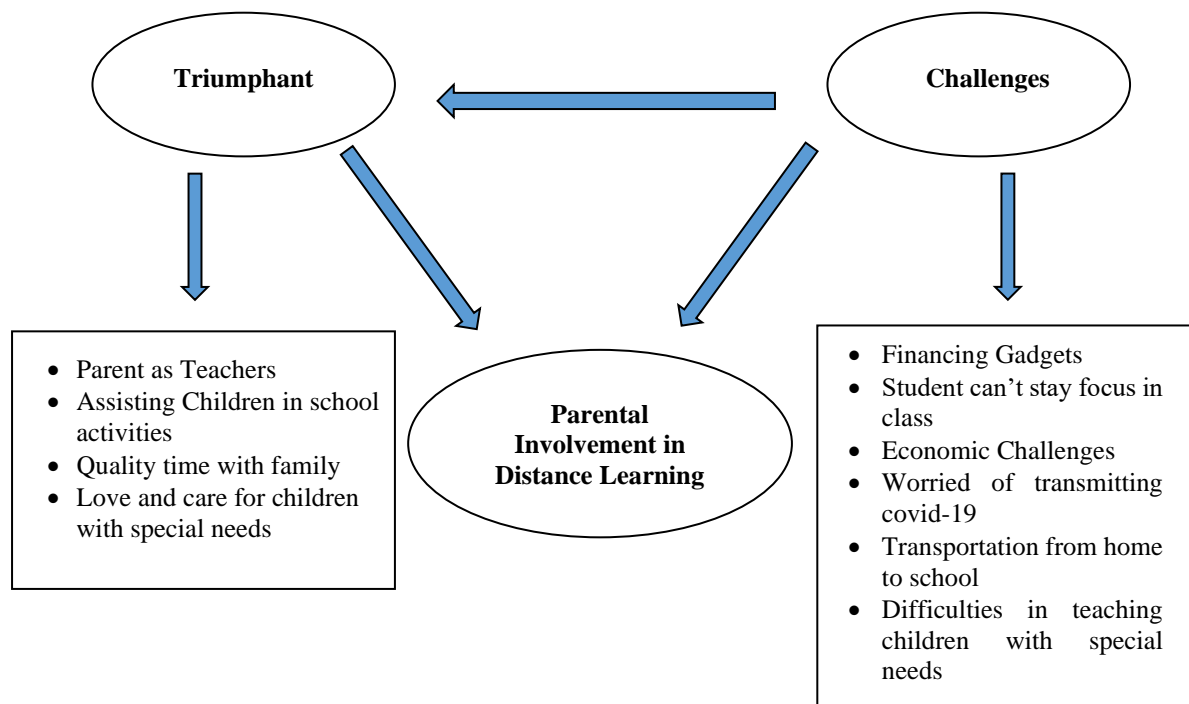**Clemente's Framework**

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

The framework is intended for parental involvement for children with special needs in dealing with distance learning wherein the parent's role is very important, particularly in the learning process of the learners. Parents who are still involved in distance learning face various challenges, including Financing Gadgets Students, can't stay focused in class, Economic challenges, worry about transmitting COVID-19, Transportation from home to school, and Difficulties in teaching children with special needs. Despite these challenges, parents play a vital role in ensuring that their child is involved in the learning process. Parents' traits such as assisting their children in school activities, spending quality time with family, acting as teachers, and loving and caring for children with special needs are all necessary for them to succeed in the learning process, even when utilizing distance learning.

The objective of this framework is to raise awareness of the significance of parents' roles in nurturing their children's growth and development, as well as to reinforce or modify parents' attitudes, beliefs, and practices related to childcare. Encourage learning and education by setting high – but not impossible – educational standards and goals and participating in school and community activities.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the parental support for children with special educational needs in distance learning during the COVID–19 pandemic.

Its specific goal is to provide answers to the following questions:
1) What are the challenges encountered by the parents of children with special needs during distance learning?
2) What are parents' lived experiences with children with special needs learning through distance learning?

3) What are the insights gained by the researcher on the study?
4) Based on the insights and results, what is the implication of the study?

1.4 Scope and Limitations

This study aimed to learn the lived experiences of parental support for distance learning for children with special educational needs. The findings of this research covered only five parents of Bagong Tanyag Integrated School. The different limitations that were encountered by the researcher were the ability of the participants in giving the data with honesty because they may be biased and may give a popular answer that other participants agree with, rather than a true opinion. Limitations also include the availability of co-participants in giving the data. Another limitation of this study is the fact that due to the coronavirus pandemic; face-to-face interviews were strictly prohibited and required maintaining the safety health protocol to avoid the rapid increase of cases. With that, the gathering of data and information was conducted using online interviews.

2. Review of Related Literature and Studies

2.1 Parent Involvement

According to Waterford.org as cited by Delgado (2019), When parents participate in the educational process, teachers and parents share the responsibility of teaching students and working together to achieve educational goals. He also stated that parental involvement in the educational process has been declining since 2016, according to Blackboard data. Many parents believe that communication between them and teachers is ineffective, so they prefer to communicate with teachers online (via texts, emails, or social networks) rather than attending face-to-face conferences or briefings. Although getting more involved would help improve communication, the parents' declining support and time availability is reflected in their low attendance.

Furthermore, according to the Stein and Strauss (2020) study, parents of special education students across the country believe the problem is much bigger if universities and colleges do not reopen soon. They claim that their children are not only dropping behind academically but that they are also seriously lacking developmental stages and losing valuable life lessons.

In addition, the study of Delgado (2019), addressed that there is a clear positive correlation between students' academic achievement as well as family support throughout his\her child's schooling Furthermore, the aforementioned point that a communication has been put in place among parents but also their students' development process, the bigger and more powerful the basis for the student's academic achievement.

2.2 Research Design

A narrative approach was used in this study to collect the data. A qualitative research design was utilized in this study. According to Pritha Bhandari (2020), qualitative research entails gathering and analyzing non-numerical data like messages, YouTube clips, or audio in order to fully understand concepts, thoughts, or perspectives. It can be used to obtain in-depth ideas about an issue or to produce new research ideas. This study specifically used narrative research. Narrative research or inquiry, according to Kayi Ntinda (2019), was among the latest qualitative approaches that focus on life experiences as the fact of personal sciences. Narrative approaches seek to participate in the aspects in which a story is constructed, for whom and why, as well as the cultural philosophies on which it draws (Bochner 2007; Trahar 2009).

2.3 Data Generation and Selection of Co-Participants

In the conduct of this research, the researcher submitted a letter of intent to the principal of Bagong Tanyag Integrated School in order to accomplish this research (see Appendix D). In addition, the researcher submitted a letter to the Division of Taguig City and Pateros for endorsement (see Appendix D). After receiving approval from the principal, the researcher communicated with at least 5 parents of children with special needs. The selected parents were given a letter communicating the intention of using five parents from the special education class. The researcher sent and secured the letter of consent to the chosen co-participants (see appendix C). The researcher utilized five parents whose children are enrolled at Bagong Tanyag Integrated School for the school year 2021-2022 and are currently using distance learning. After the researcher got consent forms signed by each co-participant, the researcher conducted one-on-one interviews to collect their stories about the current situations they experience in distance learning. Co-participants were chosen because they were willing to collaborate and share their ideas and help to find more new insights.

The researcher prepared the interview guide to be used for data gathering. The interview guide was prepared and tried out to be established and reliable. After these preparations, the researcher conducted individual interviews with the co-participants for approximately forty-five (45) minutes to one (1) hour via google meet or zoom. The researcher sought permission from the interviewees to record the interview. The interview questions formulated were based on the main research questions and sub-questions.

In this study the researcher used verbatim transcription to analyze the collected data. In order to begin the data analysis process, the researcher transcribed the collected data to be easily analyzed and interpreted. After transcribing all the gathered data, the researcher informed the co-participants to review and check their answers.

3. Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary of Findings

One narration emerged: "Challenges of a Parent with a Child with Special Needs in Distance Learning". All of the parents responded that, as a support to their child, they did their best to assist with the given worksheets and other school-related activities, such as participation in various school programs. Parents admitted that their children struggled at first with the transition from face-to-face to distance learning. Apart from being used to having classes at school, they have difficulty personally teaching their children because they lack focus and are used to the physical presence of a teacher teaching them. A parent stated that distance learning taught her about various things that can assist her child in developing his talents and skills. As a result, all the participants agreed on distance learning, in which the setup does not require or demand that they attend school in person.

One narration emerged: "Current experiences of a Parent with a Child with Special Needs in Distance Learning". Most of the parents of a child with special needs have sought and have their child evaluated or diagnosed by specialized doctors. All of the parents stated that distance learning is beneficial to them. All of the participants stated that distance learning is advantageous because it saves time and effort spent traveling to and from school. All of the participants stated that they support distance learning to avoid contracting the COVID-19 virus. Most of them expressed joy at the opportunity of becoming a teacher to their child. A parent even stated that if face-to-face instruction is implemented, she will still prefer distance learning. Distance learning, according to this parent, it is more convenient and safer, especially given

her child's medical condition, which requires him to use a wheelchair. All of the parents personally guide and assist their child in terms of studying. They are in charge of teaching students on school-related activities and lessons. The parents, on the other hand, are hands-on and personally assist and supervise everything for their child.

One narration emerged the researcher was able to come up with the insights that she gained based on the results of the study in which greater levels of participation of the parents in the learner's homeschooling can achieve certain accomplishment results. Most parents prefer distance learning because of their fear that they can get the virus when they are outside. Parents have no choice but to participate in a distance learning modality due to the pandemic, as well as they are one of the participants in a new program released by the Department of Education. At first, they are hesitant because they don't know how to use online platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet, but as time goes on, they have learned to appreciate it, and the majority of them want to use distance learning even after the pandemic.

The researcher came up with Clemente's Framework that shows the different challenges of a Parent with a child with Special Needs in Distance Learning such as Financing Gadgets, Students can't stay focused in class, Economic Challenges, worry about transmitting COVID-19, Transportation from home to school and difficulties in teaching children with special. It also presents parents' lived experiences in the distance learning process of children with special needs.

Conclusion
Based on the indicated Summary of Findings the following conclusions were drawn:

1) As support to their child, all of the parents did their best to help their children with the school-related activities, such as participation in various school programs and doing worksheets. Parents experienced the struggle in facing face-to-face to distance learning. Parents encountered different scuffles during distance learning such as difficulty with Financing Gadgets,parents must at least buy high end gadgets to use in distance learning. Difficulties in teaching children with special needs because learners lack attention while doing the task. Economic Challenges, wherein the parents cannot sustain the needs of the child in terms of providing internet connection. Worried about transmitting covid-19, parents are afraid to go outside because of the possibility to get the virus, and Transportation from home to school wherein parents have a hard time commuting because of the child's medical condition. Distance learning taught the parents to join in many webinars that are conducted online that will help them to gain information that will help their child develop his talents and skills. As a conclusion, all of the participants support distance learning, which does not require or demand that they attend school in person.

2) The majority of parents of children with special needs have had their children assessed or diagnosed by specialized doctors. It shows a lot of advantages when parents enrolled the learners to distance learning because it saves them time and effort going to school. All of the parents personally guide and assist their children in terms of studying. Distance learning is helpful to all of the parents. To prevent contracting the COVID 19 virus, all of the participants support distance learning.

3) Parents are in charge of teaching children on school activities and lessons. On the other side, parents are hands-on and personal support and monitor their children. Most of them expressed happiness at the possibility of teaching their child. If face-to-face learning

modality is implemented, a parent will still choose distance learning. This parent believes that distance learning is more convenient and safer.

4) Clemente's framework is based on how distance learning is satisfactory in the learning process despite the problems in the delivery of the distance learning among students with special needs and is still the same as the delivery in a traditional classroom. One of the biggest challenges is for families with low economic resources the financing of gadgets and mobile data. Parents are also concerned about students' behavior during class, parents encountered difficulties in teaching children with special needs. Parents' commitment and involvement in parental involvement should be improved to determine which approaches result in positive changes in the academic performance of students at every level of the educational system. From the parents' point of view, many are interested in the entire possible involvement, but some challenges hinder their ability to be involved. The findings of this study may lead to better and more feasible solutions. Structured approaches to effective parental participation in children's education. Schools must evaluate and determine what the whole community desires, then design and communicate to get parents and people of the community to become more active in Life at school. Schools are a community resource. Therefore, part of their responsibility is to be accountable to the community.

Recommendations
The following recommendations were made based on the indicated Summary of Findings and Conclusions:

1) Schools should organize Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings on how to support students enrolled in distance learning in accordance with Republic Act 9155.
2) The Department of Education should ensure that Taguig City will be equipped with a stable internet connection and all of the learners with special educational needs will be given a tablet to help the learning process.
3) Parental webinar on how to support students who are enrolled in distance learning. Create seminars for parents to develop awareness and dissemination of information up to barangay levels.
4) The proposed framework to be utilized by the Department of Education for parents to be effective, particularly in distance learning, and for the Department of Education to consider having smaller class sizes for children with special needs to give teachers more time to communicate with parents.

Acknowledgement

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