



EXPERIENCES AND PERFORMANCES OF SOLO PARENT-TEACHERS: BASES FOR PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative research method using the phenomenological research design aimed to formulate and recommend programs based on experiences and performances of solo parent-teachers. The participants of this study were twenty solo parent-teachers from elementary and secondary school in the Schools District of Banate during the school year 2021-2022. An interview guide was used to gather data. Thematic analysis was used to interpret and analyze the narratives from the depth interview. The experiences of solo parent-teachers were described as having multitasking, emotional struggle, lack of support from the family, and financial problem. Being solo parent-teachers imposes great challenges yet these individuals survive from everyday struggles being able to recover quickly from the twists and turns of life. This gives an interest for many to know and understand their stories of coping techniques and styles. All solo parent-teachers got a very satisfactory rating in their performance. The very satisfactory rating of solo parent-teachers in all categories of variables indicates that the participants have effectiveness and efficiency in doing their duties and responsibilities as solo parent-teachers.

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Keywords: *Experiences and Performances of Solo Parent-Teachers*

INTRODUCTION

Parenting is a daunting task for most people. Being a teacher is challenging and more difficult if one is a solo parent. It is harder for solo-parent teachers because they have to face the challenges alone, either by choice or circumstances beyond their control, both at school and home.

In the Philippines, single parenthood is one of the problems that the family faces today. According to Barajas (2012), many adults are experiencing parenthood, and almost 50% of youngsters born today live with one parent only. Since more people must now deal with the obligations of parenthood, the rise in the number of single parents has increased awareness. Overcoming financial challenges and working with budget constraints especially during this pandemic which triggered job loss and increased prices of prime commodities is the most difficult part of single parenting. (Alonge, 2020).

RA 8972 (2000) or the Solo Parent's Welfare provides advantages and benefits for single parents and their kids. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will serve as the primary organization in developing a full array of social welfare and various government agencies including National Statistics Office (NSO) and other related Non-Government Organizations (NGOs).

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Solo parent-teachers are at a disadvantage due to the enormous demands of teaching and the duties of being a sole parent. Hazell (2008), found out that one of the reasons why teachers leave their workload to be “worse” than expected, hence, they resign from their profession. Identifying the problems encountered, motivating factors and aspirations of solo parent teachers are useful inputs in designing appropriate interventions to help them perform their jobs better and increase teacher productivity.

Teachers’ performance involves satisfying a teaching task that meet one’s goals over a measured period. Realizing specific objectives in teaching requires specific use of teaching strategies or approach.

As an elementary school teacher, the situation worries the researcher. By focusing only on their motivation, the challenges they are encountering, and their aspirations as they carry out their duties and responsibilities as a full-time parent and a full-time teacher amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter describes the research method, research design, the participants of the study, sampling design, the data gathering procedure, research instruments, validity of research instrument and the data analysis were employed in this study.

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Research Method

The study used descriptive method using in-depth interview to gather data. The interviewer during the interview was allowed to sit and to think about the series of questions about a certain issue via face-to-face interview. The aim was to get the main or necessary views of the participants in a certain issue in a social context through the responses of the participants to the questions.

Research Design

The study made use of phenomenology under qualitative research design. Qualitative analysis has different steps that start from the bottom up and they range from data transcription, segmenting information into categories using codes, generation of themes or categories, description of themes and to interpretation of data (Creswell, 2009).

These steps are critical to check for accuracy and consistency of the findings. In a qualitative study, interviews afford interviewees an opportunity to provide their viewpoint, perception and explanation without predetermination by the researcher.

The findings were supported by the existing literature regarding experiences and resilience of solo parent teachers. Findings also led to implications for the discipline and future research.

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were all solo parent-teachers for both public elementary and secondary high schools in the Schools District of Banate during the school year 2021-2022.

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The researcher identified the participants and those significantly solo parent-teachers teaching in the public elementary and secondary high schools in the schools District of Banate.

Sampling Design

The phenomenological study investigated the various reactions to, or perceptions of, a particular phenomenon. The researcher gained some insights into the world of his or her participants and describe their perceptions and reactions. Data was collected through in-depth interview. The researcher then attempted to identify and describe aspects of each individual's perceptions and reactions to his or her experience in some detail.

Phenomenologists generally assumed that there is some commonality to how human beings perceive and interpret similar experiences; they seek to identify, understand, and describe these commonalities (Creswell, 2013).

Research Instrument

The researcher used a researcher-made interview guide for the in-depth interview to gather information to the experiences and performances of solo parent-teachers as basis for program recommendation.

The interview guide has three questions focusing on the purpose of this study.

Video recorder was used for data gathering and documentation depending upon the permission of the participants.

A thematic analysis was used to summarize the results of the study.

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Validity of the Research Instrument

The experiences and performances of solo parent-teachers as basis for program recommendation were reviewed for face to face content validity by a panel of jurors who were chosen on the basis of their expertise in research and instrumentation. Each item was assessed by the jurors, revise reject, and retain. The panel of jurors was composed of experts in the fields of research, tests and measurements, and evaluation.

Data Gathering Procedures

Upon approval of the Dean of the Graduate School and adviser to conduct the research, the researcher identified the respondents and those specifically involved in the development of the modules. A letter of request for the conduct of the study was sent to the principal or school head of the elementary schools in the schools District of Banate. Upon approval, the researcher asked for an individual appointment to then identify participants to conduct the face-to-face interview. The researcher personally conducted the interview using the interview guide. Face-to-face in-depth interview was done to gather the information. Upon observing proper health protocol of social distancing, wearing of face mask and face shield was observed. All the information and answers were recorded, compiled and analyzed. For ethical consideration, the respondents were informed that all information and data gathered during the conduct of the study were treated with utmost confidentiality and were used for the purpose of this study.

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Data Analyses

The information gathered in this study were properly analyzed using thematic approach.

This qualitative technique was used to identify the themes in all the experiences and performances of solo parent-teachers in the Schools District of Banate.

The researchers who conducted phenomenological studies search for the essential structure of a single phenomenon by interviewing, in-depth, a number of individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. The researcher extracts what he or she considers relevant statements from each participant’s description of the phenomenon and then integrates these themes into a narrative description of the phenomenon and then clusters these into themes. He or she then integrates these themes into a narrative description of the phenomenon (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2010).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study’s primary objective was to learn more about the experiences and performance of solo parent-teachers order to develop programs in the Schools District of Banate during the school year 2021-2022.

In this study, qualitative research method was used under phenomenology.

Participants in the study were all solo parent-teachers at elementary and high schools in the Schools District of Banate during the school year 2021-2022.

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A researcher-made interview guide was used to gather data on the experiences and performance of solo parent-teachers.

The data gathering instruments were subjected to face content validation by panel of experts. Thematic analysis was used for qualitative data analysis.

The following are the findings of the study.

Based on the information gathered during the in-depth interview, the following is the profile of the solo parent-teachers:

As to age, 9 solo parent-teachers were young (31-48) and 11 (51-62) were old. As to sex, 19 were female and only 1 was male. As to number of children, only 8 solo parent-teachers have only one child while 12 have 2 or more children.

The result implied that most of the solo parent-teachers in the schools District of Banate were female.

As to net take home pay, 12 solo parents were living in low net take home pay (5,000 – 10,000), while only 8 of the solo parents have high net take home pay (11,000 – up).

Solo parent-teachers were struggling financially because most of them have two or more children without any other outside support. Beutel (2000) claims that research on solo parent-teachers has traditionally focused on socio-economic results, frequently showing a negative influence on employment and incomes.

As to grade level assignment, 5 solo-parents were assigned to teach from kindergarten to Grade 3; 6 solo-parents were assigned to teach from Grade 4 to 6; 5 solo-parents were

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assigned to teach in junior high school; 2 solo-parents were assigned to teach in senior high school; and 2 solo-parents were school heads.

It is believed that regardless of grade level assignment, solo parent-teachers still continuously served for their children’s future and for themselves, too.

Regarding their position, 4 solo parent-teachers occupied a Teacher-1 position, 8 were Teacher-2, 5 were Teacher-3, 1 was Master Teacher 2 and 2 were school heads.

Notwithstanding, solo parent-teachers position in teaching does not stop there; instead, it is a way that encourages them to work for their children.

As to type of dwelling, 16 solo parent-teachers owned their houses, and 4 were living in the house owned by their parents.

This implied that regardless of their net take home pay, owning a house is important for most of the participants.

All solo parent-teachers have performance of very satisfactory (4.10 – 4.50). Nobody rated outstanding.

Mergenchroer (2005) revealed that there are factors that motivate teachers to improve their performance and the perception of teacher motivation of both teachers and school heads. The researcher examined intrinsic and extrinsic factors to determine if a statistically significant difference would exist between the perceptions of teachers and administrators.

Based on the information gathered during the in-depth interview, experiences of solo parent-teachers were multitasking, emotional struggle, lack of support from the family, and financial problem.

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Most solo parent-teachers expressed increasing responsibility as one of the main challenges and described it as several responsibilities. It occurs when a person tries to complete two things at once, switches between tasks, or complete two or more tasks quickly.

Therefore, they experienced physical and mental fatigue and needed help and support from others. Most solo parent-teachers were unable to handle the tasks, unable to manage their time and unable to overcome fatigue.

Becoming a solo parent- teacher has been associated with struggles emotionally, expressive and passionate. This struggle could be related to many activities at home plus work at school.

For single mothers, family and friends are significant yet separate sources of social support. Support from friends and family has a big impact on internalizing symptoms. Family support increased when friend support was strong. Friend's benefits on single mothers' internalizing symptoms.

Without the assistance of a partner, single parents frequently shoulder the burden of managing the family's finances. While some single parents might receive child support, others might experience the financial strains that come with making only one income.

Teachers' performance receives a higher level of significance in compliance of the pertinent provision in the Education Act of 1982. According to this Act, each teacher is responsible for ensuring that a certain learning objective is attained in a timely and effective manner pursuant to national development goals within the limits of available school resources. The effectiveness

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of teaching connotes utmost commitment to enable the students achieve the threefold goal namely: gain knowledge, develop skills, and imbue values and attitudes.

In spite of hardships, difficulties and challenges encountered by solo parent-teachers in their lives, still their performance was very satisfactory. 20 out of 20 participants have a rating ranging from 4.10 – 4.50. The ratings of solo parent-teachers were taken from their Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) for the school year 2021-2022.

This means that all the participants achieved the expected performance which the Department of Education is requiring regardless of sex, position length of service and civil status. The researcher believed they have internalized their responsibilities towards the education of their learners. The very satisfactory rating in all categories of variables simply indicates that the participants are doing well in their duties and responsibilities in the Schools District of Banate.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that DepEd should give priority on policies for solo parent-teachers such as health support system, continuing education for them and their children with more educational options, and strengthening the education reform.

Teachers and parent commitments are expected to transform an environment of equality and fairness to all students and their parents who are considered as solo parent-teachers to establish a sustainable program and functional activities for them.

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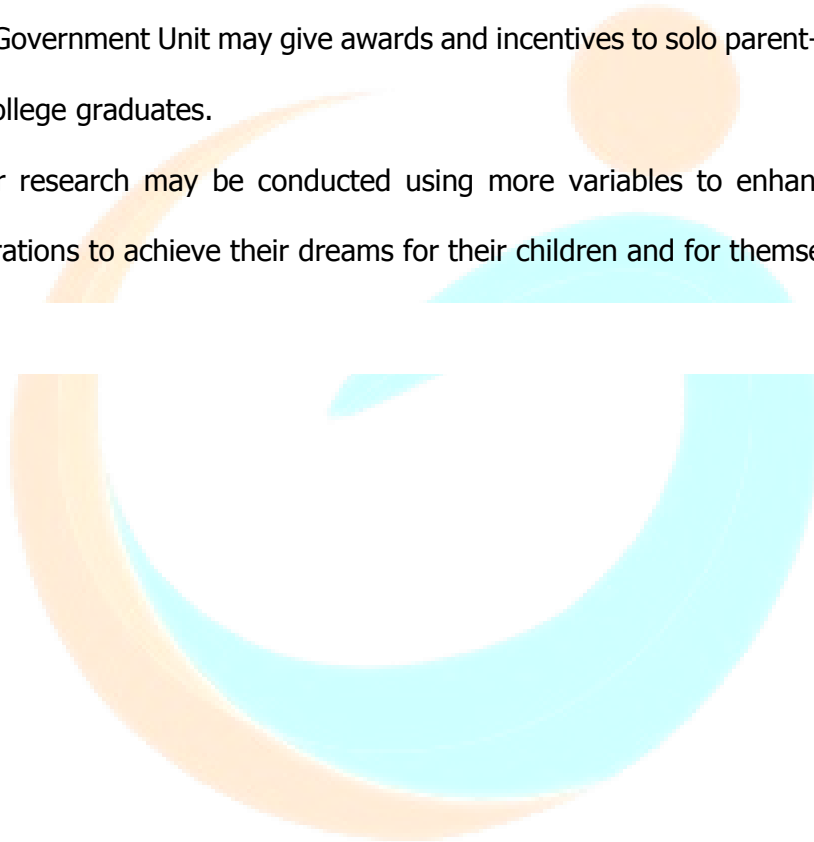


Family support for solo parent-teachers as well as career opportunities may be strongly built to support them in dealing with responsibilities at school and at home.

Financial challenges of solo parent can lead to debt which may affect their credit scores. In this regard, the government may help them by offering financial loans at a very low interest to help them get out of debt.

The Local Government Unit may give awards and incentives to solo parent-teachers whose children are college graduates.

Further research may be conducted using more variables to enhance solo parent-teacher's aspirations to achieve their dreams for their children and for themselves.



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