

PARENTS' OBSERVATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPACTS OF MODULAR DISTANCE LEARNING TO THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY GRADE PUPILS OF PR SAMONTE

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine and analyze the parents' observations and perceptions on the effects of modular distance learning to the social-emotional development of the primary grade pupils of PR. Samonte Elementary School. The study made use of the descriptive method of research. The respondents were the selected 88 parents of the primary grade learners in PR. Samonte Elementary School. The pertinent data were collected using survey-questionnaires and the data were treated using percentage and weighted mean. It was concluded that: 1. Most of the parent-respondents were young female adults, with insufficient educational background, plain housewives and belonged to families below average level in terms of monthly income.; 2. Most parents observed that their children tend to show dependence and reliance towards parental support when experiencing tiredness and difficulties in modular learning. Moreover, as observed by the parents, their children typically encounter difficulties in modular learning due to lack of face to face interaction with the teachers and the quality of home-based environment and support.; 3. Most of the parent-respondents observed in terms of social development, the major effect observed was increased time and opportunity of the children to communicate with parents, families and peers. Meanwhile, in terms of emotional development, the leading effect observed was children's excitement and motivation towards performing modular activities.; 4. The respondents agreed that the modular distance learning challenges of the learners can be addressed by major interventions such as designing community-based learning settings, improved teacher-parent collaboration and empowerment of parents via guidance and counselling during pandemic. Thus, it was recommended in the study that: 1. Schools should organize and establish committees to monitor and document learners' status during modular distance learning system.; 2. Parents should teach and train their children on more self-learning and independent learning strategies and practices that could be integrated in modular distance learning.; 3. Training programs on the best practices and support services to boost children's social-emotional development should be provided for the teachers and parents for more comprehensive knowledge sharing.; 4. The proposed interventions to address modular distance learning challenges should be translated and integrated in a concrete and specific intervention plan especially for the teachers and parents as partners in supporting the modular learning endeavor of primary grade children.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Modular distance learning became a new fad in the world of education (Castroverde & Acala, 2021). It is

effectively adopted worldwide in countries which have diverse political and social systems such as Australia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Britain, Thailand, China, Canada, India, Holland, Japan, and the common wealthy

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independent countries. It is believed that students using the modular learning approach significantly increased both the academic performance of the students (Ambayon & Millenes, 2020).

When COVID-19 pandemic spread like a wild fire, it forced the people to stay inside of their homes. The social and emotional well-being of every individual are significantly affected (Murthy, 2020). In this time of depression and frustrations, the younger students are starting to have ideas about giving up and taking their own lives because they cannot handle the pressure that the new normal has given to them (Saline, 2021).

In response to the situation, the World Health Organization (WHO) released their mental health and psychosocial considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak last 18 of March 2020. WHO advises the students to maintain familiar routines in daily life and provide engaging age-appropriate activities for their learning (Nguyen, 2021). As explained by Vygotsky, socialization affects the learning process of an individual (Connery et al., 2010). WHO also added that children should be encouraged to continue to play and socialize with others, even if only within the family when advised to restrict social contacts.

Due to restrictions imposed by the government brought by COVID-19 pandemic, socialization and mass gatherings where there is face to face contact, have become problems (Hanaei et al., 2022). One of the most affected sectors in society where there is mass gathering, is education. Over 150 countries have been touched by this pandemic, which has affected 1.6 billion students. Thus, many countries have responded by implementing a remote and distance learning modality.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) launched online classes and introduced modular distance learning and issued the enclosed Policy Guidelines for the Provisions for the Learning Resources in the implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP), DepEd Order No. 018 s. 2020. The policy establishes the guidelines that will enable DepEd to provide learning in response to this emergency, as stated in the rationale of this policy, to ensure that learning opportunities are provided to learners in a safe manner through different learning delivery. This is the reason Modular Distance Learning was implemented.

Regional Director Gilbert Sadsad said that the DepEd Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) guarantees and provides learning opportunity that does not require the use of ICT gadgets and equipment. He also emphasized that DepEd Bicol would adopt the blended learning or modular learning modality using printed materials since it is more favorable among Bicolano learners.

On March 1, 2022, some schools in Camarines Norte officially welcomed students for the start of expanded limited face to face classes. Schools Division Superintendent Nympha Guemo said that DepEd is determined to implement limited face to face classes to

address the problems and grievances of both parents and students in understanding lessons using modular method as well as the challenges in the social and mental health of students since the onset of the pandemic (Bozkurt et al., 2020; Chavez, 2020; Sharma & Bhaskar, 2020).

Thus, in view of these, the researcher found motivation in conducting and pursuing a study that would delve on the parents' perceptions and observations on the effects of modular distance learning to the social and emotional development of their children who are in the primary grades (Tan et al., 2022). These parental perceptions and observations were considered important and indispensable in this study so that the researchers could conceptualize and formulate interventions and innovations that could help address the modular distance learning challenges affecting the learners' socio-emotional well-being

2. METHODOLOGY

This study made use of the descriptive method of research. Specifically, in this study, the descriptive method was applied in the discussion of the salient variables as to profile of the respondents, parents' observations on the common difficulties, attitudes and behavior of primary grade children under modular distance learning, and the perceived and observed effects of modular distance learning to the social-emotional development of the learners.

The respondents of this study were the selected parents of primary pupils at P.R Samonte Elementary School. There were eighty-eight (88) identified respondents. The data collected for this research were limited to the primary learners and the school year 2021–2022 only.

The researcher obtained permission from P.R Samonte Elementary School's Principal to collect data. Then, the researchers distributed questionnaires to the respondents where necessary information about their profile and others are needed. Afterward, the information gathered was organized in a tabular format to facilitate analysis in order to answer the question at hand. Statistical treatment was employed, and a survey questionnaire was used to clarify responses from the respondents. The statistical tools employed in the treatment of the data were the weighted mean and percentage technique

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the results of the data analysis in response to the problems covered by this study.

1. The Profile of the Parent- Respondents

The study first delved on the profile of the parent-respondents based on the consideration that these profile variables could potentially influence parents' perceptions towards modular distance learning of their children.

Table 1. Age Distribution of Parent-Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21-30	42	47.72%
31-40	40	45.45%
41-50	6	6.81%
Total	88	100%

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of parent-respondents according to their age bracket. Based on the data gathered, it was found that majority or 47.72% of the most of the participants are from age bracket between 21–40 years old while the lowest percentage of 6.81% (6 individuals) are forty years old and above.

The findings imply that most of the parent-respondents can be considered as young adults. It can be viewed that the age profile of the parents may pose significant influence on their physical readiness and capacities to provide academic support services for their children under the modular distance learning. Apparently, there can be a significant distinction between the physical

vigor and strengths of younger and older parents to cope with the needs, demands and processes involved in providing mentoring services to their children under modular instruction.

The findings are supported by the study of Palmes (2023) which examined the impacts of parental literacy to the modular learning engagement of the grade three learners in the Division of Aklan. The results of this study also showed that majority of the parent-respondents were also within the age of 40 years below. The study also concluded and justified that younger parents are more physically enduring and capable of coping with the physical stress and fatigue brought by modular mentoring services for their children.

Table 2. Sex of the Parent-Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	16	18.18%
Female	72	81.81%
Total	88	100%

Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of parent-respondents based on their sex. It was found that majority of the respondents were female parents with 72 (81.81%) while the remaining 16 (18.18%) are male parents. This implies that mothers can be typically viewed and found to be more actively involved and engaged in supporting the modular distance learning of their children compared to the fathers of male parents. This can be justified by the scenario that in most Filipino families, typically mothers or male parents are more entrusted with the care and tutelage of their children including provision of guidance and mentoring to the children while the fathers are pre-occupied by the occupational or livelihood undertakings. Thus, mothers or male parents are the more concerned guardian towards

the exposure and journey of their children than the male parents.

The results are attested by Perilo (2019) who also found that majority of its parent-respondents were mothers, verifying the scenario that mothers have more time and attention towards extending support systems to the modular learning of their children. This was also based on the attested reality that mothers have more dedication and commitment and available time to get to know the learning needs of their children.

The data on the profile of the parent-respondents as to educational attainment were shown in Table 3. It was revealed that most of the respondents attained secondary or high school education with the highest percentage 50%.

Table 3. Educational Attainment of Parent-Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary	12	13.63%
High School	44	50%
College	29	32.95%
Others	3	3.40%
Total	88	100%

The findings only imply that the most of the parent-respondents have insufficient level of educational attainment which eventually affect their level of competence in supporting their children's modular learning engagement. Insufficiency of educational attainment implies limitations in the capacities and opportunities for the parents to offer developmentally-

appropriate and reliable instructional support services for the modular learning of their children. It would create a gap between the demands of modular instruction and the cognitive capacities of parents to extend modular mentoring services for their children.

In the study by Adigue and Abuda (2021) which investigated the correlation between parental readiness in

Parents' Observations and Perceptions on the Impacts of Modular Distance Learning to the Social and Emotional Development of Primary Grade Pupils of PR Samonte

distance learning and the modular learning achievements of intermediate grade pupils in Tangub City, it was also revealed that majority or 52 % of the parent-respondents were high school graduates. The study found and

concluded that parents who attained only secondary education level also reflect inadequacy in terms of knowledge and educational capacities to cope with the demands of parental mentoring under modular learning.

Table 4. Socio-economic Status of Parent-Respondents

Socio economic status	Frequency	Percentage
Full-time	21	23.86%
Part-time	8	9.09%
Self-employed	23	26.13%
Plain Housewife	34	38.63%
Student	1	1.13%
Retired	1	1.13%
Total	88	100%
Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5,000.00	37	42.04%
5,000.00-10,000.00	38	43.18%
10,000.00-20,000.00	7	7.95%
20,000.00-30,000.00	6	6.81%
Total	88	100%

Table 4 reveals the data on the profile of the parent-respondents in terms of socio-economic status. It was found that the highest percentage of 38.63% with a frequency of 34 of the participants are plain housewives. In addition, in terms of monthly income, majority or (38 or 43.18%) of the participants have a monthly income ranging from Php 5,000.00 to Php 10,000.00.

The results imply that mothers who assume the roles of plain housewives are more likely to gain the benefits and advantages of having more opportunities to guide, assist, support and monitor their children's modular learning engagement. In particular in this time of home-based distance learning system, mothers have more time to look after the performance and development of their children amidst exposure to modular modality. Meanwhile, in terms of average monthly income, the financial aspects may not be a major issue along the exposure of learners to modular modality, considering that the DepED ensures regular and uninterrupted supply and distribution of learning modules to the learners.

2. The Parents' Observations on the Common Difficulties, Attitudes and Behaviors of their Children towards the Modular Distance Learning in the Primary Grade

Considering that amidst the home-based, distance learning, parents have the closest interaction with their children during modular learning, they were surveyed about their observations as to the difficulties encountered, shift in the attitudes and behavioral adjustments of their children towards this modality.

Table 5 presents the data on the parents' observation of their children's common attitude and behavior towards modular distance learning. The findings revealed that that majority of the parent-respondents agreed and observed that their children let them know when he/she is experiencing difficulties in making their assignments and performance task with the highest mean of 3.98 or agree. This was followed by the response that the child/pupil let them know when he/she is tired of doing the activities in modules, with a mean of 3.93 or agree.

Table 5. Attitude and Behavior towards Modular Distance Learning (N=88)

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Show willingness to learn the subject	4.04	Agree
Show signs of misbehavior due to stress and anxiety brought on by the pandemic and in dealing with module distance learning	3.64	Agree
Let you know when he/she is experiencing difficulties in making their assignments and performance task	3.98	Agree
The pupil is able to practice socialization (ex. enjoys playing with others)	3.34	Neutral
Always mention that MDL is dull and boring	3.38	Neutral
The child/pupil let you know when he/she is tired of doing the activities in modules	3.93	Agree
Put pressure to be perfect and never make mistake in answering the modules.	3.39	Neutral
Grand Mean	3.67	Agree

N=88 Legend: 4.50-5.00-Strongly Agree, 3.50-4.00-Agree, 2.50-3.0-Neutral, 1.50-2.00-Strongly Disagree, 0.50-1.00-Disagree

The results imply that the most common attitude or behavioral tendency of the children is to refer to or seek help from their parents upon experiencing weariness or hardship along their modular distance learning engagement. This further implies the attitude of full

confidence and belief of the children about the accessibility of parental support services and system along the execution of modular learning tasks and activities that are unique and challenging for them. Thus, it reflects the reality that in terms of attitude towards

modular modality, children may show or indicate dependence and reliance to the parental support especially in consideration of the scenario of lack of face to face instruction from the teachers and the presence of home-based learning environment during modular learning.

The findings are affirmed by the study of De Vera (2020) which examined the learners' self-learning readiness and

access to parental support during new normal modular learning. The study also found that most of the pupil-respondents manifested higher dependence on the support of their parents as they undergo modular learning especially among their mothers. This was because of the pupil-respondents' awareness that their mothers genuinely understand their feelings and experiences towards modular learning.

Table 6. Difficulties encountered towards Modular Distance Learning (N=88)

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Time constraints due to work and household chores	3.77	Agree
Learners who do not have parents that could help them in studying their lessons at home	3.72	Agree
Parents educational attainment	3.92	Agree
Non-readers/ difficulties in reading with comprehension.	3.88	Agree
The appropriateness of learning tasks to the students level of understanding.	4.10	Agree
The house is not conducive for learning	3.82	Agree
Immediate feedback from the teacher on the pupil's learning progress.	4.01	Agree
Grand Mean	3.88	Agree

N=88 Legend: 4.50-5.00-Strongly Agree, 3.50-4.00-Agree, 2.50-3.0-Neutral, 1.50-2.00-Strongly Disagree, 0.50-1.00-Disagree

Table 6 presents the parents' observations on the difficulties encountered by their children towards modular distance learning. The findings revealed that most of the parent-respondents agreed and observed that the difficulties of the learners in modular distance learning can be linked with lack of immediate feedback from the teacher on the pupil's learning progress during pandemic with the highest mean of 4.01 or agree. This implies that one of the most typical difficulties faced by the learners and parents amidst modular learning during pandemic is how to cope with the needs, demands and processes of this modality without sufficient access to teachers' guidance and instruction. Thus, it further implies that without direct access to teachers' face to face instructional support, it is evident that both the learners and parents can be adversely affected as it would limitations to credible source of instruction and content knowledge.

Furthermore, most of the respondents also agreed that the learning environment and the other responsibilities of the pupils in the house also contribute to the difficulties encountered by the pupils in dealing with the MDL. These factors include time constraints due to work and household chores and the condition of the house that is

not conducive for learning. It also implies that home-related factors and aspects can also pose impacts on the level of fluency in the conduct of modular distance learning on the part of both parents and learners. The presence of household chores, leisure, play time and other activities can be adversely tempting for the children, hence, the quality and quantity of modular learning engagement can be somehow compromised. On the part of the parents, they would have to deal with the issues of bridging the gap between engagement in occupation or livelihood and the need to extend modular learning services for their children. Thus, it only implies that the difficulties faced by both parents and children are mutual and interconnected.

3. The Perceived and Observed Effects of Modular Distance Learning to Social-Emotional Development of the Primary Grade Learners

Besides academic development, the parent-respondents were also knowledgeable about the potential effects posed by the modular distance learning to the social-emotional growth of their children, something that was verified in this part of the study.

Table 7. Effects of Modular Distance Learning (MDL) on Social Development

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Chooses to be alone instead of talking and playing with others.	2.13	Sometimes
Has time to communicate and play with his/her friends and/or classmates using social media most of the time.	2.55	Always
Has time to talk to his/her parents and siblings	2.65	Always
Displaying signs of low self-esteem	2.13	Sometimes
Becomes shy and chooses to be alone most of the time.	2.12	Sometimes
Low socialization skills due to parents' lack of support and inherited attitude and behavior.	2.04	Sometimes
Grand Mean	1.84	Sometimes

N=88 Legend: 4.50-5.00-Strongly Agree, 3.50-4.00-Agree, 2.50-3.0-Neutral, 1.50-2.00-Strongly Disagree, 0.50-1.00-Disagree

Table 7 presents the data on the perceived and observed impacts of Modular Distance Learning (MDL) on the

social development of the primary pupils. The findings revealed that that most of the parent-respondents noticed

that the pupils have more time to talk to parents and siblings which obtained the highest mean of 2.65 or always. This was followed by communicating and playing with their friends and/or classmates using social media most of the time with a mean of 2.55 or always. However, the respondents also observed that sometimes, pupils display signs of low self-esteem such as shyness, chooses to be alone and low socialization skills. The findings imply that the home-based nature and system of modular distance learning has helped to positively contribute to the development of the vital social skills and values of the learners especially the skills that are rooted on social relationships within the family. Along the development of these social skills, parents assume and execute salient and integral roles and responsibilities in helping their children make the modular distance learning as socially benefitting and nurturing. The social development starts to arise and progress through the relationship, connection and quality and meaningful interactions between the learners and their parents during modular learning time and activities. Moreover, the nature of modular distance learning in terms of out of the school setting and environment has

also helped learners to gain more opportunities to try other means or alternatives in terms of communication and socialization with their peers. This is through the roles and services offered by the social media and other virtual technologies and platforms. With the aid of social media, the problems as to distance and lack of face to face instruction become more manageable through the learners' engagement in social media-based social interaction with peers.

On the other hand, the signs of low self-esteem such as shyness, choosing to be alone and low socialization skills vary from one learner to another in terms of personality and character. During modular distance learning, the levels of self-esteem of the learners may highly depend on their personality and to their coping mechanisms towards modular distance learning challenges. Moreover, self-efficacy and confidence can be also highly dependent on the extent of social and academic support systems and services received by the learners from their parents and families along the rigorous modular learning journey.

Table 8. Effects of Modular Distance Learning (MDL) on Emotional Development

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Afraid to express his or her emotions	2.10	Sometimes
Comfortable in expressing his/her ideas.	2.25	Sometimes
Feeling sad after making a low score on a test	2.09	Sometimes
Easily get irritated or annoyed by small things	2.06	Sometimes
Feel pressured and nervous about my grades all the time.	2.02	Sometimes
Enjoys answering the module	2.26	Sometimes
Feel like giving up when my school works are getting harder.	2.22	Sometimes
No interest in answering the modules.	1.97	Sometimes
Grand Mean	2.12	Sometimes

N=88 Legend: 4.50-5.00-Strongly Agree, 3.50-4.00-Agree, 2.50-3.0-Neutral, 1.50-2.00-Strongly Disagree, 0.50-1.00-Disagree

Table 8 shows the data on the parents' observations on the effects of Modular Distance Learning (MDL) on emotional development of the primary grade learners. The findings revealed that that majority of the respondents noticed that the pupil always enjoy answering the modules, with the highest mean of 2.26 or sometimes.

The results imply that the positive emotional response of the learners towards modular distance learning can be highly affected by the kind and nature of home-based learning setting and environment offered to them. A supportive and nurturing home-based learning environment can be emotionally favorable for the learners while pursuing modular learning tasks and engagements. Thus, the interest, motivation and excitement towards performing modular learning activities depend on the emotional back up or support services received by the learners from parents and family members.

On the other hand, the lowest response or observation that the pupils always feel like giving up when school works are getting harder can be explained and justified by the scenario that the kind and level of parental support, motivation and guidance significantly influenced the children's level of efficacy and resilience towards

challenging modular distance learning. Thus, the higher is the level of parental social support, the better also will be the learners' level of emotional response and motivation towards modular learning engagements.

4. Interventions Proposed to Address the Challenges Faced by the Primary Grade Learners in Modular Distance Learning

Finally, the respondents were surveyed on the potential interventions and practices which they think could help attend or address the problems encountered by their children during MDL.

Table 9 shows the data on the interventions proposed by the respondents to address the difficulties and challenge encountered by the learners along modular distance learning. The results revealed that the most preferred intervention was establishing learning hubs in the community for modular learning. This was followed by higher teacher-parent partnership and collaboration on the best practices in modular mentoring services for children and guidance and counselling services and motivational strategies for the learners and parents to help them cope positively with modular distance learning.

These findings imply that establishing learning hubs in the community for modular learning was considered as

the best intervention to address modular learning difficulties of the learners as teachers' instructional and social services for the children would be resumed or restored via these learning hubs. Amidst the pandemic crisis that resulted to massive lockdown and lack of face to face instruction, organizing learning hubs that are

approved and supported by the LGU and national government was the only way to formalize access to teachers' pedagogical and socially-oriented services for the learners.

Table 9. Suggested Interventions to Address Challenges along MDL N=88

Statement	Frequency	Rank
Home visitation	37	4
Guidance and counselling services and motivational strategies for the learners and parents to help them cope positively with modular distance learning	39	3
Establishing learning hubs in the community for modular learning	60	1
Blended learning	33	7
Higher teacher-parent partnership and collaboration on the best practices in modular mentoring services for children	41	2
Positive reinforcement and recognition	27	10
Establish relevant and engaging activities in relation to the subject content for more effective learning of students.	35	6
Provide conducive and healthy learning environment	36	5
Parent-Teacher regular monthly conference	31	8
Differentiated instructions to cater the multiple intelligences	30	9

Meanwhile, the initiatives to foster higher teacher-parent partnership and collaboration on the best practices in modular mentoring services for children can be still fostered and pursued through the adoption of more alternative communicative platforms such as social media. With this, the teachers can mentor and teach parents with mentoring strategies and practices suited for home-based learning using virtual communication. Finally, the provision of guidance and counselling services and motivational strategies for the learners and parents to help them cope positively with modular distance learning imply that even the parents also need and demand support services from school professionals to boost parental engagement and morale as new normal mentors of their children. Through guidance and counselling and motivational programs, parents can be sufficiently and properly guided, informed and supported on the best practices that they can adopt during the distance learning engagement of their children.

4. CONCLUSION

Based from the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Most of the parent-respondents were young female adults, with insufficient educational background, plain housewives and belonged to families below average level in terms of monthly income; 2. Most parents observed that their children tend to show dependence and reliance towards parental support when experiencing tiredness and difficulties in modular learning. Moreover, as observed by the parents, their children typically encounter difficulties in modular learning due to lack of face to face interaction with the teachers and the quality of home-based environment and support; 3. Most of the parent-respondents observed in terms of social development, the major effect observed was increased

time and opportunity of the children to communicate with parents, families and peers. Meanwhile, in terms of emotional development, the leading effect observed was children's excitement and motivation towards performing modular activities; 4. The respondents agreed that the modular distance learning challenges of the learners can be addressed by major interventions such as designing community-based learning settings, improved teacher-parent collaboration and empowerment of parents via guidance and counselling during pandemic.

5. RECOMMENDATION

In light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby proposed: 1. Schools should organize and establish committees to monitor and document learners' status during modular distance learning system; 2. Parents should teach and train their children on more self-learning and independent learning strategies and practices that could be integrated in modular distance learning; 3. Training programs on the best practices and support services to boost children's social-emotional development should be provided for the teachers and parents for more comprehensive knowledge sharing; 4. The proposed interventions to address modular distance learning challenges should be translated and integrated in a concrete and specific intervention plan especially for the teachers and parents as partners in supporting the modular learning endeavor of primary grade children.

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