



A LENS INTO THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF EDUCATIONALLY CHALLENGED PARENTS AS LEARNING FACILITATORS AMIDST HEALTH CRISIS IN FISHING COMMUNITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has raised concerns and challenged the Philippine educational system, mainly the function of educationally challenged parents as learning facilitators in the fishing communities of Lagonoy. Hence, using the qualitative method following the phenomenological research design with the viewpoints of structural functionalism, this study aimed to explore the lived experiences of this social group. Four educationally challenged parents participated in and were interviewed. As a result, this study found that parents had challenged their prowess to teach their children. The teaching-learning process for them was dreadfully traumatizing, but they had coping mechanisms identified to overcome this situation. Hence, this undervalued group had alarming experiences that the authorities or policymakers need to attend to fully maximize their functions as part of the intertwined relationship in the country's educational system. The parents, not just the teachers, must have enough knowledge about the curriculum and teaching-learning know-how. This was so that they could perform their roles as the key mentor to their children at home in the earliest stage of developing their cognitive skills, during and even without health-related concerns.

Keywords: academically-challenged parents, coastal area, fishing communities, structural functionalism

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1. Introduction

Aside from the health sector, the COVID-19 crisis has adversely impacted education, notably all countries' educational systems worldwide [1]. The education department has taken aback and quickly shifted the strategy from traditional (face-to-face) to remote (online or modular) learning methods to respond to the situation's challenging demands. Learning loss, mental health concerns, school closures, learning resources [2], and changing the teaching-learning process to flexible learning modalities (synchronous and asynchronous) have all contested teachers' and parents' ability to provide consistently high-quality education, particularly at the grade or elementary level, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. This grade level is crucial to a child's cognitive development and is the foundation for all his mental skills.

Teachers in elementary and secondary schools in the Philippines have quadrupled their efforts and made the most of their limited resources to prepare and print modules and other learning materials for their students. On the other hand, learning at home is a huge challenge for both children and parents, particularly for educationally challenged parents with limited or insufficient knowledge of the curriculum, teaching-learning process, and approaches. However, the Department of Education sent learning facilitators— subject teachers who visit children at home to assist them in learning if they do not have anyone to facilitate learning. However, this strategy does not guarantee that the students will fully grasp or acquire the needed basic competencies to be developed, unlike those students with parents or siblings who can enable the teaching-learning process at home without the assistance of learning facilitators.

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This concern is also contemporary and essential for parents who live in coastal areas or fishing communities where most do not have a bachelor's degree or are no-read, no-write parents and do not have teaching-learning know-how. This social group belongs mostly to low-income families currently enduring relative poverty in the Philippines [3] and cannot afford to send their children to higher education. This is due to their social vulnerability and low literacy capacities, which hinder their ability to get suitable employment to support their family's day-to-day needs and learning opportunities.

As significant phenomena above, this study aimed to fill that gap by exploring the experiences and challenges of educationally challenged parents serving as learning facilitators to their children amidst this pandemic in fishing communities. This undertaking may provide significant findings that policymakers can use to formulate policies or interventions on how these social groups can cope with the challenging demands on education amidst the pandemic or in the event of a future health-related catastrophe in which the education sector will almost certainly be severely impacted.

This study was based on the theory of structural functionalism, also known as functionalism, which perceives society as a system including interconnected components designed to meet the biological and sociological needs of its members [4]. Structural functionalism is a sociological perspective that asserts that every institution, relationship, role, and set of norms within a society serves a purpose and is essential for the survival of both the other components and the society as a whole [5]. Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), an English philosopher and biologist, identified similarities between society and the human body in his writings, ultimately leading to functionalism's development. He contended that, similar to how diverse bodily functions, the numerous components of society collaborate to maintain societal function [4]. Spencer's reference to society encompasses social institutions and patterns of beliefs and behaviors that aim to fulfill societal needs. These include government, education, family, healthcare, religion, and the economy.

Emile Durkheim, a prominent sociologist from the early days, utilized Spencer's theory to elucidate the mechanisms by which civilizations undergo transformation and endure across time. Durkheim posited that society functions as an intricate system comprised of interconnected and interdependent components, which collaborate harmoniously to uphold stability [4]. Similar to this study's goal, the researcher viewed society as a complicated system that requires each individual to play their part efficiently in achieving sustainable development. This study examines the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on parents who struggle academically as learning facilitators for their kids. It also looked at their intended functions within the educational system, where everyone neglected to offer empirical analysis that would have allowed policymakers to impose specific solutions and create programs to maintain the provision of high-quality education even outside the gamut of a pandemic-related health crisis.

1.1 Research Questions

This study explored the experiences of educationally challenged parents as learning facilitators for remote learning amidst the COVID-19 crisis in East Coastal Lagonoy, Camarines Sur, Philippines fishing communities. Specifically, it sought to address the following questions:

- a. What are the experiences of educationally challenged parents serving as learning facilitators for remote learning implemented by the Department of Education amidst this pandemic in the East Coast of Lagonoy, Camarines Sur, Philippines?
- b. How do the educationally challenged parents experience the difficulties brought about by the pandemic as learning facilitators, particularly in the teaching-learning process?
- c. How do parents deal with remote learning as learning facilitators in their children's learning process?

2. Methodology

The study was conducted in fishing communities on the East Coast of Lagonoy, such as San Sebastian and Cabotonan, Lagonoy, and Camarines Sur in the Philippines.

These communities are considered because of their geographical locations, which are vulnerable to natural hazards and climate-related threats [6] [7]. Also, health-related risks (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) [8] are a threat to these communities due to the tourist destinations (waterfalls and beaches) commonly visited by local and foreign tourists amidst this pandemic and a relatively high index of deprivation that affects the participants' social status quo, particularly in terms of attaining formal education [3]. Furthermore, Maddox [9] stated that artisanal fishing communities in developing countries such as the Philippines experience many of the same forms of educational disadvantage as other occupational groups, which influence the participant's literacy interests and levels. There are typical examples of low educational enrolment and attendance, poor teaching and learning, and enrolment and outcomes.

This study used a purposive sampling design that followed criterion sampling. In this technique, the participants were selected based on the predetermined criteria or characteristics set by the researcher. The four (4) participants were chosen based on the predetermined criteria [10] as the educationally challenged parents. They are the household heads (a male or female parent representing the head of the household) who do not have bachelor's degrees and have not completed elementary and secondary education. In other words, those who did not complete formal education and only attained the elementary level, or no-read, no-write. They are considered in this study because the researcher believed that, considering the country's educational system's current condition amidst the health crisis, their educational attainment (literacy capacity) defines their difficulties in fulfilling their responsibilities in assisting their children in becoming competent learning facilitators. Furthermore, prospective participants must have children currently enrolled in grade or elementary school level (Grades 1 to 6). No children who have completed secondary and tertiary levels since children who have completed secondary and tertiary education can assist in the teaching-learning process in any way because they already possess competencies that their parents may ask them to educate their younger siblings who are in primary school. Four (4) educationally challenged parents were

the study's actual number of participants. Only one parent per household was interviewed during the study.

The study employed a qualitative research method following a transcendental phenomenological research design. According to Moustakas [10], this phenomenological research design focuses less on the researcher's interpretations and more on describing the participants' experiences. It also highlights the concept of bracketing or *epoche* and participants' textural and structural descriptions towards constructing essence. This study attempts to disseminate and provide information about the experiences of educationally challenged parents (textural descriptions) and how they experienced problems as learning facilitators throughout the pandemic (structural descriptions), particularly in the teaching-learning process. Within the intricacies of the changed settings, the researcher aims to identify the essence of parental participation in remote learning as learning facilitators. The study used a face-to-face interview to collect essential data from the participants. The primary focus of the questions was the experiences and challenges acquired by the educationally challenged parents as learning facilitators amidst this pandemic. On the other hand, this study employed triangulation using a voice recorder, field observation, and documents to evaluate the reliability of the statements provided by the participants. To conduct a smooth flow of discussion, this study used the Bikol dialect as the primary mode of communication during the interview process.

The Moustakas approach [10] of transcendental phenomenological research was used to examine the data collected in this study, with the following steps: a) the researcher read over the data (interview transcription); b) the significant statements (key phrases), sentences, or quotes explain how the participants experienced the phenomenon, also known as the horizontalization stage; c) the researcher organized the meaning clusters from the identified significant statements into themes; d) the fourth and fifth phases used significant ideas and themes to write descriptions of what the participants experienced (textural description) and how they experienced (structural description) the phenomenon; e) the final stage was to write a composite description of the phenomenon that incorporates both the

textural and structural descriptions and conveys the essence. The study's validity was determined by conducting a literature search based on the phenomenological technique, bracketing past experiences, maintaining field notes, employing a sufficient sample, interviewing until data saturation, and identifying previous cases [10].

3. Results and Discussion

This section explained how participants expressed their experiences of educationally challenged parents as learning facilitators amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in

fishing communities. Using the Moustakas Approach [10], transcendental phenomenology explored each participant's individual lived experience, leading to an examination of essential themes related to the teaching-learning process of educationally challenged parents during the outbreak of the pandemic.

3.1. Significant Statements, Formulated Meaning, and Themes

This study presented 12 significant statements out of the verbatim statements of four (4) participants from the fishing communities of Lagonoy (Table 1).

Table 1. Significant statements and formulated meanings.

Significant Statements	Formulated Meanings
When President Duterte ordered the lockdown, I thought about how to teach my children reading and writing. I had a hard time teaching my kids because of this.	The teaching-learning process is also a traumatizing reality because not all parents have the capacity to deal with this kind of concern.
I have also seen firsthand how stubborn our kids can be when it comes to learning. Teaching writing and reading with comprehension is particularly challenging when we struggle with these skills.	The pandemic paves the way for parents to see how hard it is to teach their children, particularly the stubborn ones. However, they self-pitied because of their limited skills in the teaching-learning process.
Our children do not willingly ask us to teach them things like writing or reading during the teaching-learning process. They genuinely obeyed us when we gave them something to be terrified of, like "pamalo" (something like knout).	The teaching-learning process is also a traumatizing reality because not all parents have the capacity to deal with this kind of concern.
My kids do not genuinely understand what I am trying to teach them since I typically teach them the things I know, leaving out the ones I do not.	The pandemic paves the way for parents to see how hard it is to teach their children, particularly the stubborn ones. However, they self-pitied because of their limited skills in the teaching-learning process.
My personal experience taught me that teaching our children at home is preferable, even during the pandemic. But regrettably, I am forced to live with these difficult times because of the limitations. If our kids do not honestly want to study their lessons, they frequently get angry. I often reprimanded them.	This situation also teaches the parents to be patient enough to facilitate the teaching-learning process and the importance of the reinforcement theory of motivation (reward and punishment system). The educational parents have limited capacity to teach their children.
The topics that I find most challenging are Math, English, and Science. I require assistance understanding the context and even the English language.	Since educationally challenged parents have some limitations (mentally), their children usually take advantage of them. They do not respect and care for them.
	Educating these people is crucial to social change and understanding structural functionalism theory. It holds that everyone must play their part and cooperate to make a difference in society.

Table 1. Significant statements and formulated meanings.

Significant Statements	Formulated Meanings
When it comes to the teaching-learning process, if I do not comprehend the tasks or readings that my kids need to learn, I typically approach my nieces and nephews or other family relatives who are in high school or college (undergraduate or graduate) for assistance, provided they have their available time.	The educationally challenged parents are resourceful enough to provide their kids with a top-notch teaching-learning environment.
When my kids do not want to do their homework, I let them play instead. Because if I asked them to study, I am sure they would not do it and would not pay attention when I tried to teach them.	Educationally challenged parents need to learn about the specific teaching strategies that could help them improve their skills in teaching their children when needed.
Time is crucial while teaching our kids. There have been occasions when I have forgotten to teach my children due to the home tasks that require my attention, such as cooking and cleaning clothes.	Time management is essential in teaching their kids.
If my kids did not acquire something from me, it would break my heart. I understood that parents should be their first teachers before their children start schooling. I must first teach them the fundamentals of reading and writing. But I was unable to give it to them. It hurts.	The educationally challenged parents self-pitied, especially if they do not have something to teach their children during the teaching-learning process amidst the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis.
Particularly when the Department of Education adopted the modular approach, parents learned from the lessons in the modules during the lockdown since they always take care of their children's activities, especially mothers. Not the kids in and of themselves.	Due to the limitations of their parent's ability to teach them, children do not develop their potential or talents. On the other hand, it is noted due to parents' desire to see their kids pass.
Because education is the only gift we can give our children, I always tell them to pay attention and take their studies seriously. Except for the knowledge you have already learned, we do not have any material things we could give you or carry with you throughout your life.	This represents the desire of parents who struggle academically to pass on their pieces of advice to their children through education. They believe that educating children is the key to their future success.

Table 2 presents the themes of significant statements shared by the participants.

Theme 1. Teaching-learning Process as a Challenging Aspect of Honing One's Cognitive Skills

According to the four participants' shared experiences, they struggled to teach their children because, according to Che, "*masakiton magtukdo nin aki, ang gusto siya na ang masunod*" (I had difficulties in teaching my kids because they want me to follow their wants). They have also witnessed directly how resistant to learning their children can be,

particularly given their difficulties with writing and reading. Baye stated, "*Dae ko man masyadong matukduan ang sakong aki sa pagbasa ta ako mismo dae ko naiintindihan ang sakong tigbabasa*" (I cannot teach my children to read with comprehension since even I cannot understand what I am reading). Beth acknowledged that sometimes parents must be grumpy with their kids to get them to obey them in writing and reading or even in doing their assignments. Chen said, "*tigpapakot ko sinda arog kan pamolo para magsunod sinda sako*" (I made them fearful of something, like "*pamalo*," so they would abide by us).

Additionally, Baye confessed that the way their kids behave at home makes it difficult to teach them. Thus, it implies that the mothers are now aware of how challenging it is to develop one's cognitive abilities, especially while acting as learning facilitators in the teaching-learning process. The teachers who are qualified and skillful in imparting and refining one's life may be shown the utmost respect due to their shared meanings or symbols.

Theme 2. Presence of Teacher-Figure

Baye and Beth from Cabotonan and San Sebastian confessed that a teacher *persona* must exist for their children to pay attention to their lessons during the teaching-learning process. They claim that “*mas maray pang nasa eskwelahan ang mga aki ko na tigtutukduhan kan mga maestra asin maestro ta nagtuturubod sinda, pero pag ako ang nagtutukdo sinda,*

madudunong asin mapagal pasunudon, minsan nauuyit pa sako” (It is better if my kids are in school teaching by their teachers because they used to obey their instructions, but if I asked them to do their lessons, it is very hard for me to get their interest. They are hard-headed, and sometimes they get mad at me.) It implies that teachers' presence and participation as their typical learning facilitators during the lockdown are crucial. Due to their limited time interacting with their teachers at school, their children's behavior in carrying out their lessons has changed. Since their children view them as their parents and not as the teachers who often assist them in their chores, such as writing and reading exercises, educationally challenged parents may also feel pressure. That is why they found it challenging to manage their children while giving classes at home without the presence of their teachers.

Table 2. Themes of significant statements and formulated meanings.

Theme Statements	Formulated Meanings
Theme 1. Teaching-Learning Process is a Challenging Aspect of Honing One's Cognitive Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard time teaching my kids. • We have seen firsthand how stubborn our kids can be when it comes to learning. • It is particularly challenging to teach writing and reading when we struggle with these skills.
Theme 2. Presence of Teacher-Figure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My kids do not follow my instructions because they want to follow their teachers. • Without the presence of the teacher, our children, most of the time, do not have an interest in doing their lessons.
Theme 3. Role of Parents in Educating their Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parents must be aware of their role in their children's studies. • Parents are their children's first teachers before they go to school.
Theme 4. Working Together amidst COVID-19 Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically, I approach my nieces and nephews who are in high school or college for assistance, provided they have the time and space. • During the pandemic, no teachers have rendered voluntary services to teach our children due to the restrictions. However, some offered tutorial sessions with pay, but we (educationally challenged parents) refused to avail of the services because we did not have the budget.
Theme 5. Teaching-Learning Process is Dreadfully Traumatizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching my kids that I know how incompetent I am is traumatizing and stressful. • I did not expect that this could happen; I have to manage my time for my role as mother, wife, and maid to my family. It is so stressful. • If my children have bulky and concerted tasks or modules to be done, I look like ‘praning’ (crazy). • We do not have enough budget to buy our kids learning tools like laptops and cellphones that they can use in their classes, among other issues that we are thinking of.

Theme 3. Role of Parents in Educating their Children

Bea remarked, “Ang mga magurang ang inot na dapat nagtutukdo o sinda ang inot na maistra asin maestro kan saindang mga aki bago pa maglaog sa eskwelahan” (The parents are their children’s first teachers before they attend school). According to Beth, “Iyan ang responsibilidad asin dapat na gibuhon kan magurang bago pa man maglaog sa klase an saiyang mga aki, dapat tukduan sinda kan mga bagay na dapat nindang manud-an muna sa harong” (It is the responsibility and role of the parents to teach their children first of the basic knowledge and skills at home). However, based on their own statements, these participants feel guilty about not providing their kids with the fundamental knowledge and skills while they are at home. They are well aware of their functions as parents, especially in the teaching-learning process, but they are conscious enough of their incapacity to assist their children. For them to underline their crucial function as components of the educational system, it is vital to discuss this kind of concern specifically at the national level. They must be prepared and a catalyst for social change that could help them better themselves and contribute to the advancement of society if they are to be effective and efficient learning facilitators during the lockdown or pandemic. Bea remarked, “Ang mga magurang ang inot na dapat nagtutukdo o sinda ang inot na maistra asin maestro kan saindang mga aki bago pa maglaog sa eskwelahan” (The parents are their children’s first teachers before they attend school). According to Beth, “Iyan ang responsibilidad asin dapat na gibuhon kan magurang bago pa man maglaog sa klase an saiyang mga aki, dapat tukduan sinda kan mga bagay na dapat nindang manud-an muna sa harong” (It is the responsibility and role of the parents to teach their children first of the basic knowledge and skills at home). However, based on their own statements, these participants feel guilty about not providing their kids with the fundamental knowledge and skills while they are at home. They are well aware of their functions as parents, especially in the teaching-learning process, but they are conscious enough of their incapacity to assist their children. For them to underline their crucial function as components of the educational system, it is vital

to discuss this kind of concern specifically at the national level. They must be prepared and a catalyst for social change that could help them better themselves and contribute to the advancement of society if they are to be effective and efficient learning facilitators during the lockdown or pandemic.

Theme 4. Working Together Amidst COVID-19 Crisis

According to the participants, we must work as one to combat the COVID-19 virus, and it is one of the most crucial lessons we must remember during or amid this crisis. In the education sector, working together emphasizes the camaraderie and harmonious relationships of everyone at the different levels of the system. Even parents of children with learning difficulties have their special ways of coping with this issue, so it is not just the teachers who have critical coping skills. The four participants reported that, when they have the time, they frequently ask their nieces and nephews (family relatives) who are high school or college students or graduates for help. The sad thing is that, according to Bea, “*kan panahon kan lockdown, mayo man maestra asin maestro ang nagvolunteer na magtukdo sa mga aki me, and ibang maestra naghapot kun gusto me daang magpatutor kan mga aki me, pero nagsayuma ako ta mayo man kaming pambayad*” (During the lockdown, no teachers have rendered voluntary services to teach their children due to the restrictions. However, some offered tutorial sessions with pay, but we (educationally challenged parents) refused to avail of the services because we needed more budget. This statement is regrettable since some teachers took advantage of the situation. To assume that it is evident that this type of family cannot afford that kind of amount to utilize the services being offered. “*linoton me na sana ang pagkakan me kan panahon na ito kaysa magbayad sa pagtutor sa mga aki me*” (We will provide first food to feed our children than to avail those services during that time)—Bea confessed. It is against their duty as government employees and public servants to provide private lessons to supplement their income during the lockdown. Public school teachers must render public education services. They must be unpaid (because the government pays them) and voluntary. However, throughout the

lockdown, the Department of Education created a hands-on teaching-learning environment, notably for developing reading and writing skills at the primary education level. To assist their students in their lessons, they employed learning facilitators. Additionally, they should continue to offer everyone a high-quality education. It is the perspective of structural functionalism to look into the society that works together or function well for the development and better future.

Theme 5. Teaching-Learning Process is Dreadfully Traumatizing

Since no one has economic and educational stability during the lockdown, mental health is a crucial issue that needs to be taken care of. Parents, teachers, children who are not in school, and students have argued that they lack the mental capacity to cope with the difficult repercussions of the COVID-19 outbreak. Parents who struggle academically are not free from such difficulties. According to the participants' statements, the lockdown and the teaching-learning environment's current status have been horrifying—the traumatizing reality for them. They contend that their incapacity contributes significantly to worry and despair. “Minsan, garo na akong praning ta dae ko na maintindihan ang gigibuhon ko lalo na kun sarabay-sabay na ang gibuhon kan mga aki ko, so paglaba, pagsapna tapos si mga panga-ngaipo pa ni agom.” (Sometimes, I am like “praning” (crazy) because I do not know where to start, especially if there are bulky and concerted activities in the module that I have to look into, plus the needs of my husband, the household chores, and so on.)—Beth said. As a result, the teaching-learning issues during the lockdown add to the pressure on parents who are not adequately qualified to teach their children. Because of the duties she needed to accomplish at home, such as household chores, they felt pressured or even melancholy at times. “Saro pa ang problema me ay ang mga gamit kan mga aki, dae man kami nin sapat na budget para magbakal nin cellphone o laptop para makagibo sinda kan mga dapat gibuhon sa

pagklase” (The fact that children need to use learning tools like laptops and cellphones for their classes yet we do not have the budget to buy them, this is another issue that we are considering)—Beth said. This concern is an alarming experience for the parents since it could have a multiplying effect on their roles as household heads, mothers to their kids, wives, and learning facilitators.

3.2 The Essence of the Study

The learning crisis in the Philippines grew worse during the pandemic, according to [11]. Based on the research, international tests conducted before the pandemic in 2019 revealed that about 80% of Filipino students lacked proficiency in reading, math, and science. The World Bank discovered that 91% of 10-year-old Filipino children (in Grades 4 and 5) lacked fundamental reading abilities in 2022. The parents' contribution to transmitting fundamental knowledge and skills is one of the factors influencing pupils' reading abilities in primary education. During the pandemic (lockdown), parents, particularly those who struggled with teaching skills, questioned their effectiveness in fostering their children's cognitive abilities as learning facilitators. One of the main essences of this discussion that may also be taken into consideration as factors that influence the worsened proficiency level of primary school students in the Philippines is the presence of teachers (teacher figures), parents' significant functions as learning facilitators, and the various levels of experiences shared by the participants (parents) that brought dreadful stress that led to their anxiousness and depression stages. These interpretations of the symbols offered by the participants regarding their experiences serving as learning facilitators amid the COVID-19 pandemic may provide pertinent information that parents can assist their kids in embedding into their system, especially in learning. The words or ideas of their parents, who have always been encouraging and inspiring, may help them achieve their life goals due to the possibility that these kids interpret or feel their parents' culturally or socially disparate views (symbolic interactionism) or experiences as belonging to undervalued groups [12].

Perhaps it is crucial to remember and strengthen parents' roles as part of their responsibilities and as their adaptive strategies for dealing with this scenario. In addition to supporting their families financially and serving as learning facilitators in a pandemic and everyday life, parents have a critical role in forming society, particularly in the early stages when children's cognitive skills are developing. The development of their children's mental, social, and physical skills must begin in the earliest years of life under the guidance of their parents, ensuring that their children's potential is fully developed. According to structural functionalism, human societies develop toward more differentiation as institutions become more specialized in their roles [13]. Each actor's functions must adjust to the circumstances in which they belong because the community has a diverse population and interconnected systems. To increase their specialized role as learning facilitators and aid their children in developing their cognitive and social skills, they must be adaptable and cooperative in implementing policies or programs that the education sector may provide. This is similar to the situation for parents of children with educational challenges; structural functionalists believe the aim of critical institutions, such as education, is to socialize children and teenagers [14] and see education as serving the needs of society by preparing students or later roles, or their functions, in the community [4].

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the parents' experiences serving as learning facilitators for their children during the COVID-19 pandemic in fishing communities of Lagonoy in the Philippines. This study concluded that parents have alarming experiences that the relevant authorities or policymakers need to address to fully maximize their function as an integral part of the country's educational system. In fishing communities, parents must have sufficient knowledge of the curriculum and teaching-learning know-how, not only the teachers, so that they can fulfill their responsibility as their children's first teachers during the formative years of developing their cognitive abilities. This recommendation may be realized by producing manual kits for parents with the help

of the Department of Education, schools, and teachers. In a health-related catastrophe like the COVID-19 virus, where schools have been closed for years, the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education must collaborate to offer a unique or short educational program for educationally challenged parents or parents to improve their capacity as substitute learning facilitators. Additionally, it may be able to undertake quantitative research to investigate the effects of the participants' shared explorations of the meanings of the deteriorating state of the Philippine educational system because the parent factor is one of the important parts of a learner's cognitive skills development.

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