THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF LEARNERS FROM BROKEN HOME WITH INSIGNIFICANT PROGRESS AMIDST PANDEMIC: BASIS IN DESIGNING A REMEDIATION PLAN

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ABSTRACT

The closure of Philippine schools has greatly affected the quality of instruction and learning during the pandemic. This study aimed to delve into the lived experiences of learners with insignificant progress from broken homes during the implementation of distance learning modalities. To materialize such a purpose, the researchers employed the phenomenological method of study. Fourteen student participants from broken homes were purposively selected to participate in an in-depth interview. The themes were identified using the NVIVO Application. The result shows that these groups of learners encountered several challenges such as slow internet connection, unfinished learning tasks, and deafening noise. These students have also made some adjustments which include doing household chores, changes in sleeping patterns, and seeking help from peers. More so, as a support to their children, the parents/homes assist such as financial and material support. It is also reported that parents/guardians give advice and help their children in accomplishing learning tasks. In conclusion, institutional policies from the government needs to strengthen the collaboration among education stakeholders to further assist these groups of learners. Subsequently, proposed remediation plan was made.

Keywords: distance learning, learners with insignificant progress, broken homes, remediation plan

INTRODUCTION

Education is a basic human right. Every child, regardless of background, race, and social status has the right to receive basic education.

However, the advent of the pandemic and the implementation of distance learning has resulted in a wider gap among students from different walks of life. In a report published by UNESCO the closure of schools across the world affected about 90 percent of school children. One significant characteristic of school closures is that students do not receive the same amount of support from their teachers as compared in the traditional face-to-face classroom. Likewise, experts have argued that the closure of schools may lead to intensified educational inequalities between children from different socioeconomic backgrounds and other factors (Martineau et al., 2020). Having said that, there are different types of education inequalities that could emerge due to school closure. First, is inequality among students coming from different socio-economic backgrounds. Students from privileged households have the means to connect to the internet or own a gadget while those from underprivileged households might not have the same opportunity. Second, is inequality among the high and low-achieving students. Although self-paced learning may be viable for high achieving students it may not be the case for low achieving students because it would require a substantial amount of self-regulated learning (Grewenig, et al., 2020). Setyowati et al., (2020) exclaimed that low

achieving students have more difficulty in comprehending and generating ideas compared to their high achiever counterparts. Third, inequality between the students coming from broken and intact homes. Broken homes, as for Omoruyi (2014), is one that is not structurally intact due to the divorce, separation, death of the parent, and illegitimacy of a child.

Unlike students coming from intact households who both have parents to assist their distance learning, students from broken homes might not have that same privilege. Hence, those students coming from broken homes may be one of those who are in a difficult situation under distance learning because the assistance of the parents might be limited or non-existing at present among many other factors. Lanozo et al., (2021) found out that students from broken homes are seriously challenged by financial, emotional, social, and behavioral problems that contribute to their poor academic performance. In addition, they added that these students are inattentive. Their parents seldom provide the time, care, and financial support for their children's daily needs and academic fees. However, despite these challenges these students cope by being independent in doing their schoolwork, household chores, and taking care of younger siblings. They also maintain their optimism and the motivation to strive harder to earn their college degree and land a job to support their family.

Similarly, Abrantes and Casinillo (2020) clarified that there is no significant difference between the academic performance of students from single-parent homes and two-parent homes. They further reiterated that problems encountered by learners from single-parent homes do not in any way affect their studies and learning attitudes. They also found out that there is a high relationship between problems encountered by the students and their academic performance. This suggests that the students look at their problems as a motivation to strive harder in their studies to become successful in the future. This somehow proves that despite having a problem the students are still performing high academically.

In connection, Aktar (2013) elucidated that children from broken homes are vulnerable and they need special care for their mental, psychological and physical development. Likewise, they also go through an identity crisis which leads to frustration that often results in their deviant behaviors. In the same manner, Felisilda and Torreon (2020) explicated that the attitude and behavior of the learners from broken homes affect their academic success. They stressed the importance of designing an action plan to help learners from broken homes to achieve academic success. They also encourage the schools to take initiatives to assist these students by conducting peer facilitating groups, teambuilding activities, and symposiums as an intervention program.

On the same note, Omuruyi (2014) emphasizes that secondary schools should have guidance services with a competent counselor to counsel students from broken homes and those students coming from challenging backgrounds. More so, he also encouraged school administrators to consider putting up the group and individual counseling for students from challenging homes to develop their positive self-concept and assist them in their academic achievement. Similarly, Nwamadi (2018) also highlighted the importance of employing counselors to provide the necessary counseling services to the learners from broken homes. All these researches seem to compliment the findings of Awoniyi (2019) that schools should be well-equipped counselors should be hired to provide emotional support for students coming from broken homes.

Meanwhile, the Philippines' Department of Education (DepEd), as part of its commitment to ensuring that the teaching and learning process will continue during pandemic has adopted the basic education learning continuity plan. The learning continuity plan includes the mitigation plan of the department such as the streamlining of the learning competencies, adoption of several learning modalities, and alignment of learning resources among others. At the same time, DepEd also recognizes the imperative role of parents and the home in providing guidance and support to their children to succeed in the current learning modalities.

However, the learning continuity plan of DepEd only addresses the need to ensure that the education of the students will continue despite the pandemic but the plan and strategy on how to

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safeguard that the implementation of distance learning will become more inclusive to all types of learners still lies on the hands of the teachers and the homes. As instructional leaders in the learning area, the researchers have the utmost duty to ensure that all the learners will be given appropriate intervention so that they will not be left behind.

This study differs compared to other research because this paper explores the lived experiences of learners from broken homes with insignificant progress in their academic performance during the implementation of distance learning. The shared experiences and narratives shared by the participants served as a springboard in designing a remediation plan for learners with poor academic performance due to non-compliance and lack of engagement. The proposed remediation plan is a tool for the teachers and parents to provide the necessary intervention for students experiencing academic difficulty under distance learning modalities. This in turn helps the school achieve zero failure rate or at least curtail the percentage of students-at-risks failing at the end of the school year.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study explores the lived experiences of learners from broken homes with insignificant progress in Social Studies during the implementation of distance learning modalities. More specifically, it seeks to:

1. Identify challenges encountered by learners with insignificant progress coming from broken homes in their academic studies during the implementation of distance learning.
2. Determine how the learners with insignificant progress coming from broken homes adjust or cope with their academic studies during the implementation of distance learning.
3. Find out the interventions provided by parents and/or guardians to help their children in their studies during the implementation of distance learning.
4. Design a remediation plan that may be used for learners with insignificant progress

and low achieving students to curtail the percentage of students at-risk of failing.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers utilized phenomenological research design to materialize the purpose of this study. Phenomenological research design investigates various reactions or perceptions to a particular phenomenon. Under this method, the researcher hopes to gain some insight into the world of his or her participants to describe their perceptions and reactions (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009). Through this method, the researchers will be able to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of these group of students in a particular phenomenon or occurrence which is in this case the lived experience of learners from broken homes with insignificant progress during the implementation of distance learning (Larsson & Holmstrom, 2009).

The participants of this study possess two major criteria. The first one is to be classified as Grade 8 learners with insignificant progress in Social Studies which means that their grade in the said subject area is lower than 75 as defined in DM CI-2020-00162-2. The second criterion is that participants should come from broken homes; this means that their parents are either legally/unofficially separated, annulled, or born out-of-wedlock. The participants were determined purposively through the result of the personal data survey. Ethical consideration was also considered by drafting a letter addressed to the parents/guardian stating that the responses of their children will only be used for research purposes and that their personal information will remain confidential.

The researchers formulated the questions and were sent them to a group of experts to ensure their content validity. To gather the narratives of the students, an in-depth interview was conducted with the student participants. Before the interview, the researchers have briefed the participants on the topics that will be asked and discussed during the interview proper. The responses of the participants were recorded using a voice recorder. The responses of the participants were transcribed manually and translated into English since the

medium of the interview was in Filipino. The original and translated English transcription was sent to an English teacher for language validity. The researchers utilized the NVIVO application to identify the emerging themes from the responses of the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Participants' Demographic Profile

Table 1
Demographics of the Participants

	Variables	Frequency
Gender	Male	9
	Female	5
Total		**14**
Age	13	4
	14	8
	15	2
Total		**14**

A total of 14 grade eight (8) students with insignificant progress from broken homes were included in the study. The grades of the students in Social Studies for the first grading period were used as the basis for them to be included in the roosters of participants.

2. Challenges under Distance Learning

2.1. Challenges in terms of poor/unstable internet connection

The most prevalent theme that emerged is the slow or unstable internet connection. Almost every one of those who were interviewed complained that they all have experienced connectivity issues and that affects their engagement and participation in online synchronous classes, especially for those who choose this kind of learning modality.

The responses of the participants are consistent with the findings of Aboagye et al., (2021); Gaur et al., (2021); Adnan and Anwar (2021), and all other experts who say that technical difficulties such as poor internet connection are one of the most pressing issues for almost every student studying under the online distance education. The poor or slow internet connection affects the engagement of the students – regardless of background – in their online distance learning

Table 2
Slow Internet Connection

Emerging Themes	Participants	Response
Slow/unstable internet connection and signal interruption	Student 005	"Primarily, the main problem in distance learning is the internet connection because if you do not have an internet connection or if you have a slow internet connection you could barely understand the lesson that's why I can't focus on my studies."
	Student 002	"Modular learning is better (compared to online) because I can answer all the activities in just one day before I did not know the routine in online distance learning and once it rains you will lose the signal/connection."
	Student 008	"I cannot participate in the recitation because I don't have internet. Sometimes I don't have a signal. I could not understand some of the lessons because of the slow internet connection."
	Student 010	"There is signal interruption also, especially during rainy days."

2.2. Challenges in terms of pending/unfinished learning tasks

Another theme that emerged is the extensive number of unfinished/pending learning tasks. Many of the participants who were interviewed admitted that they have a lot of unfinished learning activities. Some participants claimed that they have difficulty accomplishing these tasks because they either lack the proper understanding of how to

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do it or they are overwhelmed with the number of academic tasks that they have to do.

Table 3
Unfinished Learning Tasks

Emerging Themes	Participants	Responses
Learning Tasks / Unfinished / Pending Tasks	Student 006	"Maybe sir is that when I have a lot of unfinished learning tasks."
	Student 009	"At first it seems that I can keep up with the submission but right now I have a lot of pending tasks to do especially in MAPEH."
	Student 010	"In my case sir I have some difficulty understanding especially in the English subject when it comes to the conversation but in Tagalog, except for those extra highfalutin words I also find it difficult to understand."
	Student 002	"Yes sir sometimes in Filipino. It's not really that we find it difficult but we just find it hard to understand sometimes we asked our teacher…."
	Student 012	"In Math only. I can't answer almost everything because no one teaches me how to solve or the technique. There is nothing like that, the module is just given to us to answer everything. The steps in solving are written but it's much better if the teacher can explain it personally."

The responses shared by the respondents seem to compliment the study of Rotas and Cahapay (2020) which states that the students under remote learning are bombarded with too many lessons and activities which in turn affect their ability to perform academically.

The students are probably overwhelmed by the amount of coursework that they have to accomplish. More so, Baticulon et al., (2020) explicated that student during online learning are burdened with excessive cognitive load and this somehow results in what Al Ateeq et al., (2020) considered as a moderate level of stress.

Many of the participants claimed that they are overwhelmed with the overly demanding nature of their academic requirements under distance learning. In line with this, Dangle et al., (2020) also claimed that 70% of the students have difficulty following the instructions in their modules and they cannot study independently this could probably be one of the reasons why many students are non-compliant with their assigned learning tasks.

2.3. Challenges in terms of deafening noise/sound

Table 4
Deafening sound/noise

Emerging Themes	Participants	Responses
Deafening sound/noise	Student 002	"Yes sir there are some neighbors who sing in the videoke up until at night without understanding that students are attending their online classes or those who are working from home who need to sleep like those who are working in the call center that is why there are some "marshals" who roam around the community to call their attention."
	Student 005	"During the birthday of our neighbors it just so happen that I have an online class that's why I could hardly understand my teachers due to the noise."
	Student 004	"Sometimes there are deafening sounds from motorcycles and right now there is an ongoing road construction."
	Student 008	"It's noisy because there is construction in front of us."
	Student 010	"In our case sir, it's not the neighbors that cause the noise but the people in our house."

The third major theme is the deafening sound/noise from the neighborhood/household.

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Several participants from the interview complained that the destructive noise coming from their neighborhood or households affects their concentration in attending their online synchronous classes as well as in accomplishing their academic tasks. The responses of the participants prove that not all students have a conducive environment or space for learning in their homes. Many of the students studying in government schools are children of underprivileged families; hence, some of them are residing in communities where poverty is rampant and the surrounding is somehow not favorable for learning which somehow affects the concentration of the learners studying under distance learning.

3. Adjustment/Coping Mechanism

3.1. Coping mechanisms in terms of doing household chores

Table 5
Household chores

Emerging Themes	Participants	Responses
Household chores	Student 002	"We wake up early because we need to go online to read the announcements of our teachers in our group chats and then we do our household chores so that we can do our modules right away."
	Student 004	"I just listen. I reduced the time I spent on online games. I also do household chores."
	Student 011	"And then I do some household chores like washing our plates, sweeping, and then I also wash our clothes."
	Student 012	"I find it difficult because I can only rely on myself. There is no one to help me besides myself and If I stop, I won't be able to study again because my parents are busy, especially my father. My mom is not always there. I can only depend on myself. I multi-task most of the time sometimes I'm taking care of my younger sibling while answering my module but somehow, I can manage."

In terms of adjustment/coping mechanism of the students during distance learning, the most prevalent theme is doing household chores. Most of the participants who partake in the interview say that since they are staying at home, they are also doing household tasks besides their learning tasks. This is also one way for the participants to help their parents and guardian from their demanding schedules. The implementation of distance learning reveals that since the students are staying at their home, they have the prerogative as to how they will use or maximize their time. In the case of students who hailed from underprivileged and troubled households doing household tasks is a typical scenario. Aside from studying and doing household chores, some students are also taking care of their younger siblings or taking the extra job.

The responses of the participants prove that many students under distance learning also perform other tasks aside from their academic tasks. This is a very common scenario in the Philippines for students coming from underprivileged families. It is a common reality for many. At some point, these household chores somehow compete with the time of the students that should have been spent studying or doing academic tasks.

3.2. Coping mechanism in terms of changes in sleeping habit or pattern

Another theme that emerged based on the adjustment/coping mechanism of the learners is the changes in sleeping habits. Many of the participants admitted that they have had an erratic sleeping pattern since the onset of distance learning. It was revealed also that the sleeping habits of the students had abrupt changes because of the changes also in their schedule.

The responses of the participants reflect that some students do not follow a regular schedule for their distance learning. Since the students are currently staying at home for distance learning, they do their learning tasks and other academic tasks at their most convenient time. In the case of some students, some of them may not be consistent in doing their academic tasks at a

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particular time or they may be preoccupied with other tasks; hence, they prefer to work on their academic tasks at night.

Table 6
Changes in sleeping habits

Emerging Themes	Participants	Responses
habits	Student 009	"I wake up at 8 am but right now since we don't have synchronous class, I wake up late in the morning."
	Student 002	"I'm still awake up to late at night to work on my learning tasks."
	Student 006	"I sleep at 10 pm and then I wake up at around 7 or 8 in the morning but before it's different. Before I just sleep whenever I feel sleepy; hence, sometimes I stay awake up to 4 am. I really can't sleep."
	Student 010	"The most is 5 am sir. Right now, around 3 am."

3.3 Coping mechanism in terms of asking help from peers

Table 7
Asking for help from peers

Emerging Themes	Participants	Responses
Asking/seeking help from peers	Student 002	"It's not really that we find it difficult but we just find it hard to understand sometimes we asked our teacher or sometimes we asked *****, the class president."
	Student 006	"Sometimes if I don't understand I usually ask our class president and if I still don't understand I just try to learn it by myself."
	Student 004	"For example, sir I asked if there is an assignment or the time of the online synchronous class".

Another theme that emerged under the coping mechanism is asking/seeking help or support from dependable peers.

Some students do not hesitate to ask or seek the help of their peers if there are unclear examples or instructions from the teacher. The participants claimed that they regularly communicate with their teachers but they are more comfortable approaching their classmates or knowledgeable peers if they have questions or clarifications. The students admitted that they feel reluctant to ask their teachers because some of them do not respond immediately to their queries. However, the participants also explicated that they also understand their teachers' situation because they are also preoccupied with so many tasks. Hence, they resort to asking their peers or knowledgeable classmates because they can respond immediately if they have queries about the lesson or instruction of learning tasks.

The responses given by the participants are quite similar to the coping strategies identified by Rotas and Cahapay (2020). The authors pointed out that seeking support from peers is one of the most common coping strategies employed by students under remote learning. Most students tend to ask for support from their peers if they have clarifications about the lesson or tasks because they are probably reluctant to ask their teachers. Some students may feel aloof from their teacher and they are far more comfortable asking their classmates or peers.

4. Assistance/Intervention from parents and the home

4.1. Assistance in terms of financial and material support

In terms of assistance given by parents or the home, the most prevalent theme that emerged is financial and material support. Most of the participants say that their parents/family are the ones who provide the financial and material support that they need in distance learning. Almost every participant claimed that their parents provide the finances that they need for school and daily needs. Also, most of the participants who live with their relatives say that their family members are the

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ones who actively provide the material things that they need in school. The participants claimed that their parents/family members make sure that their financial and material needs are properly taken care of despite having separated parents.

Table 8
Financial/Material Support

Emerging Themes	Participants	Responses
Financial/Material Support	Student 009	"My aunt helps me whenever I have a lot of assignments. My mom gives money and she also video calls every month but right now she's busy with work. My father, on the other hand, well he rarely gives to us."
	Student 002	"Sometimes they are telling me to study hard and then they are the ones who bought the school supplies that we need like paper. Our father also gives us money for our load so that we can connect in the messenger."
	Student 001	"My father bought me a cellphone."
	Student 012	"They are the ones who purchased the things that I need in school so that I don't need to borrow. They gave me a cellphone and all the things that I need in school. It's often seldom that they monitor my studies but if I need some materials they will buy it."
	Student 011	"They are the ones who purchase the things that I need in school…."

The responses were given by the participants seem to adhere to the findings presented by Palma et al., (2021) that the role of parents depends on their socio-economic status which influences their skills, knowledge, energy, and time in their level of engagement in the distance learning of their children. It must be noted that most of the parents of the students studying in government schools are laborers which means that they barely have time to monitor or guide their children in their distance learning. Some of the parents lack the appropriate knowledge and skills to assist their children in their academic tasks. Hence, the support in academics that they can give is somehow limited or non-existent.

4.2. Assistance in terms of giving advice and moral support

Table 9
Giving of Advice/Moral Support

Emerging Themes	Participants	Responses
Giving of Advice/Moral Support	Student 006	"They give me almost everything that I need. They also give words of encouragement."
	Student 014	"They always tell me to study hard and then to wash the plate and do household chores. They always tell me to study hard."
	Student 007	"They always tell me to do my learning tasks."

Another major theme that emerged based on the interview with the participants regarding the assistance/intervention given by parents or relatives is giving advice or moral support. The participants elucidated that their parents/relatives are constantly giving them advice to uplift their spirit while studying under distance learning. The participants consistently claim that their parents/relatives are giving them the advice to prioritize their education.

The responses of the participants seem to compliment the study of Palma et al., (2021) who stated that the parent's role in the education of their children under remote learning is shaped by the beliefs, perspectives, and experiences of the parents. For a typical Filipino family obtaining an education is a very important matter. The majority of Filipino parents value the education of their children so much and it can be seen in how the participants responded to the interview. Despite

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facing a pandemic and financial struggles, parents/families would want their children to continue and finish their education because of the belief that it will open them to a lot of opportunities in the future.

4.3 Assistance in terms of help in accomplishing learning tasks

Table 10
Help in Accomplishing Tasks

Emerging Themes	Participants	Responses
Help in answering/ accomplishing tasks	Student 009	"My aunt helps me whenever I have a lot of assignments."
	Student 010	"They help me in accomplishing my tasks and then they also bought the things that I need."
	Student 013	"They are capable of supporting me with my needs. My grandfather and grandmother help me with my studies."

Many of the participants claimed that their parents or family members are actively involved in helping them answer or accomplish their assigned learning tasks. There is some parents/guardian, who despite having a pre-occupied schedule, ensures that they are hands-on in monitoring or supervising their child's academic tasks.

The responses of the students somehow adhere to the discussion provided by Palma et al., (2021) that the parents, or in some instances, the family members still manage to provide high academic support to their children during distance learning. In the same light, Sari and Manningtyas (2020) noted that parents' involvement in distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic is good at 83%. It only means that majority of the parents are still hands-on in monitoring and supervising their child's distance learning education.

Conclusions

Primarily, the study aimed to explore the lived experiences of learners from broken homes with insignificant progress during the implementation of distance learning modalities.

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The learners from broken homes with insignificant progress have encountered some challenges in their academic studies. The most notable of which are the following: unstable internet connection, a large number of unfinished learning tasks, and disturbing noise from their household and neighborhood.
2. Meanwhile, these groups of learners cope with the changes brought by distance learning by doing household chores, changing sleeping habits or patterns, and asking or seeking help from their most dependable peers.
3. The assistance and interventions provided by the parents and guardian include providing financial and material support, giving advice and moral support, and as well as helping these students accomplish their assigned learning tasks.
4. A proposed remediation plan was designed by the researchers for all learners with insignificant progress and low academic performance to curtail the percentage of students-at-risks failing at the end of the school year. The remediation plan was specifically designed for Social Studies; however, teachers from other learning areas may opt to adopt the crafted remediation for the intervention of their respective learning areas. The proposed remediation plan was validated by a group of master and head teachers in Social Studies.

Recommendations

The researchers suggest the following to further support the learners and teachers during the implementation of distance learning.

1. The national government through its agencies should strictly require telecommunication companies in the country to upgrade their cell site facilities to better serve the Filipino consumers of their internet services.

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2. Government agencies like DepEd and local government units (LGUs) may venture into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with smartphone companies to provide electronic gadgets like cellphones or tablets to students and teachers under distance learning nationwide.

3. The local school's division offices (SDOs) should already start capacitating teachers to be skillful in designing lessons should the limited face-to-face classes will be implemented.

4. Parents and students should be oriented regarding the structure of learning should the limited face-to-face classes will be implemented. The parents should be oriented for them to redefine their role in the learning experience of their child.

5. Subject area teachers should collaborate to simplify the learning tasks that will be given to students. Teachers should religiously follow the DepEd Order No., 31 s, 2020 to lessen the burden of the students in accomplishing their learning tasks. More so, teachers should also consider extending the deadline of submission of learning tasks to give the students enough time to accomplish it.

6. Classroom teachers should receive technical assistance from their master teacher on how to craft and design contextualized, localized, and simplified learning resources suited to the needs and strengths of their students.

7. The school administrators and other stakeholders should also work hand-in-hand to prepare the physical facilities of the school should the limited face-to-face classes will be implemented.

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