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How Did Parents Balance It All? Work-From-Home Parents' Engagement in Academic and Support Roles During Remote Learning

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This study reports the transitional lived experiences of work-from-home parents, uncovering their roles and activities while balancing duties of working, parenting, and assisting children with remote learning. Using a phenomenological approach, a three-step coding process was applied to organize a macro-micro view of parent engagement emerging from ten semi-structured interviews with parents from the Philippines. Parents demonstrated a positive mindset amidst balancing five academic roles including organizing learning, facilitating learning, monitoring learning, motivating learning, nurturing learning, and a sixth role in supporting learning. The role of “supporting learning” was deemed most important and central to the success of other roles. Parents assumed a primary instructor role as teachers were less prepared and performed activities distinctive to student needs. Parents served as digital classroom managers who organized schedules, assisted with assignments/projects,

and participated in online chat groups. Parents repurposed living spaces and furniture for makeshift study and work areas. Parents helped children develop an online learning mindset but faced challenges motivating children to focus and finding the right mix of screentime. Parents valued children's well-being, bonding time, socialization, and life skills. This research is a novel contribution of work-from-home parent experiences and adds to the literature on remote/online education during COVID-19.

INTRODUCTION

Some reasons parents choose to enroll their children in online schools revolve around scheduling flexibility and low success at brick-and-mortar schools due to learning disabilities, lack of challenge, behavioral problems, and bullying (Beck et al., 2016; Keaton & Gilbert, 2020). However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, parents and children were not given a choice. Lockdown constraints across the globe forced schools into emergency remote online learning. In the Philippines, a nation-wide lockdown was mandated on March 13, 2020, subsequently placing added responsibility for parents to support their children while learning at home. The lockdown also forced parents to work from home when applicable. This resulted in parents having to balance multiple duties of parenting, working from home, and assisting with remote learning for their children.

The worldwide and rapid shift to emergency remote learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic poses a more urgent call for examining parents' experiences in the remote learning environment. Emergency remote learning is defined as "a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances" (Hodges et al., 2020, para. 14). Being able to further investigate these roles would allow schools to better support these parents and their changing responsibilities during COVID-19 (Keaton & Gilbert, 2020).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Multiple researchers have examined parental engagement roles in virtual, cyber/online, and blended K-12 schools (Bond, 2019; Borup et al., 2015; Borup et al., 2019; Borup & Stevens, 2016). However, COVID-19 lockdowns forced schools globally into emergency remote learning and equivocally forced work-from-home parents to shift into roles that support online learning overnight. The purpose of this study is to bridge this emergent, unexplored, and under-researched phenomenon in the

literature. This study aims to understand how Philippine parents with young children in grades 1 to 5 balanced the duties of parenting, working from home, and assisting with remote learning. Guided by the ACE framework, the following question is addressed: How did parents engage in remote learning for children during the Philippine COVID-19 lockdown?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study is guided by the Adolescent Community of Engagement (ACE) framework which suggests that when students are enrolled in online courses, parental roles and activities for supporting students are expanded, some of which include organizing, instructing, monitoring and motivating, and nurturing students (Borup et al., 2014, 2105, 2019). Parents are identified as key influencers of student engagement in distance contexts and share responsibility with teachers (Borup et al., 2014). The ACE framework briefly describes these parent engagement roles (see Literature Review section for a comprehensive description of each role):

1. Organizing: Parents provide students with an organized learning space and schedule.
2. Instructing: Parents provide instructional support, direct instruction, and helping students develop study skills.
3. Monitoring and Motivating: Parents closely monitor student performance and motivate students as needed.
4. Nurturing: Parents work to maintain caring relationships with students and facilitate interactions between students and teachers.

The authors of the ACE framework called for additional research to “refine and/or expand the ACE framework and, more importantly, identify the critical components to student success” (Borup et al., 2014, p. 123). This study explored the transitional lived experiences of work-from-home parents and their roles during the abrupt shift to remote learning during COVID-19. Although the ACE framework guided this research, the data collection and analysis were not confined to the framework’s defined roles of parent engagement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parental Engagement

Parental engagement is a critical factor influencing student achievement (Kim, 2020). Parental engagement is the active participation of parents in all aspects of their children’s social, emotional, and academic development (Castro et al., 2015). It is a multifaceted concept because it subsumes a broad range of parental beliefs, roles, behavioral patterns, attitudes, and

practices (Fan & Chen, 2001). Also, Borup (2016) and Borup et al. (2019) called for additional research on parental engagement, recognizing the importance of providing rich descriptions of parental experiences as they support children in online learning environments. Parental engagement, interactions, and the problems children face may drastically differ in an online environment (Keaton & Gilbert, 2020; Liu et al., 2010). To what extent students engage in online learning activities can be largely influenced by the parent (Borup, 2016; Borup et al., 2014). Students in an online high school experience varying degree of parental engagement: little involvement; peripheral involvement; or even daily parental involvement. The level of involvement changes due to the parents' abilities and expectations, differing student needs, and shared responsibility with teachers (Borup et al., 2015; Keaton & Gilbert, 2020).

Parent Engagement Roles in Online Learning

The following parental engagement roles were found helpful to the online learner: organizing, instructing, monitoring, motivating, and nurturing (Borup, 2016; Borup et al., 2014, 2015, 2019).

Organizing. While parents have the important responsibility to organize learning for children (Borup, 2016), this area is reported as having the lowest level of parental engagement (Keaton & Gilbert, 2020). Parents need to organize a learning schedule with and for the student to manage their workload/coursework (Borup, 2016; Curtis & Werth, 2015; Keaton & Gilbert, 2020). Parents also need to prepare learning materials and computers in advance for students (Borup et al., 2015; Curtis & Werth, 2015). For STEM high school students, parents help set up labs at home (Keaton & Gilbert, 2020). Waters and Leong (2011) recommended that parents be trained in organizing their child's time and learn how to buy books for their children.

Instructing. Parental engagement is portrayed as a partnership with the school, not only to oversee and support students' education online but also to instruct students such that they are "being like a teacher" (Curtis & Werth, 2015, p. 180). Parents assist with homework, answer content-related questions to increase understanding, review assignment/project instructions regularly, and help develop study skills (Curtis & Werth, 2015; Poggi, 2020). For children who attend online schools full time, parents often attend class with their children (Curtis & Werth, 2015). Students regard their parents as a helpful resource for learning content. In some situations, the parent is actually the first person that the students go to when they are struggling in class (Keaton & Gilbert, 2020). Some teachers find this disadvantageous with the risk of receiving incomplete or inaccurate information; teachers prefer that students seek help from them (Borup, 2016).

Monitoring. Monitoring is important to student success in the online learning environment; lack of such could result in failure (Curtis & Werth, 2015). Younger students' lack of self-regulation makes it difficult to maintain the level of consistent engagement in the online learning environment (Borup et al., 2019). Thus, parents have the role to monitor the online behavior and academic progress of students who learn online (Waters & Leong, 2011). This day-to-day oversight was found as the area with the highest level of involvement from parents (Keaton & Gilbert, 2020). Parents check grades on a regular basis, inspect assignments, monitor assignment completion, and set schedules for study time and playtime (Curtis & Werth, 2015; Keaton & Gilbert, 2020). Parents tend to increase their engagement when they recognize that their children are underperforming and devise a strategy to help the child do better (Keaton & Gilbert, 2020; Waters & Leong, 2011).

Motivating. Parents' explicit affective support in school-related activities is the foundation of parental engagement and encouragement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Parents closely monitor student performance and motivate students as needed. Parents acknowledge that motivating students is important to their success (Curtis & Werth, 2015). Waters and Leong (2011) recommended that parents be trained to incentivize and motivate their children. Similarly, Borup (2016) found that parents needed help in motivating their children to engage in learning, setting high expectations, and using a system of incentives to meet those expectations. Waters and Leong (2014) learned that parents became a learning coach for students who spend a significant amount of their day in an online setting.

Nurturing. An important parental role in an online school is to nurture aspirations and dreams for children to strive and secure a better future (Curtis & Werth, 2015; Keaton & Gilbert, 2020; Pobbi, 2020). When deciding whether online learning is best for students, parents need to consider how their relationship with their children will be impacted (Borup et al., 2019). Parents need to maintain caring relationships among children and teachers (Borup, 2016; Borup et al., 2019). Most successful online students were those who had parents communicating with the school regularly through email or calls (Curtis & Werth, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This qualitative study employs a phenomenological approach to understand the transitional experience of work-from-home parents as they balanced duties of working, parenting, and assisting their children during remote learning due to COVID-19. The key characteristic of phenomenology is "the study of the way in which members of a group or community

themselves interpret the world and life around them” (Mertens, 2015, p. 248). The phenomenological research was selected to capture lived experience of parents and thick descriptions of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Interviews

Ten Filipino parents engaged in an in-depth 60-minute semi-structured interview recorded via Zoom (see Table 1). Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data efficiently and to give participants a voice to share their experiences and opinions (Creswell, 2013). All interviews were conducted by the lead researcher, however follow up discussions occurred with two other members of the research team with documented collaborative analytical memos. Interviews were conducted in English. Institutional Review Board approval was received before the interviews were conducted. Parents were recruited through email from personal contacts based on their experience, willingness to participate, and having met the following criteria:

1. The parent’s work setting shifted to working from home due to lockdown constraints;
2. The parent had at least one child enrolled in grades 1 to 5 who had to partake in remote learning during the lockdown period; and
3. The parent was the primary support for facilitating remote learning during the lockdown period.

Participants

The ten parent participants in this study (see Table 1) were between ages 30 to 45, were of middle class (Zoleta, 2020), resided in the urban city of Metro Manila, had a stable job, had college-level or higher education attainment, and had access to Internet technology. During the lockdown, seven children engaged in asynchronous online delivery and three children engaged in bichronous delivery, blending asynchronous and synchronous online delivery (Martin et al., 2020).

Data Analysis

The lead researcher transcribed and coded the interviews using MAX-QDA. Transcripts were first read as a whole while listening to the audio, allowing the researcher to come to a holistic understanding of the context, situation, and nuanced experiences of the parent participants. A three-step coding process was applied to organize a macro-micro view of parental engagement roles and activities during remote learning (see Figure 1).

Table 1
Participant Demographics

	Amor	Hayli	Raya	Gia	Koko	Jona	Maci	Cece	Jayo	Mawi
Age	35 yrs.	38 yrs.	37 yrs.	32 yrs.	40 yrs.	35 yrs.	40 yrs.	44 yrs.	42 yrs.	40 yrs.
Parent Role	Mom	Mom	Mom	Mom	Dad	Dad	Mom	Mom	Dad	Mom
Occupation	Financial Adviser	Manager	HR Staff	Sales Manager	Instructional Designer	Management Coordinator	Instructional Designer	Education Officer	Admin. Manager	Sr. Education Specialist
Industry	Insurance	Airline	Finance	BPO	BPO	Mining	BPO	Education	Port Operations	Education
Education	Bachelor	Master	Bachelor	Some Bachelor	Bachelor	Bachelor	Bachelor	Master	Master	Master
Child Grade Level	Grade 1	Grade 4	Grade 4	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 2	Grade 4	Grade 3	Grade 1	Grade 1
Location/Region	(private school) Metro Manila (NCR)	(private school) Metro Manila (NCR)	(private school) Metro Manila (NCR)	(private school) Metro Manila (NCR)	(private school) Metro Manila (NCR)	(private school) Metro Manila (NCR)	(private school) Metro Manila (NCR)	(private school) Metro Manila (NCR)	(private school) Metro Manila (NCR)	(public school) Metro Manila (NCR)
Remote Learning Delivery	Async	Bichronous	Async	Async	Async	Bichronous	Bichronous	Async	Async	Async

In Step 1 (Micro Level), the researcher applied process coding (Saldaña, 2016) to generate a descriptive list of activities performed during remote learning. At this step, significant quotations were noted. In Step 2 (Meso Level), the researcher applied concept coding to make groups of lists of activities that fit into broader conceptual categories (Saldaña, 2016). Concept coding is a method by which the researcher “transcends the local and particular of a study to more abstract and generalizable contexts,” harmonizing data into larger concepts (Saldaña, 2016, p. 120). In Step 3 (Macro Level), the researcher aligned the categories and parent engagement roles guided by but not limited to those described in the ACE framework.



Figure 1. Three-Step Coding Process.

RESULTS

This study reports that work-from-home parents performed the following parental engagement roles while balancing duties of working, parenting, and assisting children during remote learning: (1) organizing learning, (2) facilitating learning, (3) monitoring learning, (4) motivating learning, (5) nurturing learning, and (6) supporting learning, each comprising of specific activities necessary to assist children during pandemic (Figure 2). The first five roles are distinguished as academic roles and the sixth role as a support role. A unique finding to this study was that the six parental engagement roles were not equally important. Parents placed the role of “supporting learning” as the highest priority during the pandemic such that they could not successfully carry out the five academic roles without this role. Detailed results on the six parental engagement roles and activities are explained in the next sections.



Figure 2. Parental Engagement Roles and Activities During Remote Learning.

Organizing Learning

As parents engaged in remote learning with their children, they had to organize learning schedules, learning spaces, learning content, and resources (see Table 2).

Table 2
Parent Reported Activities for Organizing Learning during Remote Learning

Category	Activities
Learning Schedules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinating a weekly or daily schedule with children • Regulating time blocks (morning, lunch, afternoon, evening) for balancing school assignments, playtime, and personal/home activities
Learning Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up a learning environment at home to help children focus • Repurposing living spaces as temporary learning spaces a few hours each day • Repurposing study tables with spare or portable furniture for a target study area • Setting up learning spaces closer or farther from the parent workspace
Learning Content and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previewing, preparing, or printing materials and assignments for children • Preparing additional activities for children to supplement the lack of content for P.E., arts, music, and home economics subjects • Selecting activities aligned to children's grade level

Learning schedules. With the sudden shift to remote learning, schools were not ready with online class schedules. All parents stepped up to coordinate a schedule around their work-from-home schedule and their children's class schedule. Parents like Koko observed that being engaged from the start of the remote learning period helped children cope with the change in learning modality. In his experience:

The first week was harder. It was different because of the change. In the second week, when the second set of assignments arrived, [his daughter] already knew [how] to do it similarly to the first week, so it was much easier.

For schools that sent assignments one week at a time, parents mapped a daily plan. For schools that sent out assignments two weeks in advance, parents paced assignments into a weekly plan. Nine of ten parents regulated schedules in time blocks, chunking the day into morning, lunch, afternoon, and evening segments. This structure helped parents allocate time blocks for school assignments, playtime, and personal/home activities. For example, the morning begun with breakfast, followed by school assignments

(about 1-3 hours), followed by lunch, then a few hours for personal activities before dinner like taking a bath, watching TV, reading books, playing with toys or mobile devices, physical/sport activities, taking naps, or helping with chores. Schedules were extremely important for developing study routines and study habits at home, and monitoring homework deadlines. Children in elementary grades could not create such structures without the guidance from parents.

Learning spaces. Children lost focus recognizing that “school and home were different.” Schools were closed and they no longer had to adhere to school rules. To help children rebuild their focus, parents simulated a “pretend classroom,” seeking an isolated, quiet, and conducive area for learning. Koko hoped that “if [his daughter] enters that space, it was really just for learning and nothing else. If it is school time, it must be school time, even if [she] is at home.” Parents also repurposed either the living room, bedroom, or dining room as a makeshift study area for a few hours each day. Koko described how he handled learning spaces at home:

The space here is limited so she doesn't really have her own [study] room. Sometimes we stay in the living room, sometimes in the bedroom. There's a foldable table she pulls out [to] start drawing, do Math activities, or read books. I work daily in the bedroom... that's where I set up my workspace.

Temporary learning spaces for children became a higher priority than temporary office spaces for parents. Parents had to make-shift study tables with spare or portable furniture. Some parents conveniently positioned their children's study corner in the same room where they work so they could easily keep an eye on them, while others preferred to set up a study corner away from their office area to maintain privacy and maintain silence for video meetings.

Learning content and resources. With the shift to remote learning, most parents believed that they gained the opportunity to select or filter what their children should (and should not) learn. This was an effect of the school's lack of preparedness to provide sufficient learning materials or a comprehensive curriculum for remote learning.

When parents felt that teachers provided sufficient daily or weekly assignments for students, almost all parents relied on these materials (e.g., readings, practice exercises, assignments, quizzes, books) and took on a “secondary role” to preview, prepare, and/or print the materials in advance for children. These parents found that materials sent through online learning portals were very helpful for their children and for them. Four parents

said they were thankful and lucky to have printers with ink at home. “We did purchase a [new] printer a year or two ago and it has been helpful for the exercises that we make him do,” described Maci. However, two parents greatly struggled. Hayli was not able to get ink before the lockdown while Koko didn’t think he needed a printer at home with a computer shop nearby. With the lockdown in place, Koko was deterred from purchasing a printer and exclaimed that he “became like a human printer,” having to redraw worksheets by hand.

However, when parents felt that the content, materials, or assignments from the teacher were insufficient, they took on a “primary role” to extend learning materials. As a result, parents had to search for activities that fit their child’s grade level. Some parents suggested additional books to read. Many parents found that physical education, arts, music, and home economics skills/subjects were lacking from the school. They supplemented these with physical activities (e.g., morning exercise routines; online yoga, Zumba, Taekwondo videos on YouTube), arts and crafts, home chores (e.g., folding laundry; watering the plants), cooking or baking.

Facilitating Learning

All parents wanted their children to succeed while learning at home. Unfortunately, parents were first-timers at serving as alternate/substitute teachers. Several admitted that they didn’t know “how to do it” or doubted if they were “doing a good job.” As remote learning delivery modes varied by school, parent activities and level of engagement for facilitating learning at home differed accordingly (see Table 3). Bichronous/synchronous delivery required parents to provide immediate/just-in-time assistance, while asynchronous delivery required from parents more responsibility and time to teach children.

Table 3
Parent Reported Activities for Facilitating Learning during Remote Learning

Category	Activities
Learning Loops (instruct-assess-feedback)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For asynchronous delivery: • Giving instructions • Administering practice or timed assessments • Providing feedback and responding to questions
Just-In-Time Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For bichronous learning: • Course assistance during Zoom classes • Course assistance during online synchronous-timed activities

Learning Loops. Parents with children in asynchronous delivery expressed frustration that they did not receive adequate instructions or guidance on “how to teach” their children. The teacher was no longer present in person to give instructions, administer assessments, respond to questions, check work, or correct mistakes; parents acquired these added responsibilities. Some parents admitted that they asked their children “how does the teacher do it at school?” This helped them facilitate a learning experience that was familiar to the child.

Parents also facilitated through “learning loops” (instruct-assess-feedback) for each subject. For each loop, parents first gave children instructions, then assessed them with a practice exercise or timed quiz, then provided feedback through corrections or revisions. Each learning loop spanned a block of 30-minutes to 1-hour; this provided independent study time for children to “keep busy” and to provide parents quiet time to focus on their job. More than half of parents struggled to administer assessments and respond to questions from children. Hayli debated on allowing her child multiple chances for exams. Gia expressed frustration that her child wasn’t trying hard enough, that “he is more relaxed and dependent” on her to provide answers. She refrained from spoon-feeding him and let him think for himself.

Just-in-Time Assistance. Parents described that asynchronous delivery afforded children and parents flexibility while bichronous delivery was more stressful and demanding, requiring just-in-time assistance to students. For parents with children engaged in bichronous delivery (Martin et al., 2020), the “learning loop” was essentially transferred to the responsibility of the teacher than the parent. Early in the lockdown, children experienced Zoom classes as hour-long subjects with breaks. Hayli described this as “the traditional way of teaching where the teacher talks and the kids listened.” After a few weeks, Zoom classes were modified to be bichronous, having shorter Zoom classes with asynchronous instruction on Google classroom coupled with synchronous-timed activities. With the change in delivery format, children now had to work independently when they were not on Zoom and submit assignments before 5 pm each day. Hayli, Jona, and Maci found this extremely stressful. Hayli’s son for example, would interrupt her for help in the middle of the work day: “I don’t understand. Explain this to me ... Come on, faster, I need to submit it in 30 minutes.” This is challenging for work-from-home parents. Parents like Hayli in turn became “just-in-time course assistants” to support children’s immediate needs as they worked on synchronous-timed activities.

Monitoring Learning

As the lockdown prolonged, parents began to monitor learning progress and conjure reinforcements for distracted or struggling students (see Table 4).

Table 4
Parent Reported Activities for Monitoring Learning during Remote Learning

Category	Activities
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseeing the start of school work, its progress, and its completion • Checking if assignments are correct and submitted on time • Allocating time to help children understand difficult concepts or tasks • Allowing extra time to revise/redo mistakes or low-quality outputs
Reinforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping children manage workload • Breaking large assignments into chunks • Allowing children to make choices on the order of activities and time for taking breaks

Progress. Throughout the lockdown, parents had to constantly monitor the progress of schoolwork. They concerned themselves with assignments being complete, correct, and submitted on time. Some parents allocated more time to help children understand difficult concepts or tasks. For example, Koko, Raya, and Maci spent more time helping with Filipino, Math, and Social Studies subjects. Other parents extended time to revise/redo mistakes or low-quality outputs before submitting assignments online.

It was observed that parents with children in higher grade levels required less monitoring compared to parents with children in lower grade levels. Raya and Maci stood out as parents of children in 4th grade who claimed their children “can do it on [their] own,” “know [their] class schedule,” and “[can] take a bath [on their own].” They found their children to be somewhat independent, but “requiring a nudge from time to time,” as compared to another parent, Amor who had to closely monitor her first-grader, constantly losing focus and making mistakes.

Reinforcement. Parents who believed their children were independent and capable experienced less challenges compared to parents who recognized learning gaps in their children. Raya shared, “to be honest, this is really new to me. I am fortunate that my daughter is smart and I didn’t need to extend too much effort on the teaching side. She can understand and she can follow.” Alternatively, parents who observed learning gaps conjured multiple reinforcement strategies to meet the needs of their children such as helping children manage workload and breaking large assignments into chunks.

Raya sensed her daughter “got overwhelmed” seeing the long list of tasks online in all her subjects. To manage her daughter’s responsiveness to workload, she creatively scheduled her learning in 25-minute chunks (i.e., Pomodoro technique) “so [her daughter] wouldn’t see all of it, but [just] give her a glimpse of [today and tomorrow].” Some parents disliked “forcing” their children to study and allowed them to choose the order of school activities and when to take breaks.

Motivating Learning

Parents had to motivate students by helping children manage the shift to rapid online learning, manage distractions, and finding the right mix of screentime for play and schoolwork (see Table 5).

Table 5
Parent Reported Activities for Motivating Learning during Remote Learning

Category	Activities
Online Learning Mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining the rapid shift to emergency remote learning • Helping children manage the transitions to learning at home
Distractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping children find balance playtime and school work • Minimizing distractions from home, family members, toys, games, non-conductive living/learning spaces
Screentime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting hours of screentime (tablets, cellphones, or laptops) for young children • Using screentime as a reward and threat to encourage children to focus

Online Learning Mindset. Most parents recognized that children lacked the online learning mindset and they had a large role in developing this mindset during remote learning. This included trying to make sense of the lockdown constraints. Parents believed that explaining the rapid shift to remote learning to children would motivate children. While most parents attempted to set up a “pretend” classroom space and schedule, it was not enough for younger children. “There needed to be a talk about what was going on. You can’t just ask him to sit down and pretend that you are in school,” Maci stated. Similarly, Hayli believed it was important for children to continue learning during the lockdown, but schools should not provide a “very rigid framework considering the mental pressure and emotional stress.” It was pertinent to explain to children the transitions to learning at home such as (1) why there were changes, (2) why everyone had to stay home, and (3) how everyone at home and school would be affected by the change.

Distractions. A major challenge parents faced was helping children find balance between playtime and school work. Children struggled to focus on online assignments knowing their toys and gadgets were within reach. Gwen explained “I feel [my child] isn’t as focused as when he was at school.” Amor recognized the same behavior and had to be strict to help her son focus:

It’s a different environment for them. They get easily distracted [at home]. If I don’t put him in a corner... he will just run around, get some books, or get some Legos. I [must] have a certain area where he will sit down and listen to what I’m supposed to say.

Most parents shared that children were easily bored at home and preferred to play. With a strict lockdown in place, children could not leave the house and toys and gadgets were their only options. Multiple parents also believed that children were struggling to focus because lesson instructions were not organized well or not challenging enough. One parent suggested that children could be more independent if lessons were project-based, where students could spend one to two weeks working on a larger task.

Additional distractions included the hot and humid temperatures, city noise, tight living spaces, and often, three family generations living together. Half of parents exclaimed that their children (and themselves) were easily distracted by the “comfort of the home,” and by family members like in-laws or siblings hanging around. Daytime temperatures were not conducive to work or study in the living room, which was usually not air-conditioned. One parent shifted her child’s study area to the bedroom to complete the assignments in a quieter, cooler space due to the heat and mosquitos.

Screentime. Seven of the ten parents shared the concern of limiting or regulating the amount of “screentime” for young children, particularly distinguishing the use of gadgets for playtime vs. schoolwork. For Amor with a child in first grade, printing out assignments was most helpful so that he could “sit down with him to answer” and “have him focus.” Jayo had not allowed their son any gadgets prior to the pandemic and worried it would be a distraction at his age. Similarly, Koko and his wife were hesitant, stating “we don’t want her ... to be exposed to *these things* [emphasis added] at an early age.” With remote learning becoming the new normal, Mawi admitted she felt “guilty that [they] really spend a lot of time on-screen.”

Evidently, screentime became a double-edged sword as both a reward and a threat. Parents used varied strategies to manage screentime. Amor increased her son’s attention to schoolwork with a reward of extra episodes of Paw Patrol. On the contrary, Gia threatened her son that he could not use his iPad un-

til “he finishes everything.” Hayli compromised by deciding to separate devices for play from devices for school as a compromise; the laptop was used for school work, while the tablet was reserved for games.

Nurturing Learning

Most parents struggled to balance multiple responsibilities of work, school, and home but learned to nurture personal and family well-being, bonding time with children, socialization, and development of life skills while at home (see Table 6).

Table 6
Parent Reported Activities for Nurturing Learning during Remote Learning

Category	Activities
Personal and Family Well-Being	Reducing academic pressure on children with flexible timelines Explaining frustrations or impatient reactions during instruction Encouraging breaks and slowing down
Bonding Time	Spending more time with children Getting to know their children better Learning more about what happens in school
Socialization	Re-establishing social interactions with classmates via virtual conferencing Connecting with parents through social media or online chat groups Prioritizing learning and playing with siblings
Life Skills	Encouraging children to “unplug” from gadgets Encouraging children to develop practical life skills Teaching children to develop hobbies

Personal and Family Well-Being. As the lockdown prolonged, tensions and stress grew stronger. Some teachers were strict and had a rigid schedule of assignments. Hayli captured her experience during the first week:

I was determined to meet all the deadlines, to really accomplish everything... that really stressed me out. I was always yelling. I hated my job. I wanted to quit my job to focus on [his] school. I wanted to transfer him to another school. I wanted to talk [the teachers] to just fail him.

Hayli described that she and her son were “panicky,” resulting in daily tug-of-war conversations on backlog school assignments. They developed “a love-hate relationship when it comes to learning.” Parents also became frustrated and impatient when children complained about boredom. They interrupted work meetings, refused to follow schedules, and nagged for extra help with school work. Schedules became harder to follow as children negotiated more time for play. Rigid schedules of assignments were detrimental to family well-being. Other parents shared in the struggle of balancing time and attention. Cece stated, “When they demand assistance or guidance ... I have to spend time with them.” Mawi found herself shouting at her children more. She claimed, “cabin fever is real... we were at each other’s necks.”

In order to maintain positive well-being at home, parents, and teachers had to begin “letting some things go.” Parents and teachers both reduced the pressures of strict timelines and deadlines and recognized the need to be flexible, patient, take breaks, and slow down. Gia was thankful for flexibility from teachers to extend [deadlines] until the end of the month. “That gave me ample time to review ... and prepare myself.” Raya shared, “I am trying to be kind to myself and not pressure myself ... I also don’t pressure my daughter too much...” Gia was honest to explain her mixed emotions:

It’s a combination of being nice and [acting] mad to get his attention. But I [make sure] he knows he is safe, that I am listening to him, and that I am not mad if he makes a mistake ... I shouldn’t let him feel that I’m impatient ... because he would feel uncomfortable and he wouldn’t absorb the lesson.

It was evident that over time, tensions were managed. Positive health and well-being within the household became a priority over academic work and office work.

Bonding Time. Amidst the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, all parents found the experience of emergency remote learning and the lockdown extremely positive as it promoted “bonding time,” “quality time” with the family, and greater involvement in their children’s learning. “Study time is actually bonding time for us both,” shared Raya. Parents found it a “very enjoyable and fun experience” to spend more time with their children. Cece’s moment with her son struck her tremendously:

It is only now that I’m hearing my son say that “he likes me” because we spend a lot of time together. I am happy also that [he] is getting to know [his] father better... in the past, it was only with the nannies that they [sing and play].

Parents further described that the lockdown allowed them to get to know their children better from study habits, eating habits, and what they like to play. Koko was impressed that his daughter was “for some reason, so interested in Science and Japanese Anime.” Some parents were surprised that it was only during the pandemic and remote learning that learned more about what happens in school. Cece learned “there are a lot of new techniques to make children understand the concepts” and perceived that the “teaching and learning strategies now are [much better] ... unlike before, I remember myself doing flashcards and memorizing tables.” Work from home opportunities helped Mommies Cece, Gia, and Maui increase their presence in raising their children. Maui believed that while she had “more responsibility” to teach her child, “it was an opportunity to be more involved as a parent.” Cece had been debating between becoming a stay-at-home mom or a working mom for years and felt rewarded by the lockdown. She believed that “being with [children] and learning the little things, [their quirks], were very rewarding.”

Jona and Maci “felt blessed” for the opportunity to work from home as it allowed them “be at home longer” with children and spouses. “The relationship with my kids [and the lockdown] has been a blessing. It’s been really good for us,” explained Jona. Maci shared her story and testament of her faith in God:

I have [work] to finish. [But] there is no food on the table yet. There’s your child bugging you and sometimes the husband is [driving me crazy]. But it makes us appreciate our presence even more ... We are blessed. We are safe. We are okay. We will go through this together and we will pull through. We’ve become closer to faith... We just let it go and let God handle it. We just pray and pray and pray.

While the lockdown afforded parents greater bonding time, involvement, and presence at home during the lockdown, some parents attributed their ability to remain nurturing and overcoming challenges because of their faith in God, feeling blessed to receive God’s help or answered prayers during a panic-struck period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Socialization. Seven of ten parents valued re-establishing social interactions with classmates and other parents during the lockdown. With online remote learning being primarily asynchronous delivery, children did not have a chance to “be with friends” like when they attended regular school. Parents felt that children were “just at home” and not in a real school environment. Amor was concerned about socialization and how to make friends,

that “you cannot have that experience at home [when] you are just interacting with your mom or dad.” Gia’s first grader did not have a lot of playmates so she decided to “become his friend” to ensure “he still grows up to be a normal kid.”

Cece, Jayo, Gia, and Koko noted the importance of socialization from school bus rides and after-school play with neighborhood children. Due to the lockdown, these types of social interactions were greatly reduced. Gia, Cece, and Koko found solace that at least their children had siblings to socialize with. Cece strategized to have her older child read or play with the younger child while she worked. Older children communicated using asynchronous tools. For example, Raya’s fourth grade child managed group chats with classmates on Facebook Messenger. But, parents with young children in Grades 1 and 2 took charge to schedule Zoom meet-ups among classmates, not for academics, but for casual talks and playing with games or toys. Parents would be present on these Zoom calls, sharing suggestions on how they were dealing with the situation.

Life Skills. More than half of the parents interviewed believed that it was their obligation or responsibility as parents to “be at the front lines,” “to filter what is good for the child,” and “to shape the knowledge” of their children. As much as possible, parents of young children in between grades 1 to 5 preferred to minimize screentime/gadgets and think of alternate activities to keep children busy indoors. For example, Jona asked his children to clear up old toys and books for a garage sale event after the pandemic. Gia, Maci, Jona, and Cece involved children in simple cooking processes like pounding garlic, molding burgers, rolling rice flour balls, or simple food preparation like pizza, quesadillas, salsa, brownies, pancakes, and hummus. “Our nannies left us to join their own families so I have to do all the cooking and all the disinfecting of the house,” explained Cece. Maci asked her son to help water the plants to cool down the summer heat. Jona, a martial arts instructor married to a designer, claimed that:

There are a lot of [practical life skills] that they don’t teach in school. We’ve been happy because we’ve been able to teach them more practical things... We get to give them actual life lessons. I teach them martial arts ... football ... car parts. I actually had my boy change the wheels for me. We have been bringing them into the kitchen too.

While involving the children in cleaning or cooking was helpful, parents took advantage of the time they had to transform pandemic home experiences into informal learning experiences that developed children’s behavior and life skills.

Supporting Learning

Support refers to the activities or needs of parents that help set the stage for learning. Unique to our study, we found that parents coped with the transition to remote learning by placing a priority on the role of “supporting learning” (see Table 7). Essentially, the role of supporting learning became the central glue or foundation to the success of all other parental engagement roles.

Table 7
Parent Reported Activities for Supporting Learning during Remote Learning

Category	Activities
Online Parent Chat Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating and connecting with parents, teachers, and the school • Disseminating announcements from the teacher • Sharing learning materials and worksheets, reviewers, lockdown activity ideas/tips • Disseminating information on official school announcements • Asking questions • Seeking help for homework • Raising concerns • Casual chats
Digital Classroom Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting children to navigate or access web URLs, learning systems, educational portals, and mobile apps • Assisting children with peripheral devices such as headphones, webcams, and microphones • Assisting children with transferring files sent through mobile apps into the computer • Assisting children to download, upload, scan, print, and submit online assignments • Assisting children with performance, art, or digital video projects

Online Parent Chat Groups. The occurrence of online chat groups was not a unique circumstance due to the pandemic. Parents shared these were organized pre-pandemic by parent leaders as a communication tool with other parents, teachers, and the school. But there was an observed increase in the frequency and amount of participation activity in online parent chat groups during the lockdown, particularly through Viber and Facebook Messenger. According to parents, online chat groups were helpful to: (1) disseminate announcements from the teacher; (2) share learning materials/worksheets, reviewers, lockdown activity ideas or tips; (3) disseminate information on official school announcements; (4) ask questions; (5) seek help for homework; (6) raise concerns; and for (7) casual chats. Koko summarizes that “It was for everything. You will know if there is a sports fest, a school play ... or a birthday party tomorrow.”

Jona and Gia felt that online chat groups forged a connected parent community “more than ever before.” Jayo found chat groups as a valuable social resource to “share stories.” Similarly, Maci valued when other parents shared their experiences and challenges during the lockdown like how children were constantly hungry, snacking, bored, watching Netflix, or browsing TikTok. Gia was the only parent who did not pay much attention to chat groups because she was overwhelmed with the amount of back-reading buried in piles of messages. But she was thankful to another parent who reached out to catch her up; through this experience, she saw the value of the online chat community. Some daddies felt shy to participate in chat groups because there were often more mommies participating. Two of three male parents admitted that it was their wives who used the chat groups more than they did for this reason.

Digital Classroom Management. Parents served as “digital classroom managers” who had to monitor and respond to every online learning activity on behalf of their children. They had to perform digital literacy skills needed for online learning such as downloading and uploading files, printing files, scanning files, submitting assignments and exams, emailing files, video playback on either a laptop or tablet, communicating with classmates and teachers, and checking announcements and deadlines. It was unreasonable to expect that all children in grades 1 to 5 were proficient in these digital literacy skills. Parents also felt they were incapable at first and they had to quickly self-learn digital literacy skills to support their children during online remote learning.

Through the lockdown, parents became proficient in helping children access or navigate digital learning materials, learning portals/systems, and communication tools. Remote learning tools varied by school but one practice that commonly surfaced was that assignments were administered online—either through the school website, online learning portals (e.g., Learn360, Aralinks, Scholastic, Genyo, Google Classroom), email, or instant messaging tools (e.g., Viber, Facebook Messenger). Assignments ranged from readings, practice activities, tests, final exams, art projects, video projects, or performance projects (e.g., singing, dancing).

Students who engaged in bichronous or synchronous delivery needed help with peripheral devices such as headphones, webcams, microphones. Students who engaged in asynchronous delivery needed help accessing web URLs and logging into mobile apps. Parents tediously helped transfer files sent through mobile apps like Viber or Facebook Messenger into the computer for larger viewing or printing. For Amor with a first grader, every assignment or exam was written by hand. She had to scan or take a photo, then email it to the teacher. Hayli also found her child’s teacher with unreasonable expectations, expecting children (and their parents) to take photos of assignments and follow a strict filename nomenclature.

Art and video projects entailed more time, planning, and oversight from parents than written assignments. Art projects required parents to buy or source materials, then provide guidance on the conceptualization and execution. Performance videos required parents to spend time practicing,

recording, and uploading files. Some examples of projects assigned were a video tour around the house (Grade 1 project), a video performing a science experiment video (Grade 2 project), or a video of a memorized song (Grade 1 project). Koko shared, “I remember we had four or five takes before we got something that was suitable for sending back to the teacher.”

DISCUSSION

Comparison with Prior Research on Parent Engagement using the ACE Framework

Parental Engagement Roles. Borup et al. (2015) identified the following parent engagement roles in the ACE framework: nurturing relationships and interactions, advising and mentoring, organizing, monitoring and motivating student engagement, and instructing. This study showed that work-from-home parents demonstrated similar roles except for advising and mentoring (see Figure 3). However, this study also had the unique addition of the “supporting learning” role, which parents prioritized as most important among the six roles. In this role, parents supported each other through on-line chat community groups and provided technology support to children by serving as “digital classroom managers” for online assignments and digital projects. The researchers agree with Borup et al.’s (2014) claim that some types of parent engagement are more important than others as in this study, parents placed the role of “supporting learning” central to the success of all other parental engagement roles (see Figure 2).

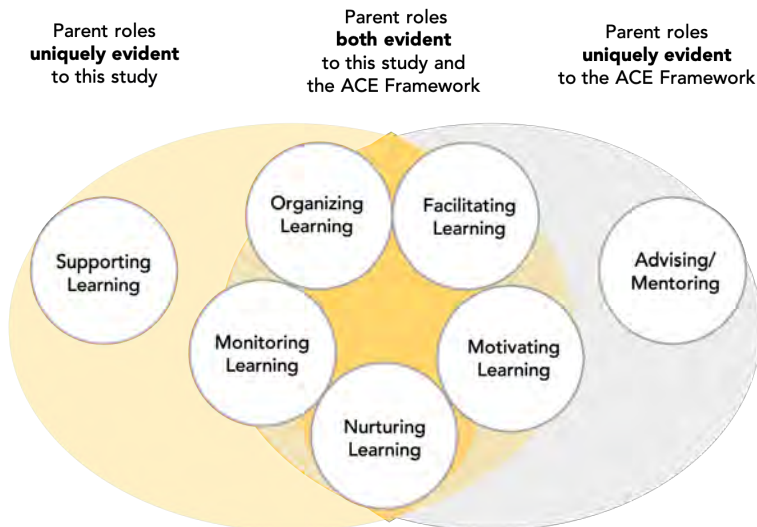


Figure 3. Comparative Illustration of Parent Engagement Roles in Prior and Current Research.

Parental Engagement Activities. Each parental role can be better understood by examining the macro, meso, and micro level activities performed by parents with their children. This study found that the activities that parents performed were distinctive and unique during the pandemic period.

For the role on organizing learning, findings overlapped with the indicators for learning spaces and schedules in Borup's (2015) study but resulted in an additional indicator on organizing learning content and resources. The pressing need for parents to prepare additional learning content and resources was an effect of the lack of preparedness of Philippine teachers and schools to provide sufficient online learning resources in the first three months of the lockdown. Note that interviews took place early in the lockdown and at this time there were no policies or guidance provided by the Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) for school closures until June 2020 (see DepEd, n.d.). Most parents believed this offered them the opportunity to select or filter what their children should (or should not) learn at their grade level. In doing so, parents prepared additional activities for children to supplement (1) the lack of content for physical education, arts, music, and home economics subjects; and (2) the lack of content on practical life skills.

For the role of facilitating learning, parents who assisted children in the asynchronous modality spent more time teaching children, applying a "learning loop," cycling through three strategies: (1) giving instructions, (2) administering practice, and (3) providing feedback and responding to questions. Parents with children in the bichronous modality had the additional responsibility to be available just-in-time to help children troubleshoot technology and complete synchronously-timed activities. There were similarities found in the activities associated with the instructional role in Borup's studies particularly on "being there" just-in-time for questions or direct instruction. However, this study identified unique granular differences in facilitation strategies dependent on the delivery mode students were situated in (i.e., asynchronous, bichronous, synchronous) during remote learning.

For the role of monitoring and motivating learning, findings relating to monitoring progress and providing reinforcement overlapped with the indicators in Borup's studies except for the indicators on establishing high expectations, modeling and volunteering. But unique to the circumstance of parents and students in transition to remote learning was to further motivate children to develop an online learning mindset, assist in reducing distractions, and limit screen time. For families engaging with online learning the first time, there was a concern of limiting or regulating the amount of screentime for young children. This was consistent with findings from a

study in Hong Kong where 6702 parents of kindergarten and primary school students reported dissatisfaction with high usage of digital devices and screentime during COVID-19, hoping for more interactive learning (Lau & Lee, 2020). With the urgent shift to remote learning, home laptops and tablets served both as a device for learning and a device for play. Screentime became a double-edged sword, used as both a reward and a threat to ensure students complete school work.

For nurturing learning, Borup's research indicators focused on communication and relationships whereas this study found emergent indicators on personal and family well-being, bonding time, socialization through virtual conferencing, and life skills--all of which were critical due to the isolation and social distancing during the pandemic. As the lockdown prolonged, parents and teachers had to reduce academic pressures of strict timelines and offer flexibility with assignments. Parents valued the work-from-home opportunity to spend more time with children and get to know them better. Parents took advantage of the lockdown to pass on personal hobbies and practical life skills to children while stuck at home, with the premise that these skills were not taught in school but would be deemed useful for their future.

In Borup's study (2016), teachers believed that overly parents could be an obstacle to students. This was not the case in this study. Parents had no choice but to be overly engaged, and in fact, be supportive and understanding of the schools' and teachers' lack of readiness for online delivery. From teachers' perceptions (Borup, 2016), parents reached out to them to ask for guidance on organizing learning, however, the parents in the Philippines assumed the primary role and stepped up due to low assistance from teachers. But parents still believe that "they were not experts" in the subject matter and depended on teachers for checking student work, providing feedback, and ensuring students are meeting standards.

Comparison with COVID-19 Studies on Parent Engagement

In a survey-based study of K-12 parents in the United States (Garbe et al., 2020), parents reported challenges with balancing responsibilities, motivating children, accessibility, and defining learning outcomes during remote learning. The same study showed that 87% of parents had sufficient or more than sufficient resources for remote learning and 82% of parents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the support received from their child's school. Philippine parents' experiences are congruent with U.S. parent experiences on balancing responsibilities and motivating the children, however, findings relating to resource availability, support received from schools, accessibility and learning outcomes differed.

Literature describing parents' experiences from South-East Asian countries like Indonesia and Hong Kong also revealed common experiences with parents in this study. A study from Indonesia led by Novianti and Garzia (2020) reported that parents with first and second-grade students had less support from schools and had to provide the learning facilities at home, supervise children's learning activities and study time, reinforce children's learning difficulties, and accompany children as they learn. Similarly, in Hongkong, Lau and Lee (2020) found that children had difficulties with distance learning due to lack of interests, home environment limitations, and not being able to learn independently.

While the findings from this study share commonalities with the experiences of parents in multiple regions such as the United States and South-East Asia, there are granular differences in the lived experiences of parent populations due to the following contextual factors. First, policies, standards, or regulations from the government or school sectors may have become available at different stages of the pandemic; some parent populations may have received guidance earlier than others. Second, it was evident that parents experienced shifting curricular requirements and assessment standards through the remote learning period. Third, the readiness of schools and teachers to support remote learning delivery varied resulting in multiple delivery modes (asynchronous, bichronous, synchronous) and channels (learning portals, LMSs, mobile apps, web links, online chat groups). Fourth, this study showed that children had varied online learning mindsets, some adapting better than others to distractions at home. Lastly, parents demonstrated varied strategies to balance duties parenting, working from home, and assisting children with remote learning.

Positive Influences of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Parental Engagement

How parents view their role in their children's education is crucial. In this study, more than half of parents believed that it was their obligation or responsibility to assist children, "be at the front lines," "to filter what is good for the child," and "to shape the knowledge" of their children amidst the pandemic. Parents demonstrated a very positive outlook and this manifested with an increase in parental engagement in their children's learning. The lockdown and remote learning period promoted bonding and quality time with family. These beliefs are key factors towards increasing parental engagement. Similar findings by Hornby and Lafaele (2011) inform that when parents believe that the manner in which they raise their children has an impact on their child's future, they are much more likely to be positive about parental engagement in school.

This then begs the question - why were parents so positive even amidst experiencing remote learning challenges and uncertainty? One key factor is that there was a lockdown. Being forced to stay home afforded the unique opportunity for parents to be engaged in their children's day to day activities and routines more than ever before. Several parents happily admitted that it was only during the shift to remote learning that they discovered what their children were learning in school. The online modality was also reassuring for parents who were not willing to go back to work or send their children back to school because of the high number of COVID-19 cases in the country.

A second factor to consider is the positive mindset of parents towards distance learning. A Philippine Department of Education survey (DepEd, 2020) reports that 59% of parents/guardians were the most open to distance learning, followed by school personnel (41%), and learners being the least open (35%). With a positive mindset towards distance learning, parents have the opportunity to cultivate an e-learning culture alongside other stakeholder groups including members of the family/household, students, parent peers, teachers, schools, communities, and government sectors (Espiritu & Budhrani, 2019).

Implications for Practice and Policy

Our study offers important implications for the various stakeholders who share in the responsibility of being accountable for student achievement, success, and well-being during remote or online learning. The effect of the pandemic has resulted in a new generation of students who expect a technology-enabled and technology-integrated education system that can support "smart learning" environments, technologies and pedagogies (Budhrani et al., 2018). Teachers need to draw from "smart pedagogy" frameworks (Budhrani et al., 2018), online engagement strategies (Martin & Bolliger, 2018), and online teaching practices (Martin et al., 2019) to effectively support online learning experiences. Government agencies will have to lead the development or updating of standards, policies, and regulations for country-wide implementation of remote/online learning (Espiritu & Budhrani, 2019). Schools might help parents by providing a comprehensive orientation of curricular requirements, assessment standards, and facilitation methods fitting to the remote learning modality students will engage in. Parent leaders or community groups should organize professional development workshops for parents on balancing multiple responsibilities of work, home, and remote learning.

This study cannot be generalized to all parents from the Philippines. The sample size was small and mainly relied on work-from-home parent experiences during early months of the COVID-19 lockdown. The researchers also acknowledge the potential for skewed findings given that parent participants were from a narrow socio-economic band situated within a metropolitan city with access to Internet and computing devices. The sample may also be especially well-positioned to support children learning at home given their age ranges and that 50% of participants are in human services occupations. There are also a few methodological limitations to this study. As this study was conducted in response to the quick transition to remote learning, participants were identified based on a convenient sample. There was insufficient time to perform member-checking.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The literature on parental engagement roles and activities during the pandemic is scant. This study presents a novel value from an international and developing country perspective and adds to the body of knowledge surrounding online education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The changing roles of parents through the COVID-19 pandemic is a relatively new phenomenon and is not yet well-defined. Qualitative efforts are useful to provide rich descriptions of parent experiences and insights to researchers interested in designing large-scale quantitative research. Researchers may apply the three-step process (see Figure 1) applied in this study to organize, analyze, present, and interpret findings in future qualitative studies.

Although a convenience sample was utilized for this study, including a wider scope of the sample or diverse populations through purposeful sampling is recommended. It is worth exploring parental engagement academic and support roles further delineating by student needs, demographics, grade level, socio-economic status, geographical location, or delivery mode (i.e., asynchronous, bichronous, synchronous). In this study, majority experienced remote learning through asynchronous online delivery; a narrower focus on bichronous/synchronous online delivery may be of interest in future studies. Additional research may explore how different types of family dynamics (e.g., single parents, foster parents, student parents, parents of students with disabilities) may factor into student and parent online learning experiences (Bergerton, 2021; Cruse, Contreras-Mendez, & Holtzman, 2020; Rice et al., 2019).

The findings of this study expand on the existing literature, not only strengthening the ACE framework, but also approves its applicability in settings other than the United States. Further research is needed to explore

parental roles, activities, interactions, levels of engagement, and impact of engagement alongside other stakeholder groups including members of the family/household, parent peers, students, teachers, schools, communities, and government sectors. These stakeholders provide a more complete examination of the support communities (Borup et al., 2020) that were prevalent during the transition to remote learning.

Lastly, roles, activities, and expectations from parents as alternate/substitute teachers in supporting learning will continue to emerge or evolve. Research on parental engagement peri- and post-COVID will need to continue as online delivery modalities and learning formats in the “new normal” become “normal.”

CONCLUSION

This research explored Philippine parents’ lived experiences to uncover their roles and activities performed during the COVID-19 pandemic as they balance duties parenting, working from home, and assisting children with remote learning. During the transition to remote learning results, results indicate that parents assumed a primary role in the capacity of alternate/substitute teachers to assist children. Albeit first-timers, parents performed five academic roles including organizing learning, facilitating learning, monitoring learning, motivating learning, nurturing learning, and a sixth role in supporting learning. The role of “supporting learning” was deemed most important and central to the success of other roles. Parents assumed a primary instructor role when teachers were less prepared and performed activities distinctive to their children’s needs during the pandemic.

Parents have the potential to be a driver of online education in the Philippines. Based on the results of the study, parents manifest a positive mindset for being engaged and involved in their children’s education, especially in unprecedented times when schools were no longer a safe place, nor the best option. They believed it was their obligation or responsibility to teach children, even amidst balancing multiple home and job responsibilities. If parents were not working from home, they would not have gained the same opportunity to be as engaged in their children’s learning. Essentially, the COVID-19 lockdown forged a reset button for parental engagement.

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