

EXPLORING HOME-BASED LEARNING: PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES OF GRADESCHOOLERS IN A PRIVATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study delved into the experiences of grade school students within a private elementary school setting during the period of home-based learning. Utilizing semi-structured and structured interview techniques, twelve participants were engaged to gather rich insights into their encounters. Thematic analysis served as the primary method for data interpretation. The research revealed that modular learning presented considerable hurdles for students.

The shift to home-based learning appeared to diminish opportunities for socialization and peer interaction, given the limitations on direct engagement with teachers and classmates. Students encountered difficulties in managing time and maintaining focus without the direct supervision of teachers. Understanding modular learning materials proved to be challenging, particularly without timely clarification from educators. Moreover, restricted access to essential resources hindered students' active engagement in the learning process.

This study sheds light on the implications of home-based learning in the context of private elementary schools. It emphasizes the urgent necessity for educational institutions and educators to address these challenges effectively, thereby enhancing the overall learning experience for students during periods of home-based education.

INTRODUCTION

In the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the landscape of education underwent a significant transformation, compelling institutions worldwide to suspend physical operations and transition to online and modular learning. This shift, as documented by UNESCO (2020), affected over 1.7 billion students globally, including 28,451,212 students in the less economically developed nation of the Philippines (Pitagan, 2021).

This unprecedented crisis prompted a necessary adaptation in teaching and learning methods, giving rise to challenges and opportunities for both educators and students. As the traditional classroom setting gave way to home-based learning, students with varying mindsets navigated the transition differently. The concept of a growth mindset emerged as a key factor, with resilient students adapting more readily to the novel learning environment (Porkhel S. and Chhetri R., 2021).

The closure of educational facilities prompted a reliance on alternative methods such as online, modular, and distance learning, presenting challenges that impacted students' exploratory learning capabilities (Abuhassna et al., 2020). Scholars, including Finol (2020) and Mallillin et al. (2020), delved into the effects of distance learning on learner satisfaction, academic achievements, and the independent learning journeys facilitated by modules, worksheets, and textbooks.

This research, titled "Exploring Home-Based Learning: Perspectives and Experiences of Grade Schoolers in a Private Elementary School" delves into the experiences of elementary students navigating home-based learning. The study aims to shed light on how modular learning not only modified the curriculum but also brought innovation to teaching and learning methods for elementary students. It explores the adjustments made by students, addressing academic challenges, experiences, and coping mechanisms during the transition from traditional to modular home-based learning.

Understanding the challenges and advantages of modular home-based learning is crucial for aspiring educators, especially in the context of the evolving educational landscape. Insights from this study provide essential knowledge for anticipating and mitigating potential student challenges. This understanding equips educators with strategies to enhance student engagement, motivation, and independence in the context of a modular setup—an increasingly relevant aspect of education influenced by factors like the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for adaptable learning modalities.

Statement of the Problem

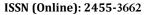
The primary objective of this study was to investigate the challenges and experiences of Grade 6 students from a private elementary school in the Division of Cabanatuan City during the height of the pandemic's impact on home-based learning. To address this objective, the research sought to answer the following specific questions:

- 1. How did the participants perceive home-based learning ?
- 2. What academic challenges or experiences did gradeschoolers encounter during the implementation of homebased learning?
- 3. Which strategies did the participants employ to manage and adapt to home-based learning?
- 4. What were the implications of the findings for basic education?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research employed a qualitative method, particularly the phenomenological approach. Pathak, Jena, & Kalra (2013) note that the qualitative method serves to understand individuals' beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviors, and interactions, producing non-numerical data. Concurrently, phenomenological research is a qualitative research approach that aims to discern and delineate the universal essence of a phenomenon. This





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approach delves into the everyday experiences of individuals, sidelining the researchers' presuppositions about the phenomenon. Thus, phenomenological research centers on lived experiences, seeking profound insights into individuals' interpretations of those experiences (Bliss, 2016). Essentially, the phenomenological research design postulates that individuals apply a universal framework to comprehend their experiences. The task of the researchers is to interpret participants' feelings, perceptions, and beliefs to elucidate the core essence of the phenomenon, often through investigations or interviews.

In this study, the qualitative method facilitated a deeper understanding of how elementary students, specifically those in grade 6, navigated the challenges they encountered during Home-Based Learning.

Respondents

The study's respondents comprised twelve Grade VI students enrolled in the academic year 2022-2023 at Amazing Grace Christian School. The data gathered were derived from their experiences during the initial outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. These students were categorized based on their academic performance: above average, average, and below average.

For a clearer representation of the research, the subsequent table illustrates the distribution of the 12 respondents among the Grade VI students of Amazing Grace Christian School.

Table 1. Respondents of the Study

Respondent 2	Above Average	
Respondent 3	Above Average	
Respondent 4	Above Average	
Respondent 5	Average	
Respondent 6	Average	
Respondent 7	Average	
Respondent 8	Average	
Respondent 9	Below Average	
Respondent 10	Below Average	
Respondent 11	Below Average	
Respondent 12	Below Average	

Research Instrument

For this research, in-depth interviews were conducted among the twelve respondents. The questions, both structured and semi-structured, revolved around perceptions, experiences, and the effects of home-based learning, as well as strategies employed to cope with this mode of learning.

Upon obtaining consent from the adviser and the parents, responses from the participants were recorded to ensure that every detail shared during the interview was documented. All data was handled with the utmost confidentiality.

Data Collection

To collect the necessary data on perceptions, experiences, challenges, and coping strategies associated with home-based learning, structured and semi-structured interviews were carried out with the twelve participants. Prior to this, approval was secured from the School Directress and the Grade VI teachers. Due to the advice of the directress, considering the area was not yet declared COVID-free, the parents of the twelve participants were also approached, and their responses were submitted in written form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this research, a thematic analysis approach was employed to investigate the experiences of elementary students in a private school during home-based learning. Thematic analysis, a qualitative research method, allowed the research team to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes within the data, providing a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives. (Creswell 2014).

The study revealed several significant themes related to students' perceptions and experiences with home-based learning. The first major theme, "Face-to-face classes can explain the lesson better, inguingmed that students left a stronger connection to the material in a traditional classroom setting. Participants expressed the value of direct interactions with teachers, immediate feedback, and engaging in peer discussions, emphasizing the effectiveness of face-to-face instruction. Some participants cited challenges in understanding lessons without personal guidance from teachers.

Another cluster theme, "Home-Based Learning is Challenging," emerged from students' experiences during the transition to online and modular learning. Challenges included difficulties in staying focused, distractions, and the absence of teacher guidance. The study also indicated that students appreciated the flexibility of time management offered by home-based learning, allowing them to allocate time according to their preferences.

The third significant theme, "Family became my support system in Learning," highlighted the crucial role of families in facilitating students' academic pursuits during home-based learning. Participants acknowledged the support, guidance, and involvement of their family members in various aspects of their education, emphasizing the positive impact of family engagement on student motivation and accountability.

Overall, the research provided valuable insights into the challenges and advantages of home-based learning for elementary students. It emphasized the importance of understanding students' perspectives and the role of families in supporting academic endeavors during this unconventional learning environment.



	Theme	Sub Themes	Description	Significant Statements
1	Difficulty in the comprehension of the lesson	Comprehension	Students were not able to understand well because no one explained the lesson properly. There's no teacher that can explain the	Participant 1: "I think being a student that learns on a home-based learning is ok. But I also think that faceto-face is better since you can really understand the lesson." Participant 2:
			lessons.	"Sa aking pananaw, ang modyular na pag-aaral ay may maganda at di-magandang naidudulot. Ang magandang dulot ng modyular na pag-aaral ay tipid sa transportation at ang dimagandang dulot nito para sa akin ay di mapaliwanag ng mabuti ang aralin."
				Participant 3: "Ang pananaw ko ay mahirap dahil walang gurong personal na magturo at magpaliwanag ng mga aralin."
				Participant 7: "Hindi maganda ang naging epekto sa akin dahil hindi ko rin naman naiintindihan dahil walang nagpapaliwanag ng maayos sa aralin."
				Participant 8 "Bilang student, ang aking pananaw ay mas naging mahirap po unawain ang lesson. Mas mainam pa din po ang face-to-face na pagtuturo."
1.1	Sufficient time to study the lesson/module	Sufficient time	Students take their time answering the activities' and complete their tasks.	Participant 1: "I would take my time answering my modules because I have enough time answering my modules than face-to-face classes unless the teacher gave us a deadline."
				Participant 11: "I would read books while listening to music, or when I can't read, I would go walk my dog outside."
1.2	Difficulty in focusing on their studies	Difficulty in focusing	The students found the home-based learning difficult because they are used to face-to-face interaction with the teacher.	Participant 1: "I found it a little bit difficult to stay focused on my modules because I was used to being in a faceto-face where there are teachers you can ask questions to."
				Participant 5: "Nahihirapan ako dahil nasanay ako sa fate to face na pag-aaral"
				On the other hand, Participant 8: "Difficult po gawa na din po na hindi ako masyadong natuturuan ng aking magulang dahil sila po ay may trabaho.
1.3	Lack of guidance from the teacher	Lack of guidance	Found home-based learning challenging because no one teaches them the lessons that they do not	Participant 6: "Hindi dahil hindi ko kasama ang mga magulang ko dahil sila ay nagtatrabaho lagi lang ako nasa loob ng bahay at nalulungkot."
			understand.	Participant 7: "Hindi madali mag modyol lalo na kung isa lang mas maganda pa rin ang may guro na magtututo sayo para mas maintindihan mo ang iyong aralin."
				Participant 8:



				"Hindi po madali. Mas mainam po na may mag guide po."
1.4	Support fro	rom Support	Family helped and supported them in answering their modules and also discussed the lesson they found hard to answer.	Participant 2: "Ang tumutulong sa akin noong ako ay nag-aaral ay ang aking nanay. Ito ang naging bonding namin ng nanay." Participant 7: "Ipinapaliwanag sa akin ni Mami or ni Tita kung paano ang gagawin kapag hindi ko na talaga alam o hindi ko na maintindihan." Participant 9: "Yes, my family is helping me and teaching me during online classes. My mother is helping me with my assignments and explaining the previous lesson that we just discussed during an online class."

	Theme	Sub Themes	Description	Significant Statements
2	Independent learning	Independent	Faced academic challenges like not understanding the lesson, independent learning can cause struggling in learning.	Participant 1: "I faced academic challenges in the implementation of home-based learning like not understanding lessons sometimes, etc." Participant 3: "Kailangan kong matuto mag-aral ng mag-isa sa bahay." Participant 6: "Naging hamon sakin dapat matuto ako araling mabuti na hindi umaasa palagi sa magulang" Participant 7: "Walang nagtuturo na guro upang maintindihan
2.1	Insufficient time to accomplish the activities	Insufficient time	They cannot finish the tasks given to them because, most of the time, they do not understand the lesson.	ko ang aralin." Participant 3: "May pagkakataon na nauubusan akong oras sa pag sagot dahil hindi ko naiintindihan ang aking sagutan." Participant 6: "Opo lalo na ang subject na math dahil kulang sa oras" Participant 7: "Nahihirapan ako sa iba dahil kinulang sa oras ko dahil may araw na madami ang binigay na modyul." Participant 9: "I had a hard time understanding the teacher's explanation and answering exercises because of the time limit." Participant 12: "Minsan nahihirapan ako sa module dahil kaunti lang ang oras."
2.2	Difficulty in understanding the lesson	Difficulty understanding	Not understanding the lesson is challenging for students because some of them were not able to fully understand the lesson given to them.	Participant 1: "Yes, sometimes. The things that made it harder for me was not understanding some of the lessons or questions." Participant 3: "Hirap ako sa modyul dahil may mga salita akong hindi pamilyar."



Participant 4: "Minsan nahihirapan ako kasi minsan hindi ko alam alam ang lesson pero kiung hindi ko alam ang lesson isearch ko top sa youtube." 2.3 Participant 4: "Math ang hindi ko masyado Difficulty Complex Based on the learners, understanding subject mathematics subject naaral kase ung math ang pinaka mababa sa card complex subject gives them a hard time ko." understanding it. Participant 6: "Subject na math dahil mas naiintindihan ko kung sa loob ng eskwelahan..." Participant 8: "Math kaya po siguro di ko natutunan mas maganda face-to-face." Participant 9: "Math was my problem; it was hard for me." 2.4 Appropriate time Appropriate Not all the time is the Participant 2: for learning time best way to do their "Sa umaga po dahil po para fresh ang aking students isipan." modules: prefer answering their work and activities Participant 3: "Tuwing umaga ko ito sinasagutan every morning while upang wala na akong isipin na sasagutan." their mind is still fresh. 2.5 Lack of guidance Guidance They tend to struggle Participant 1: "Not really. When you need help, no one can and are not confident answering their help you because they are mostly busy or doing modules when no one is something." around to teach and Participant 2: explain to them what to do because some are "Nahihirapan po ako kapag walang busy. nagpapaliwanag sa akin o walang internet." Participant 5: "Di gaano mas gusto ko ang face-to-face na pagaaral." 2.6 Utilized gadgets Utilized Gadgets like cell phones Participant 2: "Opo ang aking cellphone, ipad at laptop." as a tool for gadgets and laptops are great help during this time to learning make communication Participant 3: and to do all the work "Oo ang gamit ko ay cellphone para mag search that is needed to be sa internet." done. Participant 4: "Mayroon akong gadget kapag gumagawa ng module dahil minsan hindi ko alam ang sagot...' Participant 7: "May gadyet naman ako at nakakatolong naman sakin at medyo nahihirapan din." Participant 8: "Yes po mas madali po magsagot using gadgets." Participant 10: "Opo gadget ang isa sa gabay na tumulong upang masagutan ang modyul." Participant 11: "I only use my phone when I really need help in

right."

studying sometimes so I can get the answers



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	Theme	Sub Themes	Description	Significant Statements
3	Parents as a learning	Parents	Having a family member as a	Participant 7: "Magpaturo sa magulang."
	facilitator		mentor when seeking assistance.	Participant 8: "Humingi ng tulong sa aking magulang."
			assistant o	Participant 9: "I was doing self-learning with the help of my family."
3.1	Time management and organization	Time management	Having a to-do list makes them responsible and able to manage their time properly.	Participant 3: "Gumagawa ako ng to-do list tuwing gabi para sa umaga po ay handa at magawa ko na ang aking to-do list." Participant 4: "Gumagawa ako ng listahan ng gagawin araw-araw para maayos ang aking modules."
3.2	Organization of tasks/activities	Organization	Students tend to make to-do lists for their modules and organize their time to answer them.	Participant 1: "I make a to-do list every day, and yes, I do set a timer so I can have enough for each subject." Participant 2: "Ako ay gumagawa ng to-do-list at checklist kapag gumagawa ng modyul. Naglilimita ako ng oras para sa paggawa ng modyul."
3.3	Support from family	Support	Students seek help from their parents regarding the lesson that they do not understand.	Participant 2: "Ako ay humihingi ng tulong sa aking magulang at ipinapaliwanag nila yung aralin kung saan ako nahihirapan." Participant 3: "Lumalapit saaking magulang kung saan ang aking di maintindihan."
3.4	Conducive learning environment at home	Conducive learning	They tend to seek out peaceful and quiet places or rooms when it is noisy in order to focus on their work.	Participant 6: "Ang mommy ko, binabalikan namin palagi ang libro sa gabi at pinapaliwanag niya." Participant 2: "Humahanap po ako ng tahimik na lugar para doon ako gagawa modyul. Participant 6: "Pumupunta ako sa kwarto para mapokus ako sa pag-aaral." Participant 7: "Umaalis at pumupunta sa tahimik na lugar." Participant 12: "Umaalis po pumupunta sa tahimik na lugar."

Analysis

This study indicates that the utilization of modules promotes self-directed study, aligning with existing literature emphasizing the advantages of autonomous learning and modular materials (Nardo, 2017). Modular resources offer students a structured learning path, empowering them to assume responsibility for their education and progress at their own pace. Furthermore, modular learning offers convenience by enabling students to access materials at their convenience, from any location.

Nevertheless, the study's outcomes unveil a prevailing preference among students for traditional learning methods, despite the benefits associated with modular learning. This inclination isn't surprising, given the entrenched nature of traditional learning within our educational framework, to which students are accustomed. Additionally, traditional learning fosters crucial peer and teacher interactions, integral to the learning process. The study also underscores the inherent challenges of home-based learning, demanding self-discipline and motivation from students, which can prove daunting. Moreover, students may contend with distractions and a lack of requisite resources and support, hindering their academic progress.

The implications drawn from the study highlight the multifaceted challenges students face in a home-based learning environment. Distractions and noise disrupt concentration, leading students to seek alternative study spaces, which may isolate them further. The absence of immediate teacher and peer support impedes collaborative learning and may increase the burden of learning



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solely on students. This shift to independent learning can exacerbate struggles for some students, potentially resulting in slower progress or gaps in understanding. Ultimately, the findings underscore the critical importance of addressing the quality of education and the overall learning experience in home-based settings to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities.

In sum, the study underscores the advantages of modular learning in fostering independent study but also underscores the hurdles associated with home-based learning and the prevailing preference for traditional methods among students. These findings necessitate careful consideration by educators and policymakers, urging them to evaluate the merits and demerits of diverse learning modalities and tailor their approaches to meet the diverse needs of students.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following are concluded:

- Face-to-face classes are seen to be more effective for learning. While self-paced learning can be advantageous, home-based education presents several challenges, necessitating crucial family support for success.
- Some individuals struggle with unsupervised study or lack of assistance, while others encounter difficulties due to time constraints or internet connectivity issues. Conversely, a growing number of students now consider technology and devices indispensable to their educational endeavors.
- 3. Students frequently turn to their parents for assistance with their modules, often creating daily to-do lists for their modules on a daily basis. Many students express a greater comfort level approaching their parents for aid compared to seeking help from teachers or peers. Additionally, in noisy environments, students tend to seek out quiet spaces or rooms to better concentrate on their tasks.
- 4. Implications were drawn from the findings of the study. Based on the proceedings of the research, the following are recommended:
 - School administrators need to assess and adjust strategies to offer enhanced support for students during home-based learning. This could involve developing effective methods, integrating interactive and engaging activities, and ensuring consistent communication and availability for student assistance.
 - 2. Students should proactively take measures to minimize distractions while learning from home. This includes creating a dedicated study area free from noise and disruptions, establishing a structured routine to facilitate focused work, and employing time management techniques. Additionally, maintaining or improving coping strategies to navigate potential feelings of isolation and stress associated with home-based learning is important. This might entail practicing self-care activities like regular exercise, taking breaks, and engaging in relaxation exercises.
 - 3. Parents are encouraged to actively participate in their children's education by providing guidance and monitoring their progress. Regular communication with teachers can help address any challenges or difficulties encountered during the learning process.

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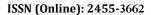
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