

# Non-readers and Parents Experiences Amidst Pandemic: A Case Study

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## Abstract

Since, the Department of Education in the Philippines has set its parameter as to the preferred mode of learning delivery nationwide, parents are compelled to simultaneously work for a living and facilitate learning at home. They need to heighten the degree of their involvement in the educational process specifically when child reads below the expected level of reading proficiency. This situation prompted the researcher to venture on the experiences of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade learners and their parents converting their home to a classroom. Thus, this study aims to identify the challenges encountered by the 4<sup>th</sup> grade learners and their respective parents in developing reading skills at home. In the same manner, the researcher also described their experiences in developing reading skills amidst pandemics by way of employing qualitative design and purposive sampling technique. The selection of the respondents includes 3 non-readers and their respective parents whereby they were asked to describe their experiences in terms of learning resources, financial stability, educational attainment, time given to the learners and support received from school or teachers. It was found that majority of the parents are financially struggling which results to limited resources, no conducive space at home for learning and many distractions. It was also revealed that less education and language barrier led to inaccurate instruction in developing reading skills. The parents also admitted that bringing education at home is a burden to them because they must work and teach their children at home simultaneously. Another issue was found to be the challenge in developing reading skills at home since they were not trained for that. On the other hand, non-readers found to be challenged learning at home with no appropriate learning resources, distraction such as but not limited to household chores, parents support and no space for learning. Thus, the parents and learners proposed for home visitation and limited face-to-face.

Keywords: Reading; Non-Reader; Parent's Experiences

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## Introduction

Education is seen as the "light and life". It is the main route to the economic growth and development to every country which means that the success of every country depends on the success of education. Oskoyo (2018) It is for this reason that people who are responsible to deliver education shall be

committed to excellence, service, integrity, and dedication. With this, reviews on curriculum, policies, programs, and practices were created and implemented to support and address the gap in the delivery of quality instruction specifically in students reading proficiency. Learning to read is essential to human being yet in most countries, to produce readers is a challenge. A child who can't read at a comfortable level will experience significant difficulties learning academic competencies and may have the risk to fail in school. It was noted that learner's success in school is determined by the level of their reading proficiency. Aina, A J; Okusaga, T.O.; Taiwo, Adebawale and Ogundipe, (2011)

Every teacher dream to produce students who can combat challenge of life and demands by way of turning them into a proficient reader. Yet the road to fulfill such dreams seems to be unclear due to several reasons that affects the ability of the learner to grasp learning and capability to learn how to read. Delta states that, reading is the backbone of all core subjects to be learned, without it, teaching-learning process will be difficult and unattainable. Today, while technology slowly invades the individual lives, the reading habit is fast vanishing. Students' attention is now on electronic media and playing online games which consumes more of their time and less in reading.

This reality is an international scenario. According to the result of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, more than two thirds of all 14 years of age students in the United States of America (USA) read below grade level, and more than six million students in the said country between ages 12 and 18 are struggling readers. In the same manner, Germany reported nearly one-fifth of 15-year-old in their country are reading below their grade level expectations. Kissan & Hiller (2013)

In the Philippines, the scenario is no different despite of the Government effort to adopt various policies and programs to ensure that "Education for All" is properly implemented, and that education is accessible to all. Davis, et.al, (2016) Notably, a community-based reading program in Basilan, Lamitan Province was even implemented to help learners in reading, yet it is saddened to know that the malady of non-readers has come so far. Myra, (2020) On a serious note, students with very weak reading skills have academic problems which later can be developed into social problems as they reach middle and high school years. Years of failure in school often triggers resistance to reading and worst cases optimism towards reading becomes impossible. They feel hopeless and vulnerable to anti-social behavior as well. Johnston, (2010)

In Sta Maria Central School SPED Center, a large number of non-readers also exist. The Department of Education in Zamboanga Division together with the initiatives of the School Administrators evidently exerted effort in eradicating non-readers yet seems to be insufficient. The efforts was manifested through different kinds of programs in reading such as "Drop Everything And Read" Project, the Remedial Classes every afternoon, and formulating Developmental plan. Yet in the recent performance indicator in reading, non-readers rate is proliferating. Aguana, 2018, reported that none of the programs work because in the study he conducted, it was found that parents have weak support in terms of developing reading skills. Hence, the researcher would like to investigate the experiences of the learner as a child who is struggling in reading, his coping mechanism to comply in school and his experiences along the way as he learns reading. It would also be nice to venture on the support mechanism provided by the parents to his child, (if there is, or none). Parent's attention and procurement of learning needs by their children. How far they can go to help their children in terms of reading.

### 1.1. Problem Statement

This study is sought to determine the non-readers and parents' experiences and challenges in the development of reading skills amidst pandemic:

- a. Describe the parents' experiences in terms of the following: (1) learning resources; (2) educational attainment; (3) financial stability; (4) Time; (5) Support received from school
- b. Determine the challenges encountered by the non-readers and parents in developing reading skills at home amidst pandemic
- c. Propose doable solution to improve program for non-readers.

### 1.2. Scope and Delimitation

This study is delimited to Sta Maria Central School SPED Center, Grade IV Parents and learners who were identified by their respective advisers as non-reader/ frustrated readers/ struggling readers/ or below reading proficiency.

The researcher intends to study parent's experiences delimited to learning resources, financial stability, time, educational attainment, and the support received from school or teacher. This also intends to study individual cases of non-readers in coping up with reading based on their level of reading proficiency.

The researcher also delimits cases to learners who needs most of teacher and parents' assistance in terms of reading.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Research Design

This study employs qualitative design (case study) because the researcher aims to describe the experiences of a certain phenomenon in the context of providing support in the development of reading skills amidst pandemic. The utilization of this design allows the researcher to study on the possibilities on how the school services can better cater non-readers learning at home and how teachers can possibly extend their instruction to improve reading without the necessity of conducting it face-to-face.

### 2.2. Participants of the Study

The selection of the participants were conducted among 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Non-readers and their parents. The identification of the qualified respondents was made by the advisers following the criteria set by the researcher

Table 1. Parents Profile

Parents	Educational Attainment	Mother's Job/ Work	Father's Job/ Work
Parent 1	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade in Elementary	Vendor in the Construction site	Construction worker
Parent 2	Elementary Graduate	Housewife	Factory Worker
Parent 3	College undergraduate	Housewife	Tahu Vendor

### 2.3. Sampling Procedure

This study uses a purposive sampling whereas the selection of the respondents was based on their experiences and present situation. This sampling technique navigates rich information and most effective use of limited resources. Patton, (2012) Additionally, this involves identifying individuals that are knowledgeable or experienced with phenomenon of interest. Cresswell & Clark, (2011)

### 2.4. Research Instrument

The researcher developed an open-ended question to be utilized during interview. The content of the instrument was also validated by three persons who are experts in the field of reading. The instrument provides pre-liminary questions to establish comfortability among the respondents and the second part focuses on their experiences and challenges. The instrument was designed in English language however, to gather in-depth knowledge about their experiences and allows smooth conversation, the researcher conducted the interview in their own preferred language such as visaya, chavacano and tagalog.

### 2.5. Data Gathering Procedure

Pursuant to DepEd Order 16, s. 2016, the Department of Education requires every researcher to strictly follow the Research Management Cycle. In view of this cycle, the researcher sought permission from the Department of Education, Division of Zamboanga City thru Planning and Research Office to conduct a study (school-based level).

In crafting the study, the researcher embedded the need to extend instruction in the field for those who are non-readers considering today's situation. It is inevitable that these learners will only repeat its history in learning reading in the absence of teacher-parent collaboration. This intention was also proposed to the school principal and therefore seek for approval as well. Upon the approval of the study from the Office of Planning and Research, the researcher made some revisions as suggested by the office and proceed immediately to the implantation of data collection.

The researcher secured both informed consent and assent. The informed consent is intended for the parents and assent is for the non-readers. This is to ensure that their rights as respondents of the study have been protected. The school head was also notified through a letter of permission in the conduct of the data collection. Upon the approval of the principal to gather data, a letter was also sent to the concerned advisers of the non-readers to ensure full cooperation in the study. Further, the letter of informed consent and assent was sent to the parents through their respective advisers as they come to the school.

To ensure that none of the health protocols was violated in the process of data collection, the researcher conducts profile scanning and made the selection according to the parent's availability of resources. The researcher then conducted the interview via phone call since none of the respondents has other mode of communication.

In preparation of data gathering, the researcher has developed a self-guided questions to bring out an in-depth discussion with the respondents. The content of the questionnaire was validated by people whose expertise in the field of reading instruction is indispensable. The researcher also secured a certification of content validity before the conduct of the data collection.

In the process of data collection, the researcher finds a little difficulty speaking with the respondents because of some reasons. It took a week before the researcher was able to reach the parents and interview. At the beginning of the interview, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, and why there's a need for them to answer with honesty. The researcher also made clear that all their responses will be kept confidential and shall only be used solely for the purpose of this study. Parents and learners were also informed that the call is being recorded to ensure that there's no information missing. The researcher conducted the interview using their preferred language (visaya, chavacano and tagalog) to make them comfortable in answering queries and establish a friendly discussion. There were preliminary questions conducted before reaching post questions to help them open and make the transition of the conversation smooth.

After the conduct of the interview, the researcher presented cases of each of the parents and learners as to their experiences in developing reading skills. The researcher transcribed the responses and made the analysis. In writing the interpretation and analysis, the researcher includes supporting literature and implications.

After which, the researcher informed the school principal that the paper has already been completed and ready for submission. With the school principals' consent, the researcher submitted the completed paper to the Department of Education Division of Zamboanga City, Office of Planning and Research subject for any corrections and suggestions in the paper.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

#### **Cases**

The participants interviews were framed around guiding the research questions. As parent, what are the challenges you encountered in developing the reading skills of the learner? Can you tell me about your experiences under new normal education given that teachers can't directly supervise the reading progress of your child? What learning resources do you have at home to support the reading skills of the learner? What assistance do you provide for the learner? On the other hand, the participants as a learner were also guided by research questions such as their experiences in reading in the absence of face-to-face learning, their feelings towards learning at home, the availability of resources, and support from their parents and school.

Cases were presented below, and the researcher also uses pseudo names to make the discussion appear more realistic and better presentation of cases.

Case 1: Mrs. Enriquez is a plain housewife with 6 children. Two among her children lives with her and the other 4 is under the care of her first husband. She lives in with her second husband who is a factory worker and earns just enough for daily needs. She didn't finish her elementary education and admitted that she's very slow in understand English language. In terms of reading resources, they have limited and what is available is

just what the learner takes for reading. With regards to the child, his phonemic awareness and letter recognition is very poor.

Case 2: Mrs. Vertulfo is an elementary graduate with 5 kids and a plain housewife. His husband is a vendor of “TAHU” or soya milk. In most cases, what is earned in a day is only enough to suffice the needs of their baby and food. Her attention is divided among 5 kids which results to less support in the learning of Elena her child. Mrs. Vertulfo also said that they don’t have the capacity to provide gadgets for learning but striving to provide affordable booklets. On the other hand, Elena ‘s proficiency level is very low in reading English and cannot even comprehend simple words. She has a major problem in retention. The child has not yet reached the level of reading proficiency, and this bothers the parents a lot. She’s worried yet doesn’t know what to do.

Case 3: Mrs. Cabezada is an undergraduate college, a mother of 9 kids and a working mother. Her husband is a construction worker where she also finds a living by way of selling some snacks for the workers. After a long day of working, both goes home exhausted, but she still needs to take care of some household chores such as but not limited to preparation of food. They are both working but they still worry for their daily needs. It not enough to support all the needs of their children in terms of school. Another issue is, they live in a small studio type apartment where there can be no place for conducive learning. In the same manner, because she’s too busy looking for their food to eat, there was no time left for Ethan in helping to read at home. Ethan finds it hard to cope with the modules given because he is also found to be very low in reading. He’s reading skills was not developed to the expected level where he is now yet. He couldn’t recognize letters and low in phonemic awareness. Even in Filipino language, he is struggling.

### 3.1. Learning Resources

In view of the reality that education has consumed by technology, students are becoming more dependent in the utilization of learning resource found on the internet, videos, and other auditory materials. As an educator, it’s hard to put your faith in traditional teaching and ignore the advantage brought by technology. In today’s educational process, various of teaching and learning resources are in need. Learning resources are undeniably significant in developing learning skills and desirable student’s attitude. Bušljeta, R. (2013) It is just so saddened to know that the threat brought by Covid-19 to public health, educational system was compelled to turn into 360 degree and make continuous education possible in every chance they can get. Along with these challenges, are the learning resources provided in support to reading for non-readers or of those who struggling in reading. It has been a challenge to those learners who are less fortunate and whose parents can’t cope with rapid change.

When interviews made about the availability of resources and their capability to provide such, Mrs. Enriquez replied:

“I am financially incapacitated Ma’am. My husband receives only 200.00 per day as a factory worker, and I don’t have work, I am just at home taking care of my kids.” This statement has no difference in the situation where Mrs. Vertulfo is in. She said, “I can only buy affordable booklets for reading but I don’t have the capacity to buy gadget for learning. My phone is in keypad only”. It can be implied that in her point of view, she sees technology as an important aspect in the development of any skills. Bušljeta, R. (2013) said that the influence of internet and technology in today’s learners is very high. This can also be the reason that compared to learners who graduated 10 to 15 years has different interest and educational process in today’s learners. They can be taught and learned through even without the presence of the elders. They want interactive, fun and dynamic instruction as well. Mrs. Cabezada agreed to the statement made by Mrs.

Vertulfo and Enriquez. She said, “it’s difficult when my husband is only a construction worker and I sell snacks along with him in the construction site. We have little income that is only enough for our food”.

This claim was also validated when the interview was conducted among the identified learners who are non-readers or struggling readers. Johnny and Ethan both agreed that their parents don’t have the capacity to procure learning resources, other than what is being provided. On the contrary, Elena said that her “*Mama and Papa*” can provide learning references that is only within their capability but not to procure gadgets. “My Papa and Mama used to buy booklets for my reading”. Which means that, those children who can afford to procure even simple learning materials have better reading performance compared to those who are not.

Although, technology has consumed education in today’s generation, teacher’s learning instruction still prevails. During the interview, the parents still prefer face-to-Face instruction rather than learning through technologies especially in reading. However, when the parents were asked together with the learners as to the assistance provided by teachers in terms of learning resources, 3 out of 3 parents and learners responded, “There was no learning resources *Ma’am* aside from the module”. This implies, that the support of the school in terms of developing reading skills is very poor. The teacher on the other hand might also be caught up in the new set up of instruction reasons to fail in providing supplemental instruction in developing reading among non-readers.

### 3.2. Educational Attainment

It is not peculiar that parent involvement contributes to children’s overall educational achievement as well as their literacy development. Home literacy is critical in helping children who reads below grade level. Broemmel, (2011)

In the conducted interview, parents were asked as to their capacity to facilitate reading development at home. Mrs. Enriquez replied, “I only reached Grade 2 in the Elementary *Ma’am*. I know how to read but only a little because I am *very slow in English Ma’am*.” To gain more knowledge about her experience, she was also asked how she manage to support instruction considering her ability and she replied, “my neighbor used to help me in giving educational assistance to my children because *she’s the only one who understands the module written in Mother Tonge (Chavacano)*. I can’t understand Chavacano since I am Visayan”. This can be implied that like teachers, parents are also experiencing communication barrier in facilitating at home aside from their ability to understand concepts. Studies found that the quality of the interaction between the child and parent is as important as interactive opportunities. According to Wessels (2014),

It is inevitable that in some cases families may have low self-esteem in their own parent-child book interaction due to limited English literacy skills or lack of English language proficiency resulting in few to no English literacy practices in the home. In addition, Statistics from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as “the nation’s report card,” additionally show that many culturally and linguistically diverse students read below grade level and great deal behind their fully English-proficient peers.

On the contrary. Mrs. Vertulfo was very honest in her responses when asked about her education. According to her she had her elementary diploma, so her education does not stop her from helping her children to read and to complete their modules. She said, “*I graduated elementary Ma’am, but I can read.*” Her only reservation is that she has a baby, and her attention is divided among her five children. Therefore, she rarely practices reading with her child and said, “her eldest sister who is in Grade 11 is the one that use to



help her in reading. I rarely do the help”.

In the same manner, Mrs. Cabezada also shared the same experience in terms of her level of education. When she was asked about her education, she said, *“I have reached college though I failed to graduate Ma’am, so I can really support my kids in their education”*. This can be denoted that education matters in providing instruction or facilitating learning at home. Compared to those who graduated in elementary, it is noticeable that the level of confidence showed by Mrs. Cabezada is higher than Mrs. Vertulfo and Enriquez in terms of instruction. Therefore, it can be concluded that parents’ educational attainment affects the development of reading skills at home. It is also an indication that the more people at home supports instruction in reading, the better results they can get. As to the condition of Elena, since she has elder siblings and her mother is a college level, she has a better reading skill in Filipino language compared to Johnny and Ethan. In addition, children’s reading might as well as reflect the poor reading background as their parents if such parents are illiterate or have low-level exposure to education or reading culture. Unemployment is higher among people with low literacy level. People with low literacy exposure are highly disadvantaged to competitive dispensations both in schools as well as in workforce. Askov, (2004)

### 3.3. Financial Stability

The procurement of learning resources and materials for learning specifically in the development of reading skills among non-readers found to be limited at home. The ability to procure learning resources dictates that capacity of the parents to procure based on their financial stability. Which means that, if parents can provide well, non-readers have higher chances to improve in reading compared to parents who cannot provide.

This was confirmed by Mrs. Enriquez when she said, *“I am financially incapacitated Ma’am and you now the salary of my husband is only 200,00 a day and I don’t work”*. In the same manner, Mrs. Vertulfo also shared the same difficulty when interview about financial capability and said, *“It is very difficult to provide Ma’am like in my case, I have a baby, I need to prioritize first the needs of my baby like diaper and milk and my husband earned just enough to suffice our daily needs.”* In addition, Mrs. Cabezada also validated the claim of Mrs. Enriquez and Vertulfo when she said, *“It’s very difficult when your husband only works for construction. It was never enough though I help, still not enough”*.

This can be implied that the financial stability of the parents affects the development of reading skills due to limited procurement of learning resources and the ability to provide a conducive environment for learning. When they were interviewed about the space they provide for the children at home for reading, 3 out of 3 of the respondents (parents and non-readers) replied, *“We don’t have space for learning at home Ma’am”*. Mrs. Vertulfo even specified and said that *“We don’t have Ma’am, our apartment is too small, it’s just like a room”*. Therefore, other than the financial stability, a place for studying is also very important to allow children focus on their daily task. Yarosz & Barnett, (2001) even said that aside from the educational level of student’s parents, the economic stability of their families was among the factors that strongly associated with reading frequency. It’s about 74 percent of children living in poverty were read to by family members before entering kindergarten, as compared to 87 percent of more affluent children. Kathrine Dudych, (2015)



### 3.4. Time

Educators use to encourage all parents to involve their children in literacy practices at home. In some cases, when parents support their children learning at home, it appears that a strong bond between parents and children are more likely to be developed. But in this case, two out of 3 said that they can't be with their children, guiding and practicing reading because they have work, and they need to attend household chores at the same time. In as much as parents would like to support their children, it is also a fact that closure of learning hubs/schools adds educational burden to them.

In an interview conducted to Mrs. Enriquez, a question was raised with regards to the frequency of providing instruction, she replied, "Difficult in time, *Ma'am*". She was also asked how long she spends her time in providing reading instruction to Johnny and she answered, "*It doesn't even reach an hour of instruction Ma'am. Sometimes less than 30 minutes because I have a lot to attend at home Ma'am.*" The same thing that Mrs. Cabezada answered when asked, she said, "I am very busy mam due to my small store located in the construction. *It's a double burden for me and stress because I have to teach my kids at home at the same time earn for a living. In most cases, 30 minutes of instruction is the most yet not frequently done.*"

This can be implied that in as much as parents would like to support their children at home, they are also having a hard time to balance their work, household chores and other things that is equally important as instruction. Mrs. Vertulfo even confirmed, 'difficult because I have a baby which requires a lot of my attention'. It can also be denoted that they don't consider developing reading skills among their children as a priority or they have less serious on the condition of their children.

However, Bhahmani, (2020) supports this claim and states that in as much as these initiatives are found to be appropriate to address the need of the time, it is inevitable that it has also given tough routine to parents who are working from home and simultaneously taking the responsibility that their children's learning process continues seamlessly during the times of COVID-19. For this reason, parents were bold enough to say that if there's a limited face-to-face, they will permit their children to attend school.

Mrs. Enriquez said, "I want my child to have a face-to-face instruction provided there are only limited students". This was also supported by Mrs. Vertulfo, she said, "*if there's face-to-face, I will allow for the learning of my child*". Apparently, Mrs. Cabezada is on the same side and said, "*if there's a chance the government will permit limited face-to-face, then I will allow her because admittedly, I cannot provide instruction for her because there are also 5 of them*". This can be denoted that despite of all the advantages brought by technology in education, teachers' instruction is beyond compare. It could be more effective when all learning resources are available and gadgets in combination with teachers' instruction.

In times of Covid-19 outbreak, education reach its highest point of changing traditional ways into something unfamiliar using technology. And these becomes a challenge to learners who belongs to less fortunate families. It is even more challenging when learners were identified as non-readers. Parents are uncomfortable continuing the role of the teacher at home. Parents contributions to their child's progress in reading could therefore enhanced when given appropriate and necessary knowledge and means to engage their children more actively, including in their native language. Cummins (2000)

### 3.5. Reading Assistance/ Support Received from School

Long before Covid-19 arrived, access to quality education has already been a dilemma. It's just that, the impact brought by Covid-19 was extreme. The lockdown compelled the government to investigate

alternative learning system that could cater education and that is accessible to all. Unlike China and South Korea who provides devices and printed assignments to the learners, Philippines can't afford to do the same. In as much as countries would like to maintain equality and inclusivity in the educational level, not all has the privilege and opportunity. Chang & yano, (2020)

In this case, everything seems to be possible in the hands of the implementers (schools and teachers). Unlike other countries who adopted online platform, the Philippines has adopted the Blended Modular in Print to continue Basic Education. Which makes instruction even harder. It is for this reason that parents have to take the responsibility in monitoring and facilitating at home. This situation even gets worst for non-readers who need direct assistance from teachers. Teaching beginning reading has no perfect formula. People who give instruction or helping non-readers must know them well to keep their interest in reading and be able to act appropriately. Flexibility is very important in teaching reading, precisely why it is important to determine methods and modifying activities to suit every learner according to their ability and readiness to learn. Dacalos, (2016)

However, when parents were interviewed on the support that is being provided by the school to help non-readers at home, they have a unified response and that is, "There was no support *Ma'am*". When they were asked how often they receive assistance, they replied the same thing, "No assistance *Ma'am*".

As the researcher continue the interview, she found that, there was also no supplemental instruction provided to the non-readers except for the regular modules and books of K-12. Mrs. Enriquez said, "We were *not able to speak with the teacher Ma'am. For as long as I comply in the submission of modules, drop it in school, its done. There was no communication about the condition of my child.*"

She also added, "There were no supplemental learning materials provided *Ma'am as well.*". Teaching and learning resources are intertwined to make instruction effective. Without the presence of learning resources and support from the teacher, development of reading skills wouldn't be possible.

This was also validated by Mrs. Vertulfo, she said, "only once, *Ma'am*" along with Mrs. Cabezada, "*Modules are provided and some books but no modified materilas*". But as to the supplemental or modified activity, there was none. This can be implied that the support of the teacher in encouraging non-readers to read and provide learning resources is poor. This can also be denoted that teacher might also be caught up with the new set up of instruction delivery in school considering that there were also limited training received and strategy on how to deal with non-readers under pandemic.

The same thing was asked to the non-readers in an interview. Johnny, Elena, and Ethan had the same responses. They said that there were no learning resources provided by their teacher or school, and there was also no supplemental instruction conducted to them. Elena said, "*No Ma'am. It was just my mother who use to talk to me but not my teachers.*" Likewise, Johnny and Ethan said, "None". This means that teachers are having tough routine in extending instruction due to the situation. This could also be the result of prohibiting teachers from having contact with the children and parents. If online instruction could be possible, the teacher can manage to have the connection however in the part of the non-readers, they can't afford to buy gadgets and get themselves connection every now and then. Therefore, it can be denoted that schools and teachers must find a way to extend instruction and help non-readers develop their skills in reading.

### 3.6. Challenges Encountered by Non-Readers

Years of failure in school often triggers resistance to reading and worst cases optimism towards

reading becomes impossible. During the interview, Johnny said, *"I don't like to read because most of the time I don't understand what I read"*. To improve reading skills, children must learn to appreciate reading and to do that, they need to have materials in which they can relate. However, children must have developed the expertise in phonemic awareness before they can read and relate. If comprehension does not exist, then they feel hopeless and vulnerable to making reading possible. Johnston, (2010)

Elena said, "I have very poor retention. I easily forgot what I have read". Adding books and other sources as written text to students' daily routine will improve the value of discipline and therefore achieves sharp memory. Dewy, (2013) Johnny shared the same experience on the challenges encountered. He can't really recognize some letters and having trouble in blending sounds. He said, *"I can't remember the words"*. This implies that their reading skills failed to develop during their early years in education. According to Stanovich, (2014) describes the slow progression of students in the process of acquiring alphabetic coding skills and recognizing words. With these barriers, they are incapable to read for meaning, and find reading insignificant. The degree of reading practices is less, and they have more negative experiences than looking at the brighter side of reading. Increasingly, they avoid reading or merely tolerate it, without really engaging in what's being read. As a result, emotional side effects begin to be associated with school, and the entire school experience is impacted. Kalem, (2020)

During the interview, a question was raised to Elena with regards to her experience under the new normal education, she said, "I is very difficult to learn teacher because *if there's something I don't know or understand, I have no one to ask and sometimes my mother doesn't know the answer too*". She also shared her experience learning at home. Unlike school, she has no space at home where she can focus in studying because their house is too small. Second is, she wants collaborative learning. She said, *"I want learn in school than at home because I have peers to ask and companion in learning while here, I don't have anyone"*. Third issue is that Elena is being taught to take care of her siblings and said, "I am also watching our baby most of the time. Just earlier, my mother went somewhere, and I was left at home, so I had to watch over our baby". This can be denoted that in this time of pandemic, parents are also taking advantage on how their children can help them instead of doing the other way around. In this case, there will be no improvement in the reading skills of the child.

In addition, Ethan's experience was also shared, and his parents seems to have no time for reading scaffolding. He said, *"my mother is busy working, no one is helping me out"*. Like Elena, Ethan also wants to spend more of his time in school because accordingly he has more time for learning in school than at home. He said, "I want more in school than here because in school I can focus". Reading needs concentration, without it, comprehension wouldn't be possible.

According to Ahmed & Ali, (2020), students need an instructional instrument and environment that fosters the optimism that they can improve. Significance on reading skills development must be instilled to hone the competency in reading through strong motivation. Thus, parents must take an extra mile to somehow provide an environment that is conducive to learning, procure instructional materials both the learning resources and materials, and above all constant monitoring in their progress. This might be an additional work to them however, if the gap in reading will not be addressed earlier, this might become a problem in the future. Therefore, it can be denoted that home support is poor and it greatly affects the development of reading skills. This also supports the findings of Iguana, 2018 that despite of DepEd reading initiatives and programs, non-readers rate is still increasing. He found that home support is the missing puzzle that would scaffold reading.

### 3.7. Challenges Encountered by Parents

According to Pan-Canadian Assessment Program in 2013, struggling readers/ non-readers require specific skills to be taught and more attention to them to make gains in reading. Several researchers identified teaching strategies which supports non/struggling readers in the classroom illuminating several emergent themes. In addition, explicit instruction in phonological awareness and a wide range of opportunities to practice reading, both at home and at school, said to improve reading skills. When classroom instruction is not enough, research revealed that out-of-class program will do the gap. This is where home support plays a vital role in the development of reading. They can create an authentic learning experience such as preparing meals, shop and participate in outings to park or museums. These activities can improve literacy. Also, constant communication using English language can oblige the children to express their thoughts one way or and found to be effective because children share their own experiences, explaining their thinking. By doing this, parents unconsciously facilitate a deeper level of communication and that precisely the key for comprehension and reading success.

Sadly, the interviewee's does not perceive these initiatives optimistically. When they were interviewed, Mrs. Vertulfo said that she constantly aids her child named Elena. Yet Elena said the other way around, "I want more in school because I have peers to ask and companion to learn with while here, no one is helping". She even added, "I am also watching our baby most of the time. Just earlier, my mother went somewhere, and I was left at home, so I had to watch over our baby". When she was asked if her baby sitting is just temporary because its summer she replied, "No teacher, *even there's a regular class, I still watch the baby*". Likewise, Johnny agreed to Elena's claim and said, "my mother is busy working, no one is helping me". Thus, it can be denoted that parents are having a tough routine to earn for a living and support instruction simultaneously. Mrs. Enriquez said that if face-to-face is available, she is willing to send her child back to school to receive normal instruction.

Parents were also interviewed as to their experiences in facilitating instruction in the development of reading. Mrs. Enriquez shared her tough times in helping his child read because of language barrier. As she talks about her experiences, she was emotional, and it can be felt how sad she was that she only finishes her elementary grades and said:

*"It is very difficult when you have no knowledge. I often asked our neighbour to help because there's a lot of things that I don't understand especially in Mother Tongue (Chavacano). What I can support is only what I know"*

*"There are letters that he cannot really recognize Ma'am. Then, teaching reading only lasts about an hour, sometimes doesn't even reach 30 minutes because I have a lot of attention at home Ma'am."*

*"There comes a time when he doesn't really like to read English, he can't just do it even with the assistance of our neighbour"*

With these barriers, it would be hard for the parents to facilitate instruction at home. One more thing is that parents were not trained on how to teach children. Over the years, teachers were taught in their college years to prepare them in terms of developing knowledge and skills among children yet for parents to do so, it would be hard. Several researchers identified teaching strategies which supports non/struggling readers in the classroom illuminating several emergent themes and none of these were taught to parents. Even Mrs. Vertulfo said that she doesn't know how to deal with her child's reading problem (being forgetful). As she shared her

experience in teaching reading to Elena, she's worried about the condition of her child and said:

*"I am worried about her. I have 5 children including the baby, among the 4 of them who is in school, only Elena is struggling. She easily forgets what she read. I even asked her what's the problem? Are you of reading? She replied, "no mama, it's just that I easily forget the words", then a few seconds after, she doesn't like to read anymore".*

*"Elena is also asking me why she is having problem in reading. According to her she is really having difficulty recognizing the words. But I do the reading, she understands. One more thing, sometimes it's difficult to make her read because she doesn't have the motivation to read. "*

*"if it is possible, once a week, teacher will have conduct home visitation for instruction because as of the moment the teachers doesn't provide anything to help my child in reading"*

Parents contributions to their child's progress in reading could therefore enhanced when given appropriate and necessary knowledge and means to engage their children more actively, including in their native language. Cummins (2000)

Wang, Zhang, Zhao, Zhang, & Jiang, (2020) also agree with Cummins (2000) and states that a collaboration between parents and children most likely achieves better results in learning plus they are able to spend more time together. Such instances allow parents to become a source of comfort in easing pain and worry and engage in conversations with their children which helps them in alleviating their anxiety. For so many years, researchers recommends that parents should be taught interventions on how to provide emotional support to children at times of uncertainty. Thus, it can be denoted that parents support is very important in the development of reading skills yet it needs an expert to help them do the instruction. This also implies that collaboration among teachers and parents has poor support in developing reading.

Another experience was shared by Mrs. Cabezada regarding instructional support at home in terms of reading. Like Mrs. Vertulfo, learning resources was also not provided by the teacher or supplemental modified activities to be utilized at home. As a result, the reading activities of the child is not guided due to there was also no spiral progression in the materials to be read and said, "we make use of what we have at home". She also shared here difficulty in helping her child read and said:

*"I am very busy selling goods in my little store, this is why, it added more stress on my part because I have to work and teach simultaneously, which sometimes, I can't do it well. I rarely provide support in reading, even Sunday I still work at home, do the laundry, cook and all that. "*

When asked about the assistance provided by school, Mrs. Cabezada claimed that there was none. She said, "No Ma'am. Only modules and books". By this, it can be denoted that Covid-19 brought so much damage to the educational process of the students in the context of those parents who are less fortunate.

Governments of countries like China and South Korea are providing devices and printed assignments to those who do not have access to technology. Meal plans are also being catered to by providing takeaways to students (Chang & Yano, 2020; Giannini & Lewis, 2020). Children who cannot be taken care of at home are being taken care of in schools in countries like France and Japan (Giannini & Lewis, 2020). However, Philippines can't afford to do that right now, but maybe eventually.

Thus, it can be implied that the attitude and perseverance of parents towards home support can be

poor due to many factors. It has also been noted that there was no supplemental support from the teacher, and these clearly affects the reading progress of the child.

### 3.8. Propose doable solution by Parents and Non-readers

With the present situation of educational process, it is inevitable that learners, parents, and teachers would experience challenges in the delivery of instruction. Teaching-learning process under Distance Learning is totally different from what has been used to by the learners, what government can offer to address such change, and the heart of parents and teachers in teaching learners especially those who were left behind in school.

The Philippine government is slowly improving in providing the needs in the field to continue basic education. Schools and teachers are also looking for ways and taking various initiatives on how to deliver instruction of quality. Parents are adjusting with the new system by compelling themselves to do the teaching at home and working at the same time.

In as much as teachers would like to extend their instruction, they have also limited strategy to deal with the situation. Likewise, parents have priorities and for them it is beyond their capacity to provide instruction at home. Thus, parents and non-readers propose a possible face-to-face instruction. According to Mrs. Enriquez, it would be better if limited face-to-face will be granted. This was also the agreed by Mrs. Vertulfo and Mrs. Cabezada. Along with this idea, Johnny, Elena and Ethan also confirms their eagerness to attend classes when if limited face-to-face will be granted.

Mrs. Cabezada said, "I hope, the teacher can visit at home and conduct instruction even just an hour fo teaching". This was also supported by Mrs. Vertulfo and said," If it is possible, even once a week, the teacher can do home visitation and teach reading". Mrs. Enriquez said, "The teacher visits at home and teach the child face-to-face"

This is evidence that no matter how technology consumes educational process, teachers' instruction still prevails. The most important human capital in the teaching-learning process are teachers. This implies that the need to conduct face-to face instruction among readers is indispensable. Hence, the researcher integrates the suggestion of the parents looking into the possibility on how instruction can be effective through this method.

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## 4. Conclusion

Based on the finding of the study, the researcher concludes that parents who have low educational attainment can barely assist the child in developing reading skills than those who have reached higher level of education. Other than that, parents are financially incapacitated to procure the needs of the learners and they don't prioritize scaffolding reading at home due to time constrained and other priorities at home. Additionally, there was no support received from school/ teacher in terms of instruction, modified activities and monitoring of non-readers reading skills.

More so, the non-readers main challenge are as follows; (1) to read with comprehension in English Language; (2) no space for learning; (3) and poor home support in terms of learning resources and instruction. On the other hand, the parents' challenges was no time for teaching reading at home, limited resources, limited knowledge and they are financially incapacitated.



The parents and learners therefore proposed for a once-a-week home visitation to conduct instruction as the situation warrants.

## 5. Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

### 5.1. Curriculum Instruction Division

Conduct a review on school reading programs, and venture on new interventions relevant to the situation of non-readers under pandemic. Also, by this intervention, ensure that programs were implemented seriously in the field.

### 5.2. School Principal

The school principal may implement school level Teachers Home-Reading Program and require every teacher to innovate and extend instruction to non-readers using the proposed intervention. Also, in the implementation of such, the school principal may also strategize the support of instruction by imposing strict compliance on quality output.

### 5.3. Teachers

The teachers shall extend their instruction bearing patience, perseverance, seriousness, and the heart to help non-readers develop their reading skills. Teaching Home-Reading must be constant to ensure progress in reading and strict monitoring over the child.

### 5.4. Parents

Parents must collaborate to teachers in providing instruction. They must show full support to the learners and provide a space for learning where non-readers can focus on learning reading. It is also significant that in time where teachers cannot meet the learner, they should act as the substitute learning facilitator at home.

### 5.5. Non-readers

Non-readers should also strive hard to learn and practice by themselves. It is imperative to have read even without the supervision of the teacher or parents. Practice what has been taught to gain mastery and eventually be able to become reader.

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