

Silaw ken Tarabay: Exploring Parental Experiences on In-Person Instructions

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ABSTRACT

Considering that the family is the social core and support towards child rearing, involvement of parents in education of the child becomes even more imperative. Parental involvement should always be considered in the instructional delivery, especially in the assessment and learner's outcome. Administrators at every level have a shared duty with parents for their students' education. This research uses Epstein's theory of parental involvement to investigate the realities faced by parents at San Vicente Elementary School during in-Person instruction. This study explores the parental involvement of parents in the face-to-face classes in the post-pandemic period. Thematic analysis was used in treating the narrative from the participants and this generated six (6) themes relative to Epstein's Parental Involvement Theory, namely: on parenting with twelve (12) identified codes, on communicating with twelve (12) codes, on volunteering with eleven (11) codes, on learning at home seven (7) identified codes, on decision making with two (2) codes, and collaborating with community with two (2) identified codes. It was found that challenges relative to parental involvement arose which can be addressed by school heads in terms of making interventions that would enhance their involvement in the academic excellence of their children.

Keywords: Parental involvement, challenges, Epstein parental involvement framework, post-pandemic, school heads

INTRODUCTION

The educational sector has been heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in most, if not all, educational institutions shifting from either online learning setup, modular learning, or a mixture of both (Duraku & Hoxha, 2020; Tria, 2020). The opportunity for remote learning is noteworthy to acknowledge in terms of innovative opportunities for learners and teachers using a new structure of learning delivery. In the study of Garbacz et al. (2019), learners in the elementary grades need more involvement and engagement towards learning and need guidance from their parents in learning modules. However, as a learner grows towards adolescence, parental involvement decreases. Camarero-Figuerola et al. (2020) stressed that parental involvement should even be increased in the adolescent stage because it serves as a defensive measure against unfavorable circumstances that may occur, such as academic failure.

Previous research has shown that the profound impact of parental involvement should always be considered in both in-person and distance instruction, especially in the assessment and the learner's outcome. Parental involvement has also led to positive implications for academic achievement. Involvement includes the support of parents in relation to reading programs, follow-up activities at home, such as facilitating home assignments, consultations with the teachers on remedial and reinforcement activities, holding expectations on the achievement of learners, and encouragement and support for learning (Antipkina & Ludlow, 2020; Bonk et al., 2018).

Certainly, learners in elementary schools require devotion and consideration in supervising education in the school and at home. The direct influence of parents as the main support in the school's mandates towards the educational goals ensures and promotes understanding of the gained knowledge and skills in classroom engagements. It covers the interest of parents in the academic performance of their learners. This is further affirmed in the study of Bartolome & Mamat (2020) that the school-home relationship is valuable during the early years of learning and has benefits in the long term. This study is expected to provide an opportunity for the school to facilitate in-person instructional delivery.

In “in-person instruction” or “face-to-face instruction”, the teachers and learners directly interact with each other in the physical environment of the classroom. This modality highlights the importance of social engagements, immediate feedback and feedforward, and active engagements of learners in a structured learning environment (Corcuera & Alvarez, 2021; Salamuddin, 2021; Villar et al., 2022) and prioritizes the learners participation and teacher-guided instructional deliveries, considering the unequal opportunities in holistic development of learners (DepEd Memorandum No. 34, s. 2022; DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020). Such modality was observed during the gradual shift to in-person classes, in accordance with the health protocols posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Local studies asserted the effectiveness in the development of learners’ interpersonal skills and critical thinking as often observed during group activities, simultaneous assessments, and group interactions and collaborations (Cano, 2022; Javier, 2022). This practice is crucial and important in the landscape of Philippine education, as it warrants a holistic learning experience for the Filipino learners.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Academic Performance

Teachers are the heart of instructional delivery. The interaction during classroom instructions motivates the learners’ interests and addresses the diverse needs of learners. In the delivery of instructions, especially in reading comprehension, the learners can explain and reason out their answers through an organized set of questions. This process nurtures dynamic interactions between the teacher and learners, encouraging thoughtful discussion and exploration from basic understanding to higher-order evaluation. Such interactions enhance learners’ analytical ability to grasp the context of literary works. Thus, teachers’ competence in the art of questioning is highly encouraged. The art of questioning in reading comprehension must have an engaging learning atmosphere and an active interaction and collaboration between teachers and learners. This will lead to learners’ independent learning.

The educational attainment of parents affects the academic performance of their learners, and with high hopes of support in achieving the opportunities towards their educational endeavors, if there is evident enthusiasm and support towards their learners' educational endeavors (Yildirim, 2019; Rasool & Zhang, 2020). The educational qualifications of parents are necessary to sustain the distance learning at home through proper guidance and support to the learner.

Parental Involvement

The impact on a learner's learning development is a combined structure of the relationship between the school and the parents (Camarero-Figuerola & Renta-Davids, 2021). The concept of parental involvement has been continuously evolving due to the changes in the landscape of educational institutions in terms of instruction to sustain and maintain the learning delivery in both traditional and online instruction (Lawrence & Fakuade, 2021). Parents' involvement is manifested through home-based involvement, where they facilitate assigned tasks and enrichment activities at home. The study of Rasool & Zhang (2020) noted that home-based involvement advances the learners' academic performance and level of achievement. However, King & McInerney (2019) contended that the family is critical to displaying academic achievements, where it varies according to the cultural milieu of the community. Parental involvement, therefore, plays a critical role in inspiring and motivating learners to reach their academic goals.

On the other hand, volunteerism in school-initiated activities, consultations, and updates is the source of positive implications of collaboration between teachers and parents towards the learners' progress (Gubbins & Otero, 2018). Thus, parental involvement is an avenue of commitment and perseverance of parents towards the educational needs of their children. And this can be attributed to the parents' availability, participation, and responsibilities that have a significant impact on the holistic development of the learner.

The contribution of parents and guardians as home facilitators during distance learning is a vital support to the additional tasks assigned to the teacher. The Learning Support Aide serves as reinforcement in distance learning to learners who cannot manage independent learning and those households who cannot

provide instructional support (DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2020). To address the gaps in instructions during distance learning, the Department of Education (DepEd) commenced a Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) webinar, which empowers parents to improve the home learning experience (Department of Education, 2021). The PTA serves as a governing body, a support group, and an important school partner in promoting the well-being and holistic development of learners (DepEd Order No. 54, s. 2009). It asserts the finding in the study of Antipkina & Ludlow (2020) that the dialogues and conferences between teachers and parents shall strengthen and make more engaging the support of distance learning at home. It is also imperative that schools consider the cultural differences and diverse experiences in parental involvement and creation of an action plan that will serve as an intervention program to address the needs of parents, teachers, and learners (Batolome et al., 2017; Ribeiro et al., 2021).

However, if the commitment and involvement of parents are not present, there will be drawbacks and challenges in achieving the goals (Hossain, 2021). Ribeiro et al. (2021) stipulated that parents of learners from public schools spend more time supporting learning compared to those who are in private institutions. Thus, the partnership between schools and parents plays an important role in supporting instruction and enhancing learners' educational experiences. When parents are actively involved in their children's education, they can reinforce and extend the learning that takes place in the classroom. The partnership fosters a more encompassing need for education. This leads to an improved quality of academic results and learning success.

The influence and motivation of learners towards learning is important, especially in the parents' support for their children at home. This links to a positive attitude towards proficiency, knowledge, and skills development. Sa'ada (2021) posited that opportunities and support of learning at home influence their behavior and autonomy towards learning. The development and growth outside the classroom needs to complement the formal schooling. This manifestation enables the home to be the extension of educational endeavors and learning opportunities. Activities that support academic engagement have been mentioned in the literature as developing critical thinking and diverse learning opportunities.

"Silaw ken Tarabay," or "Light and Guide" in English, signifies the important role of parents and guardians as home facilitators in the learning and development of school children. This could also be taken as the notion of guiding their children on the course of academic pursuits. In the context of Filipino culture, parental involvement at home is significant towards learning, where families are bonded to support learning endeavors. Jabar et al. (2022) reported that parental involvement not only fosters success in education but also serves as a way of home and school partnership. This context highlights the perception of parents as a light and path for learners in their academic undertakings. It is important that commitment and support are clear and posit the values of life lessons for them to become well-rounded individuals who adapt to the emerging needs of society.

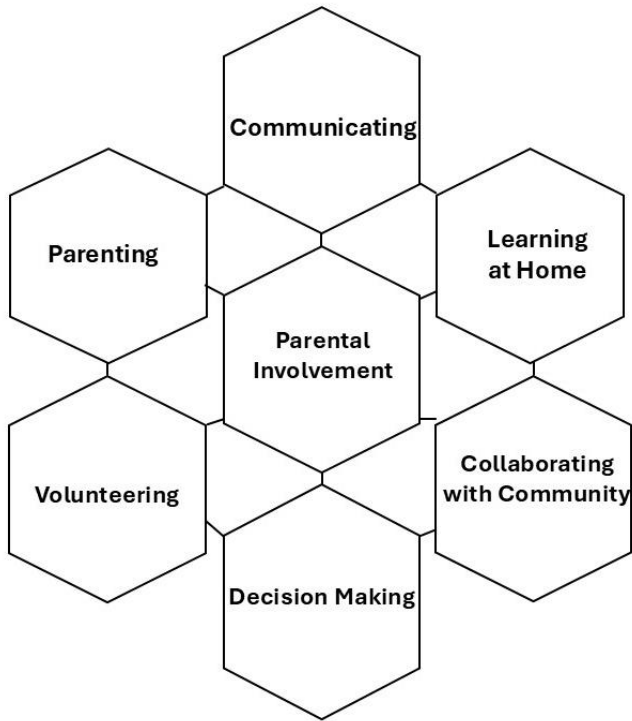
Parental Involvement Theory

Epstein (2007) reinforced that parents' involvement is imperative towards the educational endeavors of their children. The theory of credence serves as the principal source of learning and has a major influence on the academic and personal achievements of the child. Newman et al. (2019) cited Epstein (1997) that there are six types of involvement of parents towards educational success namely parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with community.

Parenting is an involvement where parents provide the physical, emotional, and social development of their child. It also encompasses a safe environment at home with established opportunities and routines that promote positive attitudes and actions. Communicating is an involvement that entails systematic and consistent communication between parents and teachers on the needs and progress of the child. It serves as a support towards learning and provides feedback on how to improve instructional deliveries in school and at home. Volunteering is an involvement where parents contribute their skills and time to support the implementation of the school's programs, projects, and activities. Learning at home involvement contributes to the academic endeavors of their child, such as engaging themselves in accomplishing home-related tasks, provision of resource materials, and a safe space at home for learning, which supports meaningful learning and engaging enhancement activities at home. Decision-making is an involvement of parents at the educational institutions,

which advocates addressing the learners' needs and interests. It also serves as an opportunity for their participation in crafting and giving inputs on existing policies, programs, projects, and activities that will support the achievement of academic success. Collaborating is an involvement of parents that establishes a partnership with the educational institution's stakeholders, organizations, and community that support and sustain programs, projects, and activities for the success of educational endeavors (Epstein, 2019).

Figure 1: Epstein's Parental Involvement Framework



The six facets of the Parents' Involvement Theory of Epstein are mutually interconnected and serve as reinforcement towards engagement of parents in achieving both academic development and attitudes towards learning. The involvement of parents in their child's educational endeavors is likely to result into a higher

academic achievement, well-structured behavior, and great social and emotional development (Yulinati et al., 2018; Koutsouveli, E., & Geraki, 2022). The theory presents a systematic approach to the involvement of parents in the education of their learners where academic outcomes are improved and the support towards school environment is fostered and supported. The theory outlines how to strengthen partnership between the school and home which leads to enhanced student welfare, achievement, and engagement. With parental involvement in the academic endeavors, it can support the school in the decision-making process and collaboration and provide learning opportunities for all learners.

In fact, the school and community partnership empowers stakeholders, especially parents to support remote learning and in-person instruction (Bryan et al., 2019). This manifestation engages parents to be the backbone of support of teachers in providing opportunities to help their children in their academic success. Also, the experience gained from individuals and groups provides an opportunity for collaboration, expert support, and holistic learning. An open communication, provision of resources, and empowerment of parents and the school system create an investment and support for the academic journey. This supports the findings of (Belaić, 2021) that positive reinforcements have an impact on learning outcomes. This exhibits the parental involvement as an emerging concern of child development. It also shows a confirmation of nurturing the educational experience of a child.

School administrators in the educational institutions have the same vision for the holistic development of the school children. This study uses the lens of the parental involvement theory to investigate one's experience at San Vicente Elementary School, Bani, Pangasinan, during the return to in-person instruction. The school administrators would benefit from this study on how they empower and encourage parents in achieving learning through collaboration and partnership. This ensures that parents from different backgrounds are empowered to support through the provision of resources that aid learning at home. Thus, strengthening the school-parent partnership through an inclusive approach that addresses the diverse needs of learners.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study explores the roles of parents at San Vicente Elementary School using a qualitative research approach, adopting a descriptive phenomenological inquiry. According to Creswell (2009), phenomenology is "the scientific study of extraordinary experiences." Essential meanings of participants are provided from the transmitted thematic data (Miles et al., 2014) and how these experiences were converted into valuable insights (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Data Collection

The participants in this study are fifteen (15) parents of learners of San Vicente Elementary School, Bani, Pangasinan chosen using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling constitutes a widely employed methodology in qualitative research aimed at discerning and selecting information-laden cases, thereby facilitating a comprehensive comprehension of the underlying issue at hand (Creswell, 2009).

The participants were selected based on the inclusion criteria namely (1) having children from kinder to grade 6 and currently enrolled in San Vicente Elementary School; (2) having been a parent of at least 3 children; and (3) a 4Ps recipient.

Data Procedure and Analysis

A researcher-made interview guide questions were validated by experts for content validity. The refinements were made from their suggestions and recommendations. The interview was made flexible to allow the participants to shape the conversation on a natural way. Interview protocols were observed and informed consent for video and audio recordings was secured. Rapport was established at the start of the conversation to allow the subjects to be comfortable with the setting.

The study utilized thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) in exploring and analyzing the critical aspect of the participants' responses focusing on a specific description of the experiences employed by the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

In order to establish a rich description based on the narratives of the participants and transcriptions that encompasses the main findings of the phenomenon to the research question, the data collection procedure involved an in-depth analysis, semi-structured interviews, and documentation notes during the interview as an analytic theme (Yin, 2005).

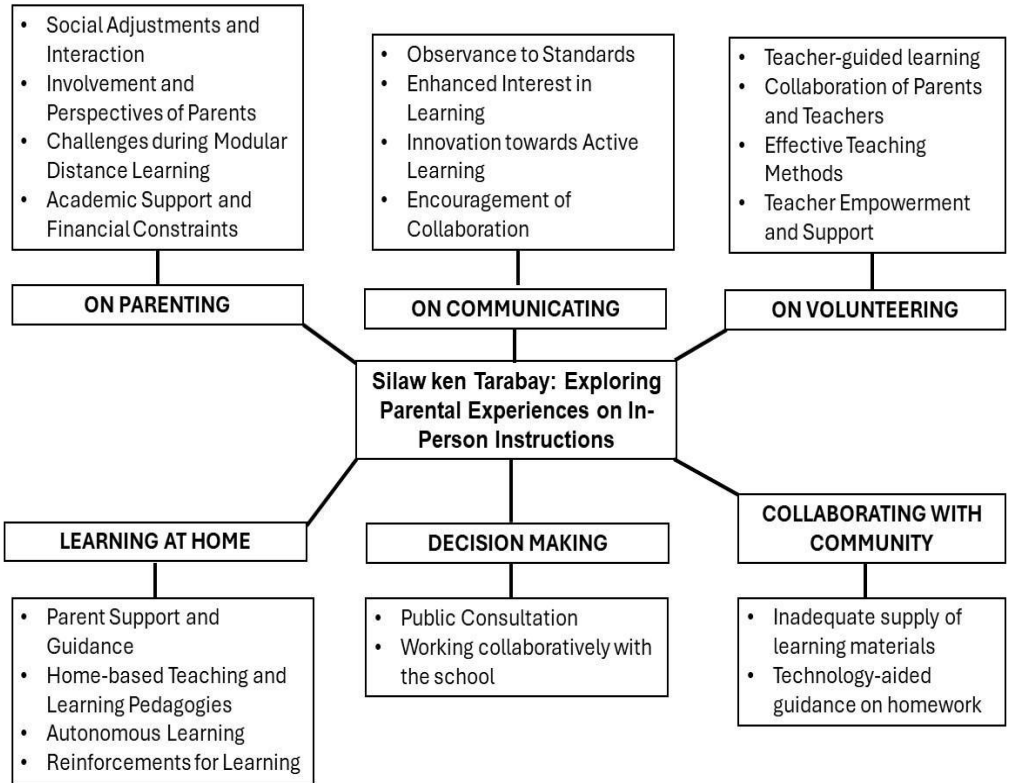
The narratives of the participants encompass a main idea, also known as an analytic theme. First, the researcher gave an interview protocol to each participant. Participants gave a verbal consent for the video recording of the interview. A rapport-building was established to lay the initial probe of the interest in the interview. Participants compared and contrasted their experiences in support of distance learning and in-person instruction, which converted them into practical and proactive parents. A semi-structured interview was conducted where the questions were pre-determined and open-ended questions were asked and followed by other related inquiries that may supplement or strengthen the key points provided in their responses. The interview served as an integrating opportunity for a more comprehensive inquiry into the topic (Ravitch & Carl, 2019).

The interviews were individually transcribed and initial codes of each participant was identified. From the initial code generated from each participant, the initial theme was explored. The generated initial themes were identified, and they were collated as a major theme. Finally, the data treatment was done, and a report on the findings through thematic analysis was made.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The narratives gathered were the source of the themes and the codes that were developed. Below is a thematic map that would show the themes and codes developed from the narratives of the parent participants. Further, the themes and codes were used to explore the experiences of parental involvement in the revival of face-to-face instruction.

Figure 2
Thematic Map of the Study



The involvement of parents during the pandemic has been so great that it brought them to become teachers in their homes. With the current trend of the post-pandemic, schools have opened doors for face-to-face learning. Even though the harm of the pandemic still exists, all stakeholders contributed their very best to make face-to-face modality possible but still, there were experiences that parents felt while the said modality was implemented. These experiences maybe something new for the parents which could be confusing or unpleasant. From the narratives gathered from the participants, the researcher was able to generate codes relative to the framework of Epstein. Moreover,

the framework becomes the backbone of the study where even during the post-pandemic, the researcher was able to detect the pattern and see its significance from the narratives given by the parent participants.

Theme 1: On Parenting. On the theme of parenting, the researcher was able to have twelve (12) codes. The codes generated were expressed and experienced by themselves. The first code identified referred to the adjustment made with the return of the face-to-face classes. One parent highlighted the following adjustment. (break down the sentence it is too long):

“As of this time po, sa full face-to-face medyo nag-aadjust po ang mga anak ko. Medyo malaki ang adjustments na ginagawa niya kasi nasanay siya na nakaharap nila ay modules nila at hindi ang mga teachers nila. Walang kausap na ibang bata, maliban sa mga magulang at kapatid (As of this time, for the full face-to-face set-up my child is still adjusting from the previous modular learning where they don’t have teachers and classmates to talk to except parents and siblings.) (P1; L 8-10).”

Parents and caregivers who were home-schooling during the COVID-19 pandemic experienced significantly higher levels of psychological distress and work/social impairment compared to those who were not home-schooling or had no school-aged children (Calcar et al., 2022). But when the doors of the school were opened, most of the parents were looking forward and expressed willingness to send their children to school (Zhan et al., 2021). Excitement among learners were also manifested knowing that they will be going to school again. It was noted that there were already and there were schools that were already implementing the limited face-to-face modality (Bordeos et al., 2022).

Theme 2: On Communicating. Communication is considered as an essential element in the involvement of parents in all activities in the school-to-home and home-to-school. As to the communication aspect of parents in the resumption of face-to-face classes, codes were focused on how they have participated in the preparation and making sure that the process of learning is feasible in the post-pandemic situation. Parents were able to communicate the strict implementation of protocols and standards:

“Maganda at maayos na naimplement ang face to face classes. Ang paaralan ay pinapatupad nang maayos ang protocol. Ang mga mag-aaral, magulang at mga guro ay maayos na sumusunod sa mga bagong patakarang kaugnay ng face to face implementation” (The school implements protocol and standards strictly and followed by the parents, teachers, and students.) (P8; L35-37).

Safira (2022) highlights that schools should communicate to parents the policies and reports of children performance, specially since parents still fear and worry about the condition of the face-to-face classes brought by the pandemic.

Theme 3: On Volunteering. Volunteering is very important in the context of Epstein’s framework. This gives an avenue for parents, teachers, and students to collaborate where the parents extend their help and support and in becoming the audience for their children. Parents from their narratives were able to deliver codes that highlight the important role of the teacher in the process of learning:

Maganda po kasi yung mga bata po ay active. Hindi po sila nahihirapan matutuhan yung mga subjects nila at lessons nila kasi nandiyan po yung mga teachers nila para mai-guide po sila. Tapos natututo rin po sila sa pagbabasa at pagbibilang. (It’s good that the students are active in learning where the teachers are there to guide and learn reading and counting.) (P5; L21-23).

Families and schools are two crucial stakeholders in fostering the healthy development and academic achievement of children and teenagers. Consequently, a productive partnership among the two actors is crucial. However, this is a relatively recent concern, as families and institutions have traditionally played separate roles. The school was responsible for the formal schooling of students, while the family oversaw their extracurricular education (Vasarik Staub et al., 2018).

Theme 4: On Learning at Home. Learning at home has a very important role to play in teaching and learning where parents

become the teachers at home. Moreover, they become those who help in the execution of curriculum-related activities, involving themselves in the planning and decision making of learners. Furthermore, the role of parents in the learning activities at home is very important, as what Participant 2 highlights:

Siyempre hindi po matatanggal yong pagkaroon po ng follow-up sa mga lessons nila sa school. Hindi naman po dun magtatapos yung kanilang pag-aaral sa loob ng classroom. Kailangan ko pa rin pong mai-guide. Kasi part pa rin po ang mga magulang sa alalayan ang kanilang mga anak sa pag-aaral. Lalo na't may kailangan din sila sa atin. Katulad sa paggabay sa kanila sa kanilang mga assignments. Sa kanilang pagkatuto, kailangan din nating makita at masubaybayan palagi sila sa kanilang pag-aaral. Nandito po tayo palagi para unawain at gabayan po sila. (Of course, it can't be avoided to have a follow-up with their lessons in school. Learning doesn't stop in the classroom. We need to guide them, because as parents, it is our responsibility to guide since it is a fact that they need us. An example of this is the help that the students need in their assignments.) (P2; L204-209).

According to Llego's (2022) research, young students who receive reading sessions from their parents exhibit enhanced language attainment and acquisition, improved literacy progress, better reading comprehension performance in the future, and overall higher success rates in academic programs. Furthermore, parental involvement towards their children's education has been found to positively impact the academic performance of the learners. Similarly, Chiaro (2020) asserted that parental involvement contributes to the development of children's imaginative and critical-thinking abilities.

Theme 5: On Decision Making. In decision making, schools acknowledge the importance of parents as important stakeholders that greatly help in the development of all endeavors of every school. Participant 8 narrated:

Bilang mga magulang, ang roles at responsibilities namin ay pakipagtulungan sa eskwelahan upang

maipatupad ang mga bagong patakaran para sa kaligtasan ng aming mga anak. Malaking bagay ang pagbabalik eskwela ng mga bata ng face to face, dahil bilang magulang dahil sa busy schedule ko, nung modular ay hindi ko natuturuan at natutukan ang aking anak sa kanyang module, unlike ngayong face to face ay mas marami siyang natutunanan sa eskwelahan. (As parents, it is our duties and responsibilities to cooperate with the school in enforcing precautions for the safety of our children. The return to school of our children is crucial in their learning especially since we parents are busy with our work and have very little time in supervising and teaching our kids at home. The return to school fo our children has ensured proper learning among our children.) (P8; L236-240).

According to Yaseen et al. (2017), the involvement of parents in the decision-making process regarding their children's education and the participation of children in such processes have a significant impact on the academic success and performance of children. Furthermore, the Nanay-Teacher Program implemented in 2018 contributed to the enhancement of School-Based Management (SBM), a strategy aimed at decentralizing the management of learning and decision-making in school-related activities. This approach seeks to foster collaboration among school administrators, students, and parents to promote the provision of high-quality education.

Theme 6: Collaboration with Community. Epstein (2007) emphasized the importance of identifying and integrating community resources and services to enhance school programming, family practices, and student learning and development. This integration would serve to improve overall educational outcomes and support systems for students. But with the effect of the pandemic, the schools were not able to deliver complete sets of resources. This was also observed by those parent-participants, Participant 2 mentioned that:

Siguro po yung pagkukulang po ng mga libro na puwede ko pong gamitin sa pag follow-up po ng mga lessons ay naging malaking abala. Sabi po kasi ng teacher, kulang po ang supply ng libro

para sa kanila. Hindi rin naman po sapat yung mga nakasulat lang sa notebook ng bata yung puwedeng gawin. Kasi kailangan po may makita rin pong examples na puwedeng maipaliwanag sa lesson. (I think the insufficiency of the books needed to follow up the students in their lessons has been a big concern. Teachers admitted that there are not enough books available. It is not enough that the lessons are written in their notebooks. Books are needed for examples to help explain the lessons more effectively.) (P2; L398-401).

According to Lee-Chua (2012), parents should attend school activities, visit with instructors, and talk to their children about what they're learning. Hilton et al. (2013) also proposed engaging in activities such as sharing lunch with elementary-aged children, participating in field trips, attending sports and musical events, and becoming involved in the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). These activities were recommended as effective ways to foster positive family-school interactions and support children's educational experiences. Kemp (2017) observed that schools and the community function as a unified entity, and forging partnerships across all sectors of the community facilitates the realization of students' full potential. Community-school collaboration improves student values, culture, and learning. It was also found that when teachers, parents, families, and communities work together to promote learning, children obtain better grades, attend school more often, stay longer, and engage in more activities.

CONCLUSION

The pandemic greatly affected schools that made parents to be more hands-on with their involvement in the academic growth of their children. When schools opened their doors for face-to-face classes, parents got excited to send their children to the real classroom. It can be seen from the narratives that parents have been challenged with the process of teaching and learning with their children. For school heads, there is a challenge to create programs that would develop the coaching skills and contribute further to the intellectual growth of parents since parents are considered important contributors to the academic development of their children. It is also the task of school heads to build strong

relationships and partnerships with parents to further address the challenges faced in the education of their children.

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