
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Parental Stress in Home Education: A Case in the Philippines

Julie Marie Pastoril¹, Maude Adan Flores², Mia Janice Derecho³, Raymond Espina⁴, Reyhan Capuno⁵, Ramil Manguilimotan⁶, Gengen Padillo⁷, Janine Joy Cañete⁸, Kaitlin Marie Opingo⁹ and Jonathan Etcuban¹⁰ ✉

¹SpEd Teacher, TheraPlay Child Care Services, Danao City, Philippines

²Teacher, Mission Achievement and Success Charter School, New Mexico, USA

³Teacher, Hipodromo Elementary School, Cebu City, Philippines

⁴⁵⁶⁷⁸⁹¹⁰Faculty, College of Education, Cebu Technological University, Cebu City, Philippines

Corresponding Author: Jonathan O. Etcuban, **E-mail:** joetcuban@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Parents had to deal with more stress during the COVID-19 epidemic as they balanced employment and at-home schooling. Many found it difficult to provide emotional support, adjust to new technology, and balance their children's academic demands. This revolutionary change put parental engagement to the test, frequently causing family relations to break down due to the stress of running home-based learning environments. This study aimed to determine the degree of parental stress in home education during the COVID-19 pandemic in the three identified public elementary schools in Cebu, Philippines, as a basis for crafting an action plan. This study was conducted by 150 parents whose children are enrolled in the three identified public elementary schools. It utilized a descriptive correlational method using an adapted survey questionnaire based on the study of Vermulst et al. (2011). The collected data were statistically treated using frequency, mean, standard deviation, Chi-square test of independence, and ANOVA. The study revealed a significant relationship between the respondents' gender and stress levels. Also, the study shows that the degree of stress the respondents experienced differs when grouped by income. It is concluded that gender is associated with stress among parents. Mothers and fathers are relatively stressed about parenting amid the pandemic due to gender roles. Because of the pandemic, many families have exhausted the available resources to meet their daily needs. Each household has different needs, available resources, and support from the community. Thus, stress levels and coping strategies among parents and families also differ. The researchers highly recommend implementing the proposed action plans to address families' hurdles in parenting children at home.

KEYWORDS

Education, parental stress, descriptive-correlational method, Philippines.

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1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered every aspect of life. After confirming the first localized transmission in the Philippines, the government officially declared a public health emergency. This was followed by various declarations of the closure of schools, public meeting places, lockdowns, and other restrictions intended to slow the virus's progression. Thus, it has impacted the education system, a prime driver of a country's economic future.

As per the Department of Education (DepEd) order and under the directive of the president's office, there will be no face-to-face classes until the vaccine for COVID-19 becomes available, and they shall implement the distance learning delivery modalities (DLDM) for the school year, 2020-2021. Such modalities stipulated are Modular Distance Learning (digital or printed), Online Distance Learning (ODL), Television/Radio-Based Instruction (TV/RBI), and Blended Distance Learning. Schools can adopt one or a

combination of the mentioned modalities based on the COVID-19 restrictions and the specific background of the school or locality. Among the modalities mentioned earlier, modular distance learning is the most adopted by public schools, primarily when the learning occurs between the teacher and the geographically remote learners. It involves an individualized education that allows learners to use self-learning modules (SLMs) in print or digital format. This modality is the most viable for independent learning, and the periodic supervision of parents or guardians at home must support it. However, such an approach would significantly affect parents' daily lives. An added role of being the first-hand teacher or learning facilitator given to parents or guardians for their child could be a big challenge for those parents whose limited home education abilities. Also, parents struggle more to sustain their children's continued education during these trying times, whether they work or not. They are bound to juggle their living against the demands of supervising their children at home.

The issues mentioned are why the researchers focused on the degree of stress and parental involvement in how parents home-educate their children during this COVID-19 pandemic. This study will provide insights into parents' opportunities and concerns as they educate their children at home amid the global health emergency. Therefore, the researchers are convinced that studying the stressors and parental involvement in home education during the COVID-19 pandemic, crafting an action plan on stress management of parents, and teaching strategies in distance learning during the pandemic will support parents in facilitating education at home and overcoming stress.

2. Literature Review

This specific study is fastened to the Family Stress Theory by Reuben Hill (1949). Meanwhile, the Interactive Framework of Coping with Difficult Situations by Endler and Parker (1992) and the Social Cognitive Learning Theory of Albert Bandura (1977) supplement the primary theory. Additionally, the 1987 Constitution Article XIV, Sections 1 and 2, the DLDM, and the Adoption of the Basic Education Continuity Plan for SY 2020-2021 (DepEd Order 12, series 2020) support this study.

The primary theory of this study by Reuben Hill (1949), the Family Stress Theory, highlights the wheel pattern in reunited households, which includes initial disorganization, recovery, and reorganization. This pattern is present in the coronavirus pandemic, provided that many people suffer from socioeconomic and emotional distress. Hill's ABC-X family stress model is the pillar of the family stress theory. Factor A in this model refers to the cause of stress – stressor – an event that triggers a shift in the family's harmony. Factor B is the mechanisms, resources, or abilities people use to cope with stress. Factor C reflects the family members' perceptions about an event, like how they describe it. The X factor is the result of the tension or problem that accompanies leads to the adaptation of coping mechanisms (Wu & Xu, 2020).

The stressor is factor A of the ABC-X model. According to Wu and Xu (2020), Hill conceptualized stressors as events or conditions that put pressure on the adjustment of family structure in 1949. Despite existing research relating family and individual stressors to inadequate parenting and child abuse and neglect, households around the world are facing a new set of stressors that endanger their well-being, security, and socioeconomic quality of life because of the coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 pandemic (Brown et al., 2020). Due to socioeconomic and psychological stress, children in marginal low-income households have difficulties attending to academic responsibilities (Phelps & Sperry, 2020). Focusing on children's safety and educational experiences has become more challenging, particularly for those who are underprivileged and live in overcrowded homes (Cluver et al., 2020).

Also, lower-class households may have minimal internet access, or parents and caregivers may have fewer opportunities for homeschooling and academic resources and information that may lead to child maltreatment. Despite virtual education opportunities, some parents and caregivers cannot give much assistance to children due to work commitments. In this crisis, avoiding such stressors is not a good option. Over the past two decades of research on coping with stress, researchers suggest the impact of stress is not on how intense or what kind of stressor is but on how the person perceives and copes with the stress that can change its effect (Van Bavel et al., 2020).

With that, resources can be individuals and larger groups who are valuable sources of support. They can also be economic or social initiatives such as fitness programs, parks, and outdoor activities, or stress management programs such as counseling and parental support networks. Individual resources are also composed of personal attributes, features, knowledge, parental experiences, and psychological qualities, such as self-confidence and personality, which can significantly impact parenting practices (Wu & Xu, 2020). Furthermore, promoting mindfulness, social support, and coping skills to maintain engagement may help individuals endure lengthy periods of social isolation. Active coping was also an essential resource for recovery (Park et al., 2020). Both inter- and intra-personal resources can mitigate the effects of stressors on distress (Park et al., 2021).

In addition to the relational and social support that a parent gets within their household, family service providers and teachers could link families with other local services to expand their support systems, especially those with financial difficulties (Prime et al., 2020). Factor C reflects family members' perceptions of an event, such as how they describe it. In some cases, the interpretation of

a stressful situation can be neutral since both positive and negative situations may be sources of stress. If this is the case, stressors may be a problem for households.

Furthermore, an accumulation of stressors due to COVID-19 is a crucial risk factor implicated in higher parent-perceived stress. In contrast, anxiety and depression are associated with both higher parent-perceived stress and child abuse potential. These results suggest that the more significant number of stressors experienced from COVID-19 may act as a salient determinant of general parental stress. Still, negative perceptions of stress could be notably higher among parents who also report feelings of anxiety and depression (Tumulak et al., 2024).

For the third aspect, parents may develop expectations or beliefs about whether the stressors are pleasant or unpleasant. The development stage, prior experiences, visions, and interpersonal relationships can influence a person's perceptions of a situation. If a stressful situation occurs, individuals prefer to assess the event personally enough that others can constructively perceive the stressor, view the event as an obstacle, or perhaps as an incentive to take it to a new level of accomplishment (Wu & Xu, 2020).

With economic changes, other socioeconomic factors may exacerbate the effect of COVID-19-related stress factors on the overall perceptions of stress and parenting, especially among minority groups (Brown et al., 2020). If a COVID-19 pandemic becomes a family problem, it relies on how parents establish their perceptions of a challenging situation (Vinkers et al., 2020). When dealing with pandemic issues or emergencies, parents' finances and other resources, attitudes and perceptions, and coping mechanisms decide the success of parenting (Billiote et al., 2022). Stress can lead to good parenting or abuse and neglect. If parents do not have successful coping mechanisms and parenting styles, the coronavirus pandemic will increase the risk of abuse and hardship for children (Phelps & Sperry, 2020).

In addition, it has been suggested from the previous study that protective factors may mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on parental stress and child abuse potential. Specifically, adaptive coping strategies and supportive family environments may serve as protective factors for families experiencing stress and may differentially influence abuse potential (Josep et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, as Harris (2020) mentioned, better parenting lets families set up home environments to promote student learning. Parent benefits can include a greater understanding of and trust in parenting, an enhanced understanding of child and teenage welfare, and an improved desire to adjust the home setting and make it more learning-friendly. The available resources and attitudes of parents amid the COVID-19 pandemic influence their mechanisms of coping with stress. The use of positive coping mechanisms helps parents develop pain resilience, improve social reinforcement, make positive sense, and take targeted and value-driven behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic (Polizzi et al., 2020).

The main framework of this study is supplemented by the Interactive Framework of Coping with Difficult Situations by Endler and Parker (1992). When faced with a COVID-19 stressor, parents can use different stress management styles. If they use cognitive or appraisal coping strategies, they can change their outlook about COVID-19 and reassess the effect of the pandemic on their family lives. When parents use a problem-oriented coping method, they will find solutions to the issues that the stressful event has brought to their communities. For instance, they can look for job opportunities if they lose a job amid the coronavirus pandemic. When parents use emotion-focused coping mechanisms, they may pursue moral support or counseling when dealing with anxiety and depression. Given the complicated and elevated pressure during the COVID-19 pandemic, parents with little effective coping mechanisms could have a higher risk of maltreatment (Pagaran et al., 2022; Lawson et al., 2020).

This study is supplemented by the Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCLT) of Albert Bandura (1977). Social Cognitive Learning Theory highlights the interrelatedness of personal, environmental, and behavioral factors towards self-efficacy. SCLT emphasizes cognitive functioning, primarily how young people and adults use it and how it affects their social relationships and behaviors (Capuyan et al., 2019). This theory also promotes reciprocal determination, wherein personal, environmental, and behavioral factors are interrelated and aid in honing a critical individual. The personal factor discusses the gender, cultural perspective, weight, and height of an individual as determining factors in creating healthy choices (Dillard, 2019).

On the other hand, environmental factors talk about the people, physical facilities, resources, and surrounding communities of a person. Furthermore, this theory also points out motivation. Motivation confers about various processes that make an individual proactive and goal-driven despite many factors. Motivational mechanisms refer to internal factors that affect one's preference, action, determination, environmental regulation, and success (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020).

Self-efficacy also plays a vital role in SCLT. According to Bandura (1986), as Dillard (2019) mentioned, self-efficiency corresponds to a person's optimism in his or her potential to meet external conditions successfully. According to Albert Bandura, self-efficiency interacts with internal and external influences bidirectionally to maximize personal accountability. Self-efficiency stimulates

motivational mechanisms embedded in cognitive processes influenced by impressions of potential, assumptions of consequences, and realistic action plans by empowering individuals to measure previous and future behavior to determine future decisions. Bandura emphasized that self-efficacy is less impactful on motivation when results are difficult to control or when outcome expectations seem hard to achieve depending on the resources at hand.

An individual may feel distressed and be unable to adjust well to certain situations because they face a potential danger of lost productivity, deprivation of supplies and means, and the unavailability of benefits from something one has invested in, such as time, money, effort, and many more. At the same time, a person may feel positive stress, or eustress, because of getting an advantage and keeping available supplies and support (Merino et al., 2021).

According to Katić et al. (2021), when considering the broader context, remote learning is the most viable choice for limiting the spread of the coronavirus disease, safeguarding the welfare of teachers and students, and continuing learning amid the pandemic. Distance learning has led numerous learners to lose enthusiasm for their educational pursuits (Meşe&Sevilen, 2021). Real-time synchronous classes are pivotal in delivering ODL. They require a reliable internet connection and enable more interactivity among learners than other distance education forms. This mode of educational delivery positions the teacher as a facilitator, promoting active learner engagement through various internet-based technologies while learners remain geographically dispersed. The Internet serves as a medium for facilitating communication between learners and teachers and among peers. ODL supports live responses and interactions, allowing students to download resources, complete and submit assignments, and participate in webinars and virtual classes. Various learning management systems or similar technologies, such as the DepEd Commons and DepEd Learning Resource Portal, are crucial for implementing ODL effectively (DepEd, 2020).

The theories, legal bases, related literature, and studies are crucial in understanding parental stress and involvement in home education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Together, they inform evidence-based interventions that can support parents in navigating their dual roles during health crises.

3. Methodology

This section disclosed the research design, flow, environment, and instruments. It also showed the respondents, data analysis and treatment, research instruments, and scoring procedures.

3.1 Design

This research used a descriptive-correlational method to study the degree of stress and parental involvement in home education during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has caused parents difficulties, contributing to their stress amidst health crises. The researchers correlated the gathered variables to test their relationship and the differences among these variables.

3.2 Environment

The study was conducted in the three identified public elementary schools in Cebu, Philippines. During the COVID-19 epidemic, parents in Cebu, Philippines, whose children were enrolled in the three public elementary schools, encountered several difficulties. The abrupt transition to online and modular learning presented challenges because of parents' need for experience with digital platforms, inconsistent Internet connections, and restricted access to technology. Many were forced to work as home tutors, frequently juggling employment and domestic duties. Economic limitations also worsened stress levels since families found it difficult to continue their children's education and offer learning resources. Despite these obstacles, parents showed tenacity and dedication by making adjustments to guarantee their children's education during this historic period.

3.3 Respondents

Table 1 indicates the data and the number of parent respondents included in the study.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents

School	Female		Male		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
School A	32	27.59	18	52.94	50	33.33
School B	40	34.48	10	29.41	50	33.33
School C	44	37.93	6	17.65	50	33.33
Total	116	100.00	34	100.00	150	100.00

In this study, 150 parents whose children are in the three identified public elementary schools were the respondents and answered the adapted survey questionnaires. They were chosen using non-probability convenience sampling.

3.4 Instrument

The researchers utilized a two-part questionnaire. Part 1 gathers the respondents' profiles, including age, gender, highest educational attainment, occupation, and combined monthly income. Part is an adaptive survey tool based on the Parenting Stress Questionnaire by Vermulst et al. (2011). The 34-item adaptive questionnaire was categorized into a] Parent-Child Relationship (7 items), b] Parenting Problems (7 items), c] Depressive Mood (8 items), d] Parental Role Restriction (6 items), and e] Physical Health Problems (6 items). The respondents were advised to respond to items by encircling their responses using the four-Likert scale: 1 point for Very Low, 2 points for Low, 3 points for Moderate, and 4 points for High.

3.5 Data Analysis

The gathered data were statistically treated using frequency, simple percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, Chi-square test of independence, and ANOVA.

3.6 Credibility and Reliability

In a transmittal letter, the researchers requested permission from school principals to perform the study on the selected respondents. A list of parents whose children attend the designated public elementary schools was requested. They distributed the poll questions upon approval. To protect the privacy of the information gathered, the parents' formal approval was sought. The confidentiality of the data collected on these respondents' well-being is ensured. The researchers also assure the respondents that the information they collect will only be utilized for the study. The Data Privacy Act of 2012 is administered and implemented following the National Privacy Commission's mandate, which is rigorously followed in this study to establish global guidelines and standards for protecting personal data and to ensure that the data protection legislation is followed. It guarantees the unrestricted flow of information necessary for innovation, progress, and national development while defending each person's right to privacy. Additionally, it ensures the confidentiality of all communications and personal data between the government and the commercial sectors participating in the research.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Every piece of information was handled with the utmost secrecy. When the findings were revealed, the parent respondents guaranteed no report would name them or the schools. Every participant in this research had the option to withdraw at any time. To get the correct data and conclusions, researchers had to consider the issues of validity and dependability. Numerous literature reviews have been done to guarantee the question's validity and reliability.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Profile of the Respondents

This section presented the data summary of the three locales of the study based on the respondents' profiles in terms of age, gender, highest educational attainment, occupation, and combined monthly income. In addition, this study wanted to determine the degree of stress encountered by the respondents from the three locales in parenting children, the significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and their degree of stress met in parenting children, and parental involvement in home education amid the pandemic.

Age and Gender. Age and gender are determined as significant variables that may explain the results. Table 2 presents the age and gender of the respondents from the three locales of the study.

Table 2
Age and Gender of the Respondents

Age (in years)	Female		Male		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
54 and above	3	2.00	2	1.33	5	3.33
44 – 53	20	13.33	5	3.33	25	16.67
34 – 43	55	36.67	14	9.33	69	46.00
24 – 33	38	25.33	13	8.67	51	34.00
Total	116	77.33	34	22.67	150	100.00
	Mean: 37.29					
	StDev: 7.45					

The table shows that of the 150 respondents from the three locales, 116 (77.33%) were females, and 34 (22.67%) were males. On the other hand, as many as 69 (46.00%), or almost half of the respondents, were 33-43 years old. According to the information, most respondents were in their early to middle midlife, and more female parents participated in the survey. As a result of this information, more female parents have a higher chance to determine and assist their children's primary and educational needs at home. However, more male parents are expected to earn a living to feed their families and provide other necessities.

Children's outcome expectations and quality of life are amplified by the impacts of mothers' successful goal achievement and self-confidence in their abilities to achieve a particular purpose. Mothers who are competent and motivated to develop, enhance, and demonstrate skills contribute to the holistic development of children, which may vary depending on where they belong in the age bracket or group (Curelaru et al., 2020).

According to Sevilla et al. (2020), female parents do more household tasks and look after the welfare of their children than male parents as they focus more on remote work than assisting their other half with childcare and household chores during the COVID-19 pandemic. Chung et al. (2020) added that despite having few studies, we can still presume that showing much love and support by both parents will boost children's positive achievements.

Highest Educational Attainment. The respondents' maximum academic attainment was deemed essential because it may determine the support or challenges parents may face, particularly given the scope of topics in the children's modules. Table 3 presents the collected data.

Table 3
Parents' Highest Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	f	%
Master's Graduate	1	0.67
Master's Level	1	0.67
College Graduate	35	23.33
College Level	19	12.67
High School Graduate	65	43.33
High School Level	9	6.00
Elementary Graduate	11	7.33
Elementary Level	7	4.67
Vocational	2	1.33
Total	150	100.00

Regarding the highest educational attainment, the table revealed that 65 (43.33%) of survey participants graduated from high school, followed by 35 (23.33%) who graduated from college. Given the data, most respondents were averagely educated, giving them an upper hand and a disadvantage in assisting their children in completing learning tasks at home. Some parents may help their children without assistance, while others who lack content knowledge may need support from classmates, teachers, neighbors, etc. According to Olaseni and Olaseni (2020), parents with high educational attainment would better recognize the importance of excellent education than uneducated and undereducated parents. Parents' high academic achievement improves their children's educational outcomes (Assari et al., 2020).

Occupation. The respondents' occupations were also inquired about, which may influence parental engagement in home education. Table 4 summarizes the information gathered.

Table 4
Parents' Occupation

Occupation	f	%	Rank
Housewife	64	42.67	1
Teacher	15	10.00	3
Factory Worker	8	5.33	4
Vendor	8	5.33	4
Business Owner	7	4.67	5
Driver	6	4.00	6
Helper	4	2.67	7
Others	38	25.33	2
Total	150	100.00	

Regarding the respondents' occupations, the data showed that 64 (42.67%) of the respondents were housewives, and 15 were teachers (10.99%). The findings implied that the global crisis caused by COVID-19 has impacted many families, as nearly half of the respondents were jobless, likely to result in financial losses, financial instability, and insufficient resources. Such difficulties may cause an extreme stress level to parents who may exhibit poor parenting and socioemotional problems.

Financial struggles worsen parental stress among mothers and may result in violence and poor parenting (Jackson & Choi, 2018). At the same time, employment and other duties may force parents to rely on childcare from other people or significant others, causing less parental involvement in children's home education (Lee et al., 2021).

Related causes that may determine the degree of stress parents have perceived due to COVID-19 are marital conflict, psychological functioning, harmony between work and individual well-being, parenting style, and household relationships (Brown et al., 2020).

Combined Monthly Family Income. The researchers also pursued the respondents' combined monthly household income because it is an essential variable that may prove the study results. The information gathered is presented in Table 5.

Table 5
Combined Monthly Family Income

Monthly Income (in PhP)	Classification	f	%
P43, 828 – P76, 699	Middle Income	3	2.00
P21, 914 - P43, 828	Lower Middle Income	21	14.00
P10, 957 - P21, 914	Low Income	52	34.67
Less than P10, 957	Poor	74	49.33
	Total	150	100.00

As for the combined monthly family income, the table showed that 74 (49.33%) respondents earned less than P10,957 (Poor). More than such a budget is needed, especially for households with a more significant number of family members. Many families, particularly parents, do their best to do something for their family's needs while also addressing other responsibilities, like the children's educational needs, by depleting resources and income. Thus, due to the pandemic, most respondents are experiencing financial difficulties and scarcity of resources.

Suppose the data results are compared to the proposed thresholds of income classification by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, an attached National Economic and Development Authority agency by Albert et al. (2018). In that case, most respondents belong to the poor income class. Amid the global health crisis, scarcity of food resources, lack of healthcare coverage, childcare services, and support interruptions have been prevalent among households (Patrick et al., 2020). Some parents revealed their coping mechanisms to combat the recessions on the economy during the pandemic by reducing food expenditures, using emergency funds, and taking out a loan or borrowing money from others (Karpman et al., 2020).

4.2 Degree of Stress Encountered by the Respondents in Parenting Children

This paragraph explains the level of positive and negative stress experienced by parents while educating their children amid the COVID-19 pandemic, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6
Degree of Stress Encountered by the Respondents in Parenting Children

#	Indicators	WM	StDev	Interpretation
1	I feel happy with my child.	3.62	0.68	High
2	My child listens to me.	3.23	0.68	Moderate
3	I enjoy life.	3.39	0.82	High
4	Raising my child leaves me with too little personal time.	2.92	0.92	Moderate
5	I feel cheerful when my child is with me.	3.50	0.78	High
6	I can calm my child down when he/she gets angry.	3.13	0.86	Moderate
7	I feel happy.	3.64	0.69	High
8	My child keeps me from other activities.	2.95	0.85	Moderate
9	I feel satisfied with my child.	3.61	0.68	High
10	I am in charge when I am with my child.	3.41	0.79	High
11	Sometimes, I do not see the point of living.	2.32	1.03	Low
12	I want to visit friends more often but cannot because of my child.	2.77	1.02	Moderate
13	When I am with my child, I feel good.	3.61	0.71	High
14	I am patient with my child.	3.39	0.73	High
15	I frequently feel good.	3.33	0.72	High
16	I have less contact with friends than I used to because of my child.	2.93	0.99	Moderate
17	I feel calm when my child is with me.	3.49	0.70	High
18	Interaction with my child is easy.	3.07	0.80	Moderate
19	I am frequently in a bad mood.	2.29	0.87	Low
20	I cannot leave the house much at all because of my child.	2.85	1.01	Moderate
21	My child is a source of enjoyment.	3.71	0.62	High
22	I am doing an excellent job as a parent.	3.55	0.62	High
23	I hate myself.	1.71	0.97	Very Low
24	I have little contact with others because of my child.	2.60	1.03	Moderate
25	I am good at correcting my child when necessary.	3.19	0.79	Moderate
26	I view the future positively.	3.29	0.86	High
27	I have a bloated or pressing feeling in my stomach.	1.82	0.94	Low
28	I feel drained.	1.93	0.97	Low
29	I feel pain in my chest or heart region.	1.55	0.90	Very Low
30	My stomach hurts.	1.49	0.82	Very Low
31	I feel sleepy or drowsy	1.81	0.90	Low
32	I feel tightness in my chest.	1.45	0.81	Very Low
33	I have an upset stomach.	1.43	0.75	Very Low
34	When I get up in the morning, I am tired and poorly rested.	1.85	0.97	Low
Aggregate Mean		2.79	0.83	Moderate

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00-High; 2.50 – 3.24-Moderate; 1.75 – 2.49-Low; 1.00 – 1.74 –Very Low

The table illustrates that parents perceive a high level of eustress about positively worded items that deal with relationships between a child and parents, specifically numbers 1, 5, 9, 10, and 13. As a result, parents being with children amid the pandemic still gives them hope and strength. Because of the current crisis, parents try to maintain a close relationship with their children regardless of financial and health issues.

Meanwhile, Janssen et al. (2020) pointed out that socio-emotional anguish caused by the COVID-19 pandemic sway parenting behaviors elicits emotional and mental isolation, extra sensitivity, less support, and decreased mindfulness of the children’s needs. Furthermore, several parents reported low to high levels of distress and eustress when promoting discipline and good behaviors among their children, as revealed by items 6, 14, 17, 18, and 22. Before the pandemic, parents who had already established good relationships with their children may have coped well with disciplining them. In contrast, others who already struggled with parent-child connection experienced extra stress. Other factors like socioeconomic status, mental well-being, health issues, and routines may have also contributed to parents’ varying stress levels. Based on different studies on interventions, parental burnout was linked to increased parents maltreating and neglecting their children. Therefore, formal mediation to decrease parental stress could mitigate child maltreatment and abandonment (Brianda et al., 2020).

Mikolajczak et al. (2019) pointed out that according to early studies, immensely stressed parents do not support child abuse and bad parenting. On the contrary, they frequently become apologetic when they partake in physical and verbal abuse, fearing for the children's welfare. Generally, the parents from the three different locales feel averagely stressed in these trying times, especially when parenting children in their homes. According to the study by Janssen et al. (2020), parents and teenagers in their research appear to be handling the situation effectively. Households and individuals varied in how much the COVID-19 epidemic affected their mood and parental involvement.

4.3 Test of Significance of the Relationship

Table 7 shows the significance test for the relationship between the respondents' profile and their degree of stress in parenting and educating children at home during the pandemic using the Chi-square test at the 0.05 significance level.

Table 7
Test of Significance of the Relationship Between the Profile and the Degree of Stress Encountered by the Respondents

Variables	df	χ^2 -value	P - value	Decision	Result
Stress and					
Age	6	4.146	0.657	Ho accepted	Not significant
Gender	2	6.677	0.035	Ho rejected	Significant
Educational Attainment	16	20.975	0.179	Ho accepted	Not significant
Occupation	66	43.946	0.983	Ho accepted	Not significant
Monthly Income	6	8.978	0.175	Ho accepted	Not significant

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

The table shows that parental gender significantly correlates with their stress level in educating their children at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. The computed p-value of 0.035 is less than 0.05, leading to rejecting the null hypothesis. The data imply that for many male parents, balancing parental involvement and a compensated job is stress-inducing and a novel event. However, despite extensive father involvement in child-rearing, motherhood or fatherhood continues to be a prerogative heavily influenced by gender disparities.

Female parents are responsible for most household and childcare tasks even if employed, and male parents are not (Aguar et al., 2021). In addition, female parents who cohere to the traditional norms, where society imposes beyond expectations on the mother in terms of full support, focus, and commitment to their children, often neglect their necessities to meet society's expectations and are thus more likely to become stressed. Mothers may endure discomfort, skepticism, self-blame, despair, and social isolation more frequently because they may prioritize their children over time. Moreover, the findings indicate that some mothers and fathers had a chance to develop a deep relationship with their children.

5. Conclusion

The COVID-19 epidemic has brought attention to gender disparities in the stress levels that parents experience when it comes to educating their children at home. The study shows that mothers were more likely than fathers to feel stress, mainly as a result of cultural expectations and established gender roles. Mothers were particularly burdened with the responsibility of juggling distant learning with other family chores, which led to heightened stress. Fathers, on the other hand, despite their involvement, usually felt less pressure to balance these responsibilities. As a result, there is a correlation between parental gender and stress levels, with females being disproportionately impacted by the responsibilities of raising children during the epidemic in comparison to men. There are several restrictions on the research on parental stress and homeschooling during the COVID-19 outbreak in the Philippines. Firstly, much of the data is derived from self-reports, which might create bias since parents may under- or overreport their experiences. Secondly, the study could not have considered the stark socioeconomic differences in the Philippines, which significantly impact stress levels and the availability of educational resources. Third, because stressors may change after a pandemic, their period-specific emphasis limits the findings' long-term relevance. The perception of parental participation may be distorted by cultural conventions around gender roles, undermining the findings' generalizability. Thus, the researchers recommend implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the proposed action plans. Also, they suggest conducting further studies to strengthen these findings in an enormous scope.

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ORCID iD (if any): <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8930-6476>

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