



**TRAVERSING A NEW ROLE: FROM COUPLING TO PARENTING
DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

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ABSTRACT

This study looked into the lived experiences of married heterosexual couples that traversed into a new role from coupling to parenting during the coronavirus pandemic. The research design used was qualitative with phenomenology as an approach. Using the interpretative phenomenological approach, the study generated six (6) themes. The themes were Realized Journey, Experienced Stressors and Apprehensions, Appreciated Blessed Times, Change of Priorities and Perspective, Dealing with Change, and Recognition of Social Support. The themes that emerged from this study were aligned with Schlossberg's Transition Framework wherein it demonstrated that a transition period was illustrated into three stages. The Moving In stage (Approaching Transitions), the Moving Through stage (Potential Coping Resources), and the Moving Out stage (Assimilated Change).

Under the first and second theme which corresponds to the Moving In stage, it identified what type, context, and impact of transition the participants had experienced. As for the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth themes, these were included in the Moving Through stage wherein the potential coping resources of the participants during the transition period were explored. Furthermore, the Moving Out stage was the actual assimilation of the change in the role that happened to the participants wherein they became parents. As an output of the study, a Virtual Home Learning Environment was conceptualized and focused on the well-being of first-time parents during the pandemic who transitioned from coupling to parenting.

Keywords: coupling, pandemic, parenting, role

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INTRODUCTION

The transition to parenthood is only one of the foremost euphoric life occasions that an individual may experience during a lifetime. On the other side, it can moreover be a challenging time within the relationship. McMillan, Armstrong, & Langhinrichsen-Rohling (2021) discussed that the shift to parenthood speaks to a major life occasion for hopeful parents, influencing personal and social well-being. Given the global situation which is the period of the covid-19 pandemic, entry into parenting represents a major turn in every person's life. Brown, Doom, Lechuga-Peña, Watamura, & Koppels (2020) revealed that as a result of the worldwide coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), families across the world are encountering another scope of stressors that compromise their holistic wellbeing, security, and monetary prosperity.

To begin with, take a glance on how the global pandemic started. According to Amit, Pepito, & Dayrit (2020), the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) has spread worldwide beginning with the report in Wuhan, China on December 31, 2019. On January 30, 2020, the Philippines detailed to begin with two imported cases. With regard to the locality which is the province of Laguna, according to Hernandez (2020), it recorded its first COVID-19 case on March 15, 2020. Meanwhile, according to Chipeco (2020), Calamba City announced its first case on March 25, 2020. Since then, the cases surged as well as to different parts of the globe.

In relation to the facts previously stated, rampant changes were brought by the pandemic most especially to those in transition from couples to being parents. Wherein couples can also be considered vulnerable sectors with regards mental health concerns for the fact that they are managing a major life change in the middle of crisis. According to Westrupp et al. (2021), the COVID-19 pandemic presents major effects to psychological well-being of individuals. The pandemic has been also related with expanded mental health concerns in adults all throughout the world. Unfortunately, with the presence of these risks in psychological well-being of couples or parents, still there are limited exploration related to this dilemma.

Thus, giving the researcher the interest in taking a look on the aspect of transitioning into a new role while experiencing a pandemic. Normally, it can be stated that there are given changes that couples should expect as they transitioned. According to Brotherson (2016), couples typically can experience expected adjustments as they transcend in welcoming the birth of a child such examples are changes in couple relationship, social life, emotions, finances, housework, time, and sleep.

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Furthermore, in the journey for couples to adjust to this new role as parents, couples become overwhelmed by the struggle of becoming a parent. Added to that are the adjustments that they need to conquer as they become parents during the pandemic period. Being completely winded up in the stress to continue living as before with the added role of caring and loving a newborn baby, there are aspects of their lives that have been reduced or somehow even forgotten. With regards to this so called adjustments, the researcher opted to provide information on what actually happens to couples when an infant is added to the pile during times of crisis as relevant to what we are experiencing right now. Also, taking into consideration the psychological impact brought to us by the pandemic as couples transitioned. The study wanted to bring light to the current situation wherein how couples cope with those challenges as they live in a situation full of distress and uncertainty. It is also suitable to explore this topic since there are limited publications related to this concept that was done in similar locale. There are several studies quite similar to this that was done in other countries but this cannot confirm what is actually happening in the chosen locale.

In support, this study was conducted to explore the experiences of couples that became parents during the period of distress and uncertainty, the coronavirus pandemic. Lived experiences of couples who become parents during the pandemic were assessed to be able to portray how couples transitioned to parenthood during pandemic.

METHODS

This study utilized the qualitative research design. A qualitative approach was considered more relevant to undertake this research as it allowed greater capacity to gain more depth and meaning based on an individual's experiences of being couples to being parents during the pandemic along with their beliefs and feelings. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was selected as the research approach for this investigation. IPA was ultimately chosen for this study to gain an in-depth understanding regarding the process of how couples transcend to becoming parents during the pandemic of which can be considered a major leap in every relationship. Through purposeful random sampling, the researcher selected five (5) heterosexual, married couples as participants in the chosen locale which is the City of Calamba in the province of Laguna where the study was conducted wherein availability of participants that was recruited was high in probability and the present scenario regarding the covid-19 situation were readily observed. Specifically, the participants of the study are couples that belong to the following criteria. Participants were married heterosexual couples whether in civil

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INSTABRIGHT e-GAZETTE

ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume III, Issue IV

May 2022

Available online at <https://www.instabrightgazette.com>



or church wedding of any religion, first time parents during the pandemic, nationality were both Filipino citizens and were residents of the City of Calamba in Laguna. Also, they belonged to the age group of 20 to 34 years old.

In gathering pertinent information, the researcher used six (6) guide questions that are based on the research questions of the study. With the advantage of the guide questions, a semi-structured interview was used to carry out this research study. Aside from the semi-structured interview, participants were also asked to accomplish a demographic profile survey to be able to verify the participant's qualifications based on the given criteria identified by the researcher. A recorder was used to record the interviews and all interviews were fully transcribed in verbatim. As mandated by our current situation in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher conducted the interview virtually using zoom or google meet application to ensure health protocols.

The analysis of the data was patterned using Taylor-Powell and Renner's (2003), an approach in qualitative data analysis. The entire textual data was read and re-read and the notes and impressions were reviewed as the researcher went through the data. The data were scrutinized to screen out potentially meaningless information. The focus of analysis was centered on couples' responses to every questions or topic. The data were organized by question to be able to look across all respondents' answers and to identify consistencies and differences. The data were coded and indexed to identify themes or patterns and then organized them to coherent categories that would summarize and bring meaning to the text. As data was organized, into categories, patterns and connections and within the categories resurfaced. The qualification of different categories was determined to be the gateway for later interpretation. The last phase involved the interpretation, wherein themes and connections were utilized to explain the findings of the study. By means of interpretation, the researcher was able attach meaning and significance to the analysis.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered in this study. As such, this research was guided by the following central question and corollary questions: What is the essence of the lived experiences of couples traversing a new role from coupling to parenting during the coronavirus pandemic?

Meanwhile, the corollary questions have been answered in the discussion provided below.

Corollary Question Number 1: How do the couples described their experiences regarding their life transition from coupling to parenting during the pandemic period?

Interview Question 1: Can you describe your entire journey on having a child?

When asked to describe their journey on having a child, Couple 2 mentioned that their journey on having a child was kind of difficult but at the same time it was a joyful experience. Meanwhile, Couple 3 described their journey as similar to a roller coaster ride wherein different kinds of emotions were experienced by the couple that they cannot really explain.

In the course of the interview, the researcher observed that couple 2 were very thankful while sharing their journey on having a child. This can be noticed by the hand gestures made during the interview, as if they were saying the word "thank you". On the other hand, positively, Couple 3 responded enthusiastically during the interview. Facial expressions made showed how excited they were in sharing their journey on having a child.

This was supported by Vermeulen et al. (2022), the open question was answered by 556 (55%) of the 1007 women who took part in the HRQoL-study in June 2020. In general, they discovered a plethora of mixed and interrelated emotions. Despite the fact that many women reported negative feelings, the pandemic did have some pleasant features for responders. Fear of contamination, feeling alienated and unsupported, not being able to share experiences, disturbed care, feeling unprepared, and experiencing a tranquil phase were highlighted as six overarching themes.

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Interview Question 2: Can you discuss the challenges that you have encountered during the transition? Narrate as many as you can recall.

When asked about the challenges encountered during the transition period, Couple 3 shared that being isolated at home and wasn't able to go out started well from the beginning of the pandemic but as the days passed by it caused them to be unhappy about the inevitable situation. On the other hand, Couple 4 mentioned that the challenging part of the transition period was the difficulty in being able to acquire consultation with a pediatrician due to the pandemic. Also, they

have shared that they have switched to several pediatricians due to unresponsiveness or they cannot reach the doctor immediately for emergency concerns.

During the interview, Couple 3 seems to be on an emotional state while narrating the challenges they have encountered. Similarly, Couple 4 was felt agitated while recalling the challenges that they have shared.

This was justified by Giltenane et al. (2022), ages of the participants, who were all first-time mothers, ranged from 21 to 35. The concepts of "The buck stops with me" and "disrupted parenting" emerged as the two main topics. The epidemic affected new moms' experiences, and they felt an overwhelming sense of responsibility for their child. In light of public pressure to uphold moral standards as well as ambiguity and mistrust surrounding official COVID-19 instructions, it was more difficult to fulfill this obligation. The intended transition to motherhood was changed by the pandemic. The disruption of the delivery process, the inability to communicate with close friends and family, and the lack of adequate healthcare support were all deemed to be harmful. The presence of more partners and the new social expectations, however, were seen favorably.

Interview Question 3: When you think about the change, tell me how you felt at the time you became parents? Was it a good time in your life? Why or Why not?

When asked about their feelings on becoming parents during the pandemic, Couple 1 and 2 both answered it positively. Couple 1 shared that becoming parents during the pandemic was a blessing and it was more of an answered prayer while Couple 2 was very thankful of the pandemic because the pandemic made it easier for them to surpass the role of becoming parents offering them options to be able to provide for the family while staying at home and at the same

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time considering their family.

During the interview, Couple 1 was happy and smiling while expressing how they felt while Couple 2 was feeling thankful and is full of gratitude while reminiscing how they felt as they become parents.

Gray and Barnett (2022) stated that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the experiences of new, firsttime mothers were arranged around two themes. First, pregnant moms experienced an overwhelming sense of responsibility for their newborn, which was exacerbated by the pandemic. The issue of honoring this responsibility was heightened by cultural expectations to do the "correct" thing, as well as ambiguity and suspicion surrounding government instructions on COVID-19. Second, the pandemic disrupted the expected transition into parenthood. Disruption to the birthing experience, inability to interact with close friends and family, and restricted healthcare support were deemed negative. However, the partner's enhanced presence and changing social expectations were regarded as advantages.

Interview Question 4: Tell me your experiences of managing yourself during the time of this life transition. What made you feel this way?

When asked about their experiences on managing oneself during the transition period, Couple 3 and 4 both shared their experiences that is focused on managing their emotional state. Couple 3 shared that encouragement is very important for couples to be able to support each other as they face a life transition together. Meanwhile, Couple 4 narrated that controlling and knowing how to deal with your emotions is one way of doing it. They also noted that showing to your partner that you are affected by what is happening around you can initiate the collapse on each other's emotions.

This was related to the study of Riggs et al. (2018), previous research has shown that unsuccessful partner expectations can lead to marital conflicts increase and marital satisfaction decrease. In addition, transition to parenting can also generate interpersonal change. Intrapersonal change includes aspects of the transition to parenthood, such as the acquisition of new roles and identities as mother and father, individual expectations and references to emotions, including notions of coping with associated changes to parenting.

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Interview Question 5: Can you describe how your life changed and how you dealt or manage those changes?

When asked about their experiences about life changes and how they deal with those changes, Couple 3 shared that changes on their schedule has been experienced when their baby was born specifically their working schedules. Since, they have no one in the household where they can entrust their new born child, they have strategized proper time management so that they can all accomplish tasked at work while taking care of their baby. On the other hand, Couple 4 had experienced changes on sleeping habits. It is necessary to attend to their new born baby at all times. So, they have managed to make some adjustments on their sleeping schedule to be able to compensate the hours that they need to wake up to take care of the baby.

During the interview, Couple 3 was very proud and happy as can be observed on the smiles on their faces during the interview while Couple 4 was grinning and giggling while sharing their experiences during the interview.

According to Roy (2016), there were common disparities as partners transcended to parenting. First thing that can be shaken by these changes was the quality of relationship towards one's partner. The changes to parenthood expanded relationship disharmony and stress due to the truth that couples needed to move their conjugal jobs and duties in groundwork for parenthood. As a matter of fact, having a child built a couple's surface territory for struggle, since they currently had new nurturing issues they needed to arrange and came in concession to.

Furthermore, based on Deave et al. (2018), The prenatal and postnatal data revealed several recurring themes, including relationship changes, practical baby care, breastfeeding, information and antenatal education, and support systems. There was little understanding of the adjustment to fatherhood. The majority of women reported feeling highly supported, notably by female family members and, for those who attended them, postnatal groups. In contrast, men frequently had only access to medical experts and their coworkers. Although they were heavily involved in their spouses' pregnancies, the males felt left out of prenatal appointments, prenatal classes, and the material that was available. The alterations in the connection with their partners had gone unnoticed by the parents, who were also taken aback by them. Prior to becoming parents, they would have preferred additional information on parenting and child care topics, changes in relationships, and viewpoints of spouses.

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In conclusion, Pregnancy and the transition to motherhood are significant life changes for a family. Existing research have surveyed parents, primarily women, about their experiences with prenatal education after the fact. They attempted to fill this void by polling first-time mothers and their partners on how they could be better supported throughout the antenatal period, particularly in terms of the transition to motherhood and parenting skills.

Interview Question 6: Kindly share examples of support that you found extremely helpful in the transition process?

When asked about their experiences about the support received during the transition period, Couple 1 and Couple 5 both stated that their families are their main source of support as they face the transition process during the pandemic.

It can be noted during the interview that Couple 1 was very thankful while sharing the support received coming from their families while Couple 5 was grateful and smiling during the interview.

This was supported by Patrick et al. (2020) that because of separation from support systems, parents detailed a deficiency in childcare and experienced difficulty with overseeing childcare assignments. It can be noted that researchers found out that social help was supporting in decreased parental distress, thus positively affecting parenting. Parents may keep virtual association with others; yet, they experienced a deficiency of actual help. Parents may likewise be exploring various roles at home.

Corollary Question Number 2: What themes emerged from the testimonies of the couples?

There are six (6) themes that emerged from the responses of the participants. The themes were as follows: Realized Journey, Experienced Stressors and Apprehensions, Appreciated Blessed Times, Change of Priorities and Perspective, Dealing with Change, and Recognition of Social Support.

It can be noted that the generated themes were anchored to Schlossberg's Transition Framework. The generated themes depicted the transition process as described on the Transition Framework which are enumerated as the Moving In Stage, Moving Through Stage and Moving Out Stage.

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Stage 1: Moving In

Realized Journey

The first interview question "Can you describe your entire journey on having a child?" generated the first theme "Realized Journey". The first theme was a part of the 'Moving In' stage of Schlossberg's Transition Framework or also known as Approaching Transitions wherein we identified the type and nature of the transition. According to the participants, when couples were asked about their realized journey on having a child, they all responded unique experiences that they have encountered on having a child during the pandemic. They have experienced being first-time parents differently, the way that they never expected. The participants described their journey on having a child during the pandemic as an unexpected experience and also as a difficult but happy experience. In this way, Schlossberg Transition Theory was applied in identifying the type of transition that the participants experienced as they approach transition. In approaching transitions as part of the transition framework, the experiences shared by the participants can be recognized as unanticipated event which involves a change in role.

This was in consonance with the notion of Aydin and Aktas (2021) on the seven key categories which were used to analyze how women in the COVID-19 pandemic experienced pregnancy: physical health, psychological health, adaption to pregnancy, pregnancy follow-ups, social life, husband connection, and coping mechanisms. In the COVID-19 pandemic, expectant mothers have both satisfying and unpleasant pregnancies.

Moreover, the findings were explained by Linden et al., (2021) that the COVID-19 pandemic could at times completely overshadow the experience of being pregnant, while at other times, sunlight broke through the clouds to illuminate the women's experiences of being pregnant during the pandemic. This best captures the essence of what it was like for the women to be pregnant during this time. Dealing with the pandemic's uncertainty and the sensation of being in an information echo were the main characteristics of the experience. Without their partners' assistance, women experienced social isolation and had to undergo prenatal exams. In spite of the paucity of information, there was a high level of trust in maternal healthcare services.

Experienced Stressors and Apprehensions

The second interview question "Can you discuss the challenges that you have encountered during the transition? Narrate as many as you can recall." generated the second theme "Experienced Stressors and Apprehensions". The second theme was also a part of the 'Moving In' stage of Schlossberg's Transition Framework or also known as Approaching Transitions that presented the context and impact of the transition. During the interview, when the participants

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were asked about the challenges that they have encountered during the transition period, they have shared several stressors and apprehensions that they have experienced. The participants considered financial concern, physical discomfort, emotional struggle as challenges that they have experienced. Also, they have mentioned about their difficulty on searching for preferred child health care during the transition process. Relating the participants' responses to Schlossberg's Transition Theory, this was applied as couples approached the transition period wherein the changes or challenges brought by the transition itself were identified as well as the background and impact of the transition was revealed as stated in the subordinate themes mentioned above.

This was justified Barbosa-Leiker et al. (2021) that, food scarcity and the need to remain inside during the COVID pandemic made it challenging for pregnant women to locate wholesome nourishment. Also mentioned were missed prenatal checkups, however several said they had used telemedicine to get these treatments. Financial difficulties were widespread in our sample, and participants had trouble finding childcare. After adjusting for demographic factors, pregnant women were less likely than postpartum women to use good stress-coping techniques. In prenatal women of racial and ethnic minorities and lower socioeconomic position, they were able to identify signs of higher stressors brought on by the COVID-19 epidemic and less social support. Participants expressed worries about their infant getting COVID-19 while in the hospital, about their loved ones missing the delivery or important obstetric checkups, and they wanted support from their friends, family, and birthing classes. Qualitative results further match our survey findings. The participants' top needs were found to be financial resources, access to safe healthcare, COVID-19 knowledge and research into maternal-infant health outcomes, and access to baby necessities (such as formula and diapers).

Stage 2: Moving Through Appreciated Blessed Times

The third interview question "When you think about the change, tell me how you felt at the time you became parents? Was it a good time in your life? Why or Why not?" generated the third theme "Appreciated Blessed Times". The third theme introduced the 'Moving Through' phase of Schlossberg's Transition Theory or known as 'Taking Stock of Coping Resources'. In this stage, the coping resources was stated as the 4S System (Situation, Self, Strategies and Support). With this, the generated theme pertained to one of the 4S – Situation.

As per the participants, when asked about how they felt about becoming parents during the pandemic, couples have shared positive experiences regarding this.

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The participants responded the change of having a child that they have encountered made them feel like it was an answered prayer even though it happened in the middle of the pandemic. This made them feel full of gratitude despite the negativity that the world is experiencing. In addition, they mentioned that the pandemic was a blessing in disguise that have brought them to nourish their relationship. Making it stronger than before. They felt very grateful about the change that they have experience which is about becoming parents during the pandemic. Schlossberg's Transition Theory may be applied because as the participants move through the transition process they were able to acknowledge in what particular situation the transition process occurred as described in their responses.

This finding was congruent with that of Chasson, Ben-Yaakov, & Taubman-Ben (2021). According to them, they compared the levels of the presence of meaning and the search for meaning in life between two samples of new mothers: one recruited before the outbreak of COVID-19 and the other during the pandemic, on the theory that existential questions may arise in the face of the transition to motherhood in the shadow of a global crisis. Additionally, they looked at the relationships between the two facets of meaning in life and the mother's perception of the infant and marital satisfaction on the one hand, and the two facets of meaning in life on the other, to see if these variables acted as a mediator between the research group and meaning in life. The findings show that mothers' perceptions of their infants' warmth and the existence of meaning were much higher before the epidemic than during it. Additionally, compared to before the pandemic, they showed higher signs of meaning seeking and marital satisfaction. For the entire sample, more marital contentment and a feeling of the infant's warmth were connected to greater presence of meaning, while greater search for meaning was associated with worse marital satisfaction and a view of the infant's intrusiveness. Finally, the association between the research group and the two facets of meaning in life was totally mediated by the mother's marital happiness and assessment of the infant. These findings are crucial because they offer, for the first time, proof of how new moms' perspectives on their relationships with their child and spouse and their own meaning in life shift when they are faced with a crisis.

Change of Priorities and Perspective

The fourth interview question "Tell me your experiences of managing yourself during the time of this life transition. What made you feel this way?" generated the fourth theme "Change of Priorities and Perspective". The fourth theme was a part of the 'Moving Through' phase of Schlossberg's Transition Theory or known as 'Taking Stock of Coping Resources". This was focused on one of the coping resources stated in the 4S System which is the Self.

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INSTABRIGHT e-GAZETTE

ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume III, Issue IV

May 2022

Available online at <https://www.instabrightgazette.com>



When the participants were asked about their experiences on how they have managed themselves during the transition process, couples mentioned that they are able to surpass the transition period thru prioritizing their baby and by having a broad understanding of every situation that couples were facing. The Schlossberg's Transition Theory can be applied because this is the period wherein couples were immersed in the transition process. It can be identified that one of the potential coping resources that the participants revealed is managing oneself.

To prove that they prioritizing their baby and have broadened understanding about the transitioning, Ben-Ari & Ben-Yaakov (2020) denoted that, all coronavirus related tensions were emphatically connected with parents' worry about raising a baby during the pandemic, in any case, not with parental difficulty, like saving money for going to a clinic or local area center for baby examinations. Though parental stress alluded to how skilled a parent felt about bringing up their baby and their own impression of the limitations this job put on other parts of their life, the fear about raising a baby during COVID-19 referred to the parent's interests about the effect of the pandemic on the baby's development, due to the need to remain in home lockdown, absence of social and family get-togethers, and other strange conditions.

In addition, Harrison, et al. (2022) stated that some facets of maternal and reproductive health for women remained stable or even improved during Covid-19. Overall satisfaction levels with prenatal and postpartum treatment remained high. However, the results also suggest that Covid-19 had a negative impact on other facets of women's health and care, notably after childbirth. Comparing results from before the epidemic, overall satisfaction with postnatal care decreased significantly. When seen as a whole, the survey results indicate that giving birth during the COVID-19 epidemic may have added to the already stressful experience for mothers and their families. Covid-19 may have increased some of the already existing issues in some areas of the system as well as created new ones for maternity services.

And lastly, Kazmierczak & Karasiewicz (2019) added to the support that, adaptation during the transition to motherhood involves reorganizing one's identity, which is reflected in changes in one's life roles. Gender differences play a big role in this family transformation. The role of a mother is more firmly related with the female self-concept than that of a provider for the family, even if males still place a great importance on being the breadwinner in Western countries. Therefore, the relative perceived and desired prominence as well as the directly judged relevance of the three primary life roles—spouse, worker, and parent—before and after the birth of the child were examined. Seventy-eight couples took part in the study, which involved 137 couples. Following the birth of the child, the parental function was regarded (relatively and directly assessed) and desired as having a greater salience. In comparison to males, who saw their job

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as a parent as more important to their identity after having a kid, women placed a larger importance on being a parent. Both spouses gave it comparable ratings, suggesting that spouse identity was developed inside the marriage. The investigation of complicated changes in self-perceptions in the course of becoming a parent and a parent-to-child transitions was made possible by the inclusion of couples and repeated measurement of all variables.

Dealing with Change

The fifth interview question "Can you describe how your life changed and how you dealt or manage those changes?" generated the fifth theme "Dealing with Change". The fifth theme deals with an essential part of the 'Moving Through' phase of Schlossberg's Transition Theory wherein it was focused on one of the coping resources stated in the 4S System which is the Strategies.

When asked about the changes in their lives and how they dealt with those changes, couples have mentioned several strategies or life plans that they have implemented to be able to deal with life changes that they have experienced brought about by the transition period.

The participants mentioned that as a couple having a mutual decision and proper communication is one of the vital approach in dealing with the changes accompanied by the transition process. In addition, they also shared that teamwork made it easier for them to cope with the changes. Lastly, majority of the participants revealed that being able to adjust on every situation that they faced is also important to be able to handle the hurdles brought about by the transition. Schlossberg's Transition Theory may be applied because as couples move forward the transition process they were able identify one of the potential coping resources which are the strategies they have employed to be able to handle the changes given to them by the transition process.

Likewise, according to Donker, Mastrotheodoros, & Branje (2021), the considerable efforts taken to stop the spread of COVID-19 have had a significant effect on daily life for families. The quality of parenting and the relationship between parents and adolescents may suffer from changes in family routines and stress caused by COVID-19. However, employing active coping mechanisms may be linked to little detrimental or even beneficial changes in the connection between parents and adolescents. This was further supported by Spring (2020) that an average decline in parental support, positive parenting, and harmful relationships with teenagers was found. Relationship alterations were not directly predicted by COVID-19-related stress, and moderating effects were not consistently demonstrated. Only the employment of active coping mechanisms by adolescents reduced the negative effects of stress on effective parenting. The

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relationship between stress and a shift toward positive parenting was unfavorable for adolescents with high levels of active coping, but beneficial for those with low levels of active coping. For adolescents with low active coping, the relationship between parenting and adolescence was beneficial. The results show that parent-adolescent interactions during a pandemic require care, particularly for teenagers who are under a lot of stress and who are actively employing coping mechanisms.

Recognition of Social Support

The last and the sixth interview question "Kindly share examples of support that you found extremely helpful in the transition process?" generated the last theme "Recognition of Social Support". The sixth theme was still a part of the 'Moving Through' phase of Schlossberg's Transition Theory and the last coping resources stated in the 4S System as described by Schlossberg was Support.

When asked about the examples of support that they have found extremely helpful during the transition process, based on the responses of the participants, couples have considered that those that came from their family and friends were the tremendously valuable social support that they have received in the transition period during the pandemic. Likely, Schlossberg's Transition Theory can be applied because the participants revealed one of the potential coping resources which is the acquired support as couples ventured into the transition period.

This finding affirmed by Kazmierczak (2015) that, in the beginning, most new parents require a little additional help from family and friends. This could involve doing duties around the house or watching the kids while you take a break, or it could be emotional support like simply listening.

Stage 3: Moving Out

In addition, to be able to complete the discussion about the transition framework, we need to consider the last phase which is the Moving Out stage. This stage involves the strengthening of the coping resources being experienced by the participants as identified on the generated themes on stage 2. Thus, be able to continuously perform the new role as parents. The Moving Out phase depicted a disengagement on the previous role which is coupling and settling on the new role which is parenting during the pandemic period.

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Corollary Question Number 3: Based on the consolidated findings, what informative social media platform may be proposed?

As an output of this study, an educative material that may be developed is a VIRTUAL HOME LEARNING ENVIRONMENT that will be focused on the well-being of parents who transitioned from coupling to parenting during the pandemic.

As a part of the Virtual Learning Environment, a peer support group was created through the utilization of Facebook Groups to be able to bring pandemic parents together. This way new parents during the pandemic can share knowledge, practical experiences anytime and new parents easily have access to support and information. The Facebook Group created was named PANDEMIC PARENTS PH. It will be managed to invite members specifically first time parents during the pandemic.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on their experiences, participants experienced this kind of transition unexpectedly. No one from them had seen that they will experience it this way. The experiences that they have shared was definitely brought about by the situation that they are in which is the current global pandemic.

Even though couples had to experience the transition process during the time of global pandemic, couples were able to realize with much deeper understanding about the kind of journey that they had experienced. They were able to identify coping resources necessary to be able to move through a major life transition. They were able to understand the meaning of the situation that they are into that even the transition period happened during the most uncertain situation, the participants were able to understand the positive meaning of the situation that they currently have.

They were able to learn as well to all the challenges that they have encountered. They were able to cope with all the trials brought about by the transition through strategizing together as one couple for one common goal. Lastly, they were able to recognize essential support that helped them surpass the transition period while living in a situation that is full of uncertainty.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and conclusions, the following are the recommendations of the study; First and foremost, Parents should give importance to the experiences that they encountered as they transitioned from being couples to becoming parents during the pandemic particularly the coping resources also known as the 4S. These identified coping resources mentioned as Situation, Self, Strategies and Support can be vital to be able to cope up as they move their way in accepting a major life role. Couples should also learn from the lived experiences depicted in the study through the Transition Model by Schlossberg. This will be beneficial for them order to understand what particular type and context of transition they are experiencing. Also, this will help them prepare when a similar situation is encountered. Marriage counselors should give emphasis on the lived experiences shared in the study to be able to facilitate interaction with couples or clients who transitioned the same way as the participants in the study. Psychologists should consider the lived experiences stated in this study during the conduct of marriage and family therapy during the pandemic. Thus, creating a program or therapeutic community that will help couples, parents, or even families in coping during the transition period from coupling to parenting during the pandemic. Lastly, future researchers with the same objectives and endeavor of the study may use this as one of their references. Other factors included in this study regarding the lived experiences of couples traversing a new role from coupling to parenting during the coronavirus pandemic could be subjected to future studies. They may also utilize other appropriate methods and designs.

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ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume III, Issue IV

May 2022

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