TEACHING BEGINNING READERS: NARRATIVE OF PARENTS AS READING PARTNERS IN THE NEW NORMAL

Ma. Erika Abella, Merry Chiells Bordey, Nicole Lallabban, Shairah Luyun
Mark Vincent Malana, Roselle Pagadduan, Brenda Pelovello, Ma. Luisa Rance
Rose Anne Soriano, Ma. Rosario Talattad, Alfa Tambiao, Le Gallien Vallejo
Reylyn Vinarao, Maricris Visalda, Larie Mae Yadan

Bachelor of Elementary Education, College of Teacher Education
Cagayan State University- Andrews Campus, Tuguegarao City

ABSTRACT

In the new normal, parents have played a critical role in the development of reading skills of their children. Unlike teachers, not all parents are professionally trained to fulfill their duty as reading partners; hence, it is imperative to examine the narratives of parents as reading partners in teaching beginning readers. Using a qualitative research approach, the researchers unraveled the experiences of 10 parents who have direct involvement in teaching beginning readers in the new normal. The result disclosed that parents viewed their role as reading partners to be challenging. In motivating their children to read, they utilize positive reinforcement and impose punishment. Interestingly, they ensured that their children were assisted in reading by conducting reading sessions every day in a conducive place for learning. Notably, the Marungko approach and translation strategies were employed to help their children read. In the process, adequate educational background, setting of priority and time management, and availability of relevant reading resources enabled the parents to teach beginning readers. On the other hand, various household chores and the lack of background in teaching reading have fervently hindered the parents to perform well their role as reading partners. Ultimately, this study proves that parents are crucial in the development of reading skills among beginning readers and their narratives provide elucidation to their joys and struggles and what else may be done to empower them as reading partners in the basic education.

Keywords*: Beginning readers, modular distance learning, new normal

INTRODUCTION

The novel coronavirus disease has adversely affected the education sector. Almost a third of the countries worldwide had fully or partially closed schools in September 2021 (UNICEF, 2021), while most educational institutions in Asia had been closed for a year or more. The Philippines is one of the few nations with the most prolonged school closures (UNESCO, 2021). As a result, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan, which provides various learning delivery

services for parents and learners to select from, but all necessitate a high level of parental involvement. Participation of parents is the most popular strategy in acquiring knowledge in this pandemic, which works effectively, especially in teaching beginning reading.

Since the school closures, reading is one of the greatly affected skills among learners. In its general sense, reading is the process of comprehending written texts. It requires perception, attention, memory, language skills, and thought (Cayir, 2017). In addition, word recognition and comprehension are two connected processes in reading. Learning to read involves various skills that must be taught to a child. Instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension will surely help a child learn to read (Reade & Sayco 2017). The acquisition of reading skills starts at the phase of beginning reading, this stage of reading development commences reading instruction involving children whose ages range from four to seven years old (Bear et al., 2016). Indeed, it is a complex process that requires detailed and thorough teaching.

In the new normal, Bernardo (2020) found that modular learning delivery is the most popular learning modality in the new normal context. It features the use of self-learning modules by learners delivered in print and electronic copy, it is the most preferred modality by parents in primary schools, especially in rural areas where the internet is not accessible for online or blended learning. In this setting, the parents and guardians assume a crucial function for productive result undertaking, especially as teachers' partners in teaching beginning readers, particularly in Filipino, Maryline (2021) .

In context, learners begin their education in the language they are most familiar with their mother tongue and must build a strong foundation in that language before progressing on to other languages (DepEd, 2016). Republic Act 10533 or the Enhanced Basic Education Act highlighted the relevance of teaching Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education" (Official Gazette, 2013). In addition, the Department of Education through its Department Order number 74 s. 2009 mandated the institutionalization of MTB-MLE nationwide to improve educational outcomes from kindergarten to Grade 3. Moreover, Section 6 of Article 14 of the 1987 Constitution, encourages the government to "take steps to establish and maintain the use of Filipino as a medium of official communication and as a language of instruction in the educational system" (Official Gazette, 2022). Guro Tayo (2022) noted that when it comes to learning to read, learning Filipino comes first, followed by learning to read in English, simply because Filipino letter sounds and syllables are easier to acquire than English. As previously claimed, children's overall educational attainment can be improved by teaching them with the language that they can easily understand in their early grades (Benson, 2002).

However, Philippine Star (2010) reported that most Filipino learners lack motivation to read and many do not have a reading habit (Luz, 2007), which may contribute to an increased number of non-readers and poor readers, especially during this pandemic. This scenario is alarming because teaching reading has become a shared responsibility of

parents and teachers. However, parents face struggles in teaching beginning readers as some of them lack expertise in delivering reading instruction, unlike teachers equipped with pedagogical knowledge in teaching reading. Further concerns that hampered effective teaching and learning quality were a lack of learning spaces at home, poor internet connection, and learning equipment and reading resources (Grewenig et al., 2020). Local government units and non-government organizations work together to provide access to technology through the distribution of devices and hotspots, yet underlying infrastructure and instructional materials necessary in teaching beginning readers remain inadequate (Wheeler, 2020).

Moreover, parents are of diverse characteristics and abilities; these predictors affect parental involvement, directly influencing children's educational outcomes. For example, in a study conducted by Bayod et al. (2021), some parents reiterated that they returned the modules unanswered due to their lack of understanding the lessons, and teaching their children may disrupt their daily works. Also, they claimed to prioritize serving food at the table over teaching their children. With this, the problem revealed by Programme for International Student Assessment (2018) that 80% of Filipino learners did not attain the minimum level of proficiency in reading may get worst as students have limited interaction with teachers in the modular distance learning delivery modality which placed the parents and guardians as the more knowledgeable others in teaching beginning reading.

Hence, it is imperative to determine the challenges and factors that might enable and constrain the parents in teaching their children to read as their responsibility is crucial to ensure learning in the new normal. These difficulties faced by parents must be taken into account as their role is necessary for acquiring reading skills in Filipino. Based on the foregoing contexts, the study generally explored the narratives of parents as reading partners for their children who were beginning readers. Specifically, this study answered the following questions:
1. How do parents view their role as reading partners of their children in beginning reading?
2. What are the experiences of the parents in terms of:
      A. motivating their children to read;
      B. assisting their children how to read;
      C. strategizing in teaching their children how to read; and
      D. accessing relevant reading sources for their children?
3. What enabling and constraining factors do parents encounter as partners in teaching their children to read in Filipino?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researchers employed qualitative research approach using in-depth interviews to elicit the narratives of the study participants in teaching beginning readers in the new normal.

According to Legard et al. (2003), in-depth interviews combine structure with flexibility as the material is generated by interaction. In addition, in-depth interviews efficiently collect primary data providing more detailed information than other data collection methods (Vecaldo et al., 2019).

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in barangays Bangag and Lanna, Solana, Cagayan where the residences of the study participants were located. These barangays are situated in rural areas and where the public elementary schools utilized pure modular distance learning.

Study Participants

The participants were purposively selected based on the following inclusion criteria: They must have (a) a child in Grade 1 whose age ranges from six to seven years old who is into MDL; (b) direct involvement in the reading instruction for their children; (c) the ability to answer the questions; and (d) the willingness to participate in the study. The inclusion criteria ensured that the participants could provide the necessary data for the study. With these, there were a total of ten study participants and the number was based on the data saturation.

In terms of the profile, nine of the participants are mothers, while one is a guardian. Most of the participants have two children and only two of them are degree holders. Among the participants, one is a student and the rest are plain housewives. Moreover, none of them had attended seminars pertaining to teaching beginning readers. However, one has an appropriate educational background as she is a graduate of Bachelor of Elementary Education. The researchers used pseudonyms to conceal the real identities of the participants. Table 1 shows the profile of the participants.

Table 1. Profile of the Participants

Participant	Relationship	No. of children	Sex	Age	Educational Attainment	Employment status
A	Mother	1	F	34	College graduate	Housewife
B	Mother	1	F	28	College graduate	Housewife
C	Mother	2	F	25	College Undergraduate	Housewife
D	Mother	3	F	34	High school graduate	Housewife
E	Mother	3	F	27	Elementary graduate	Housewife

F	Mother	2	F	28	High school graduate	Housewife
G	Mother	2	F	24	College Undergraduate	Housewife
H	Mother	1	F	27	College Undergraduate	Housewife
I	Mother	2	F	25	College undergraduate	Housewife
J	Uncle or guardian	N/A	M	18	High school student	Student

Research Instrument

The researchers utilized an in-depth interview approach with an interview guide consisting of items responsive to the research questions to generate the appropriate data needed. Three experts performed qualitative content validation on the interview guide, and it was pilot tested to two non-respondents to determine the items' inclusivity and estimate the allotted time for the interview session. Also, the items of the interview guide were translated to Ilocano, which is the participants' native language.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers conducted a direct, in-depth interviews among the potential participants. Prior to the interview, researchers sought the permission of the barangay officials to conduct the interview. An informed consent through Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) form was given to the potential study participants, they were given enough time to review their participation in the study while fully understanding their rights to withdraw and refuse. After the consent was granted, they were asked for an appointment to conduct the study at their respective homes in their most convenient time. The researchers ensured that the interview area would be well-ventilated, conducive and free from any disturbances. They were also oriented about the nature and significance of the study, the extent of their participation, the risks and conveniences, their rights and confidentiality, and given, the risk of COVID-19, the participants were ensured that the interviewers are vaccinated and that minimum health protocols set by the Regional Inter-Agency Task Force (RIATF) were strictly followed. Furthermore, the researchers asked for the permission of the participants to document and/or record the responses using a mobile phone. Interview and recording were also complemented through note-taking.

Data Analysis

The data generated from the interviews were transcribed, repeatedly read, and were critically analyzed through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method utilized to identify, analyze and generate themes from a set of data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). It was

used to generate codes, search for sub-themes and major themes arising from similar and contrasting data taken from the interviews. Manual thematic analysis allowed the researchers to make meaning from the content and to come up with appropriate concepts or codes. Next, interrelated codes were categorized to come up with sub-themes. Lastly, themes are generated by refining the sub-themes.

RESULTS

Parents' View of their Role as Reading Partners of their Children

Table 2. Themes and sub-themes on the Parents' View of their Role as Reading Partners of their Children

Theme	Sub-theme	Sample Responses
Challenging Task	Difficulty in motivating children to read	*"I find it hard to motivate my child to read."* (C) *"My child is stubborn when it comes to reading. He does not like to follow my instructions."* (B)
	Various concerns at home	*"There are other children that I need to attend to that is why I am hard up in doing my role in teaching my child to read."* (D) *As a housewife, I must prioritize my household chore first so that I can have time for my child to read. My situation is really difficult."* (F)
	Lack of skills and preparation to teach	*"There are times that I cry in frustration because I am not capable of teaching my child because I am only an elementary graduate and I have a new born baby to look after."* (E) *"I am still a high school student with modules to attend to also. I really do not have the ability to teach. I do not know how to do it."* (J)

Table 2 shows that the participants view their role as reading partners to be a challenging task. This point is affirmed by the sub-themes extracted from the transcripts as follows: difficulty in motivating the children to read, various concerns at home, and lack of skills and preparation to teach reading. Some participants consider their role as disadvantageous because they have a hard time assisting their children to read. Some of the children are not paying attention when they have extra time to facilitate reading session. In addition, the

children do not listen to the parents' instruction, making it hard for the parents to assist them.

Also, the participants were unanimous in claiming that it is challenging to teach their children to read because of other household chores to attend to. Nine of the participants are housewives and they shared that most of the time, they are left at home to do all the household chores while their children are doing their modules. Consequently, this scenario consumes much of their time that becomes difficult for them to provide quality reading moments with their children no matter how much they desire.

Moreover, the participants admitted that they are not prepared to teach reading. They lack the skills since they are not trained to do so. They just relied on what they know and sometimes they could hardly focus on teaching their children because they themselves are hard up. Participant B said,

> "I am a teacher education graduate but still I find it hard to teach my child how to read. I believe it is a big concern to those parents who did not have the appropriate education and training."

Parents' Experiences of their Role as Reading Partners of their Children

Motivating Children to Read

Majority of the respondents used positive reinforcement in motivating their children to read by giving rewards such as food/snacks, money, gifts, toys, and time to play gadget. Participants B and E stated,

> "I give her reward such as food. I also encouraged my child to read by promising her that I'll buy stuffs after."
> "I offer my child some money for him to buy snacks as a motivation."

On the other hand, some of the participants said that they impose punishment when their child refuses to cooperate in reading and if they will not read. As mentioned by participants D, I, J,

> "If he refuses to cooperate, I sometimes scold him."
> "I scare him by telling him that, your teacher will scold you if you do not know how to read".
> "I'd not allow him to use his tablet if he will not read."

In addition, some of the participants also integrate fun and engaging activities in motivating their child to read. Participants B, F, G, H, J expressed,

> "Yes, through the use of print outs."

"I count so that she will read words as fast as she could."
"I ask him to translate or describe the words so that he will also be engaged."
"We do have flashcards."
"I use flashcards to engage him."

Nonetheless, some of the respondent's major struggle is capturing and maintaining their child's attention span. They also have a hard time motivating their children to read, which leads them to use punishment such as scolding or scaring their child. Parent I and J enunciated,

"If he refuses to cooperate, I sometimes scold him."
"I scare him by telling him that, your teacher will scold you if you do not   know how to read."

Assisting Children in Reading

Majority of the participants have a tentative schedule in assisting their child in reading. According to them, they will just assist their child in reading whenever they are done with the household chores, their babies already fell asleep and they usually have the reading session every time their child has a module. Participants C, H and I mentioned,

"I teach my child to read every after accomplishing all household responsibilities."
"Everyday. We don't have a schedule, after I'm done with the household   chores, that's the time I teach him."
"I teach him how to read every time their teacher gives them module.
"After his sister fell asleep"

Indeed, the participants dedicate their time to assist their children in reading although they do not have a schedule to follow. Furthermore, the participants claimed that they always ensure a noise-free environment, or no disturbances that can cause distraction during their reading time. Most of the respondents provide their children with a conducive learning space so that their children can focus.

Strategies in Teaching Reading

Interestingly, some of the parents use "Marungko Approach" wherein they first teach their child letter sounds and syllables, phrases then words to sentences. Participants C, F, G and H testified,

"Yes, I teach her how to read through teaching her the basics so that she can gradually learn to read phrases and then sentences."
"Yes, letters, sounds, syllables to words."
"Yes, A E I O U to Ba-Be-Bi-Bo-Bu to words."

"I taught him letters, sounds of letters to syllables to words."

Additionally, they use pictures and other vibrant and interesting reading materials in teaching them sounds. As mentioned by the participants, A, D, I and J,

"Yes, I use images."
"Yes, I use images accompanied by a text."
"Yes, I use charts."
"Old storybooks and I search engaging videos on YouTube."

Furthermore, all the parent-respondents stated that they use translation strategy whenever their child encounter unfamiliar words on their learning module. They use their mother-tongue to clarify terms that are difficult to understand. Also, they write the words its translation to Iloko as part of their drill during reading sessions.

The parents have also responded that whenever they notice that their children are having difficulty in reading, they use the strategy of modeling. They explained that they will read the word first and then let their child imitate them. In doing so, they believe that it becomes easy on the part of the children to read words, phrases and sentences.

Accessing Relevant Reading Sources

The majority of the participants have access to reading sources that are available at their homes such as books and self-made charts. They make use of these materials other than modules issued by the school or the class adviser. As the participants avowed,

"Through these books, I have found and learned more examples and explanations to provide my child in as much as her reading ability is concerned." (D)
"It makes teaching easier as it aids me in my newly acquired role." (I)

Also, respondent H said that her child is good at reading in Filipino already and he is now starting to read basic sight words in English and that what makes her successful in fulfilling her duty as a teacher's partner in teaching reading is her access to online platforms which allows her to learn various strategies in teaching reading from parents like her.

Having access to various reading sources aids in parents teaching their children to read. They see these as significant instruments for their role as reading partners. Moreover, utilizing the internet to access colorful printed materials is beneficial in gaining more of their child's attention. As observed by participants A, G, and J,

"It has aid me to persuade my child to read."

"It is very helpful because it makes my job easier since it encourages also my son to read because the materials are colorful."

"He is more excited to read when the reading materials are colorful."

Enabling and Constraining Factors that Parents Encountered as Reading Partners

Table 3. Themes and sub-themes on the enabling and constraining factors

Themes	Sub-themes	Sample Responses
Enabling Factors	Availability of Relevant Reading Resources	*"I am glad that the school provided us with modules. Also, we have some reading resources at home that were used by my children who are now in the higher grades."* (G) *"I bought reading materials for my children because I believe that reading is the foundation of learning. If the materials are not available, then it is difficult to teach reading."* (I)
	Setting of Priorities and Proper Time Management	*"I learned some reading strategies through Youtube and online resources that helped me in my role"* (H) *"It is a matter of scheduling properly so that I can attend to the reading session of my child."* (B) *"I always put into consideration the need of my child to be guided in his modules."* (J)
	Parents' Educational Background	*"It is important to have a background in education to facilitate the teaching."* (A) *"I am happy that I take charge of my child's learning and I can put to practice what I learned during my internship experience."* (B)
Constraining Factors	Various Household Chores	*"I have multiple responsibilities at home that hinder me to teach my child to read such as doing household chores, taking care of newly born baby and assisting her two children in their modules."* (G)
	Lack of Background in Teaching Reading	*"I am not capable of teaching my child because I do not have the proper training. I am only an elementary graduate."* (E)

*"I am not a teacher by profession so even if
I am college graduate, I still find it hard to
teach my child how to read."* (A)

Table 3 shows the themes and sub-themes on the enabling and constraining factors that parents encountered as reading partners in the beginning reading experiences of their children. The participants shared that it becomes more facilitating to teach reading to their children if they have adequate educational background, when reading is prioritized and teaching is scheduled properly, and if relevant reading resources, either printed or online, are available. On the other hand, the participants believed that they are hindered in their role as reading partners because of various household chores and the lack of background in teaching reading.

DISCUSSION

The present study ventured into parents' narratives as reading partners of their children who are beginning readers. It disclosed themes as to how they view their role, their lived experiences, and the factors that aid and hinder them from the realization of what is expected from them. Consequently, this will fill the scanty literature discussing parents' accounts of the new normal education, particularly those with children who are into modular distance learning.

Significantly, the parents view their role as a challenging task because of relevant reasons. They find difficulty motivating their children, have various concerns at home, and lack skills and preparation to teach, which affirms that their role is not that simple to take over. The shift of responsibility from teachers to parents resulted in the disruption of parents' daily work, especially if there are other children to look after. Indeed, parents are torn between doing the household chores, providing for their family and assuming their roles as their children's reading partners in the new normal, Decena (2022). There is a significant overlap between child, maternal, and family circumstances, such as child abilities, maternal psychological wellbeing, parenting style, cultural factors, and socio-economic circumstances, such as income, education, employment, and neighborhood conditions (Taylor et al., 2016). Multiple risk factors explain why parents believe that helping their children learn to read is a difficult task. In addition, they see themselves as unskilled in portraying their role as teacher's partners in teaching reading, and they face numerous difficulties. This is relevant to the study of Mudzielwana (2014) revealing that illiteracy is a significant barrier to parents supporting their children with their reading skills.

Despite that, most of the parents shared that they are fulfilled as it is a new learning experience that they discovered brought by the circumstances of the pandemic. It is fulfilling for them to experience what teachers do every day in a classroom during face-to-face classes. The parents shared that the most rewarding part of teaching is when they can

take part in acquiring and developing their children's reading skills. It pays back the effort, determination, and time they exerted to achieve a positive outcome.

The second research objective elicited the respondents' experiences in teaching their children who are beginning readers. In motivating children to read majority uses positive reinforcement in the form of giving rewards such as snacks, money, gifts, toys, and time to play gadgets. This finding coincides to the previous study by Marinak and Gambrell (2008), pointing out that the proximity of the reward to the desired behavior is considered an essential factor in enhancing reading motivation. In the present study, giving children snacks, money, gifts, and toys stimulates their attention to engage themselves in reading rather than merely telling them to read. It is also important to note that some of the participants impose punishment when their children refused to cooperate. This point means that parents employ behaviorist theories and that they acknowledge the importance of appropriate use of reinforcements, which can foster a culture of reading motivation. In terms of assisting their children in reading, the participants dedicate their time every day. If duly encouraged, most parents can devote extra time and effort to assist with their children's education (Ho, 2009). Although many of them have a tentative schedule in assisting their child in reading, they see to it that they have time after the household chores or their babies have already fallen asleep.

Moreover, though parents do not have a particular space for learning, they ensure that the place provided is conducive to learning. In such an environment, that the learners are more likely to be task-oriented and reflective (Lim et al., 2003), hence children are able to focus on their reading time. Also, Aerila and Merisuo-Storm (2017) claimed that children interested in reading and experiencing the joy and success of reading are provided with a comfortable reading place and enough reading time.

Notably, reading strategies were also employed, and parents believed that these strategies helped them teach their children. The results show that most of the participants use Marungko Approach and translation strategy. The purpose of the participants in using the Marungko Approach is for their child to learn reading from sounds of letters and syllables gradually, phrases, then words to sentences. This situation supports that the Marungko approach provides a positive end in developing the learners' reading competencies like the skill to identify letter names, identify letter sounds, discriminate initial sounds, read familiar words and read an oral passage (Boltron & Ramos, 2021). Translation Strategy also aids the participants in helping their child understand unfamiliar words. In fact, the study of Lartec et al. (2014) found out that participants use translation as a bridge to connect learners to the lesson. Moreover, it allows teachers and parents to address the needs of learners who do not speak or comprehend Filipino adequately. This scenario is also supported by Dekker and Young (2007), in which respondents used an innovative strategy wherein the basis for motivating pupils to read and understand the text is through utilizing the Filipino language or the learners' mother tongue.

Furthermore, the parent-respondents named few among the enabling and constraining factors they encountered. Factors that enable parents to assume their role as reading partners are; the availability of relevant reading sources, their educational background, setting of priorities, and proper time management. The availability of reading materials at home has aided parents. It creates a more significant impact on teaching beginning readers as it is an effective way to develop their child's reading skills. Parents confirmed that with enough printed reading materials, their role becomes lighter. The majority of the participants have access to reading sources available in their homes, such as books and self-made charts.

On the one hand, due to the lack of access and availability of other reading sources at home, some parents have to depend on provided materials by the school. This theme entails that parents' experience accessing relevant reading sources may affect beginning readers. As previous studies reported, reading materials at home have yielded a significant positive impact on the students' reading achievement (Chui & Ko, 2008). Hence, this notion only implies that parents who immerse their children in books or other reading materials give them a head start in school and an advantage over their peers throughout their primary school. As asserted by Mol and Bus (2011), exposure to more print improves the comprehension and reading skills of a child. The result of the present study is affirmed by Huang et al. (2019), claiming that the number of books available at home significantly impacted the reading attainment of a child. Hence, it can ease parents from their burden. Next is the parent's time management. Dong et al. (2021) claimed that most parents felt the need to be present with their children during this new normal. Participants are primarily mothers, which is parallel with the study of Ribeiro et al. (2021), where they found out that female parents contribute more to assisting their children. The study also suggests that the more school time, the more involvement is required from them. Therefore, time management is an essential component in fulfilling parents' newly acquired responsibility.

Remarkably, the respondents unveiled factors that hinder parents from fulfilling their roles which are; household-chores and the number of children to look after. The factors that constrain the parents in fulfilling their duties as reading partners are similar to the findings of Mudzielwana (2014), affirming that sometimes parents fail to assist their children due to time constraints; this includes the set of household chores that needs to be accomplished and other children to look after which constrains them from assisting their child. Second, some parents cannot assist their children in reading because of their educational attainment. The educational background of the parents is perceived as a factor that enables and constrains them from functioning as reading partners in the new normal. Those respondents with high educational attainment find it easier to teach their children than those with low educational attainment. In support, Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) pointed out that parents' educational attainment has a pattern of influence on their children's education. Those that are highly educated tend to have a more positive impact than low, no formal education and illiterate parents. Consequently, the low literacy level limits the active parental involvement in children's education, which means that parents with low literacy

levels might have the will to assist their children but are hindered by their limited formal education (Donkor, 2010). Eventually, when parents have more learning experiences, they recognize how to utilize effective reading strategies employed to them in their early years of learning in assisting their children who are beginning readers.

Indeed, parents are true of diverse characteristics and abilities. Their experiences as reading partners in the new normal have presented the idea of how crucial their role is in their children's education. Thus, there is a need to determine more of these factors, whether technical or personal barriers, that might enable and constrain the parents in teaching their children during this pandemic, specifically those beginning to read.

CONCLUSION

The new normal in education has challenged the parents particularly mothers whose children are in the foundation of education. The parents being reading partners in learning to read in Filipino have viewed their role as a challenging task. Despite that outlook, they still gave their best to become relevant and meaningful guide in motivating and assisting their children to read, strategizing in teaching their children how to read, and accessing relevant reading sources for their children. In the process, adequate educational background, setting of priority and time management, and availability of relevant reading resources serve as enabling factors. On the other hand, various household chores and the lack of background in teaching reading have fervently hindered the parents to perform well their role as reading partners. Ultimately, this study proves that parents are crucial in the development of reading skills among beginning readers and their narratives provide elucidation to their joys and struggles and what else may be done to empower them as reading partners in the basic education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the study bared the challenges and constraining factors encountered by the participants as reading partners, the following are suggested. First, the school heads may provide parents the trainings that would equip them on the different strategies in teaching reading. They may also provide reading resources that may be used by the parents and their children in their reading sessions. Second, teachers should make sure that they closely monitor the parents as regards their status on teaching reading. Furthermore, since teaching beginning reading is not the sole responsibility of mothers, teachers must encourage the fathers to get involved in teaching their children to read. They must also establish strong communication with parents in order to give them guidance and assist them in their needs when teaching reading to their children. Also, as they are the ones with direct contact with the parents, they can be of great help by capacitating the parents to become better reading partners and by providing or recommending reading materials that may be useful for the parents. Third, the parents as reading partners, may coordinate well with the teachers and school administrators as regards to their needs to effectively carry out their functions.

Lastly, the school administrators may conduct capacity-building activities to empower parents as reading partners.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

REFERENCES

Aerila, J., & Merisuo-Storm, T. (2017). Emergent readers and the joy of reading: A Finnish perspective. Creative Education, 8(15), 2485-2500. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2017.815171

Bayod, R. P., Forosuelo, E. J. D., Morante, J. P., & Guerra, M. C. (2021). Bracing for the new normal or post-normal? Challenges and aspirations of indigenous parents for education of their children. Eubios Journal of Asian and International Bioethics, 31(3), 161-169.

Bear, D.R., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. (2016). Words their Way: Word Study for phonics, vocabulary and spelling instruction (6th ed). Boston. MA: Pearson.

Benson, C. J. (2002). Real and Potential Benefits of Bilingual Programmes in Developing Countries. International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 5(6), 303-317.

Bernardo, J. (2020, July 30). Modular Learning most preferred parents: DepEd. ABS-CBN News.   https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/07/30/20/modular-learning-most-preferred-by-parentsdeped

Boltron, M. T., & Ramos, A. L. (2021). Improving Beginning Reading Literacy through Marungko Approach, ASEAN Journal of Basic and Higher Education 5(1), 1-12. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354067478

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. The Psychologist, 26(2), 120-123.

Cayir, A. (2017). Analyzing Reading Skills and Visual Perception Levels of First Grade Students. Universal Journal of Educational Research 5(7), 1113-1116. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2017.050704

Chiu, C., & Ko, H. (2008). Parental factors related to children's reading: Evidence from comparing transnational marriage families and local families, 1-14. https://www.iea.nl/sites/default/files/2019-04/IRC2008_Chiu_Ko.pdf

DECENA, A. J. (2021). A SURVEY ON THE READING DIFFICULTIES OF K-12 LEARNERS IN SELECTED TAGALOG-SPEAKING PROVINCES: BASIS FOR

INTERVENTION . *International Journal of Arts, Sciences and Education*, *1*(2), 219–226. Retrieved from https://ijase.org/index.php/ijase/article/view/61

Dekker, D., & Young, C. (2007). Bridging the Gap: The Development of Appropriate Educational Strategies for Minority Language Communities in the Philippines. In A. Liddicoat (Ed.), Language Planning and Policy: Issues in Language Planning and Literacy, 236-253. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853599781-016

Department of Education (2016, May). K to 12 Curriculum Guide MOTHER TONGUE. https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Mother-Tongue-CG.pdf

Desforges, C., & Abouchaar, A. (2003). The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievements and adjustment: A literature review. London: Department for Education and Skills, Research Report. https://relationalschools.org/2017/08/12/desforges-c-abouchaar-a-2003-the-impact-of-parental-involvement-parental-support-and-family-education-on-pupil-achievement-and-adjustment/

Dong, C., Cao, S., & Li, H. (2020). Young children's online learning during COVID-19 pandemic: Chinese parents' beliefs and attitudes. Children and youth services review, 118, 105440. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105440

Donkor, A. (2010) Parental involvement in education in Ghana: The case of a private elementary school. International Journal about Parents in Education, 4(1): 23-28.

Grewenig, E., Lergetporer, P., Woessman, L., & Zierow, L. (2020). Covid-19 and educational inequality: How school closures affect low – and high – achieving students. CESifo Working Paper No. 8648. 1-32 https://www.cesifo.org/DocDL/cesifo1_wp8648.pdf

Guro Tayo (2020). Filipino Reading Materials. https://gurotayo.com/2020/06/filipino-reading-materials.html

Ho, E. S. (2009). Educational Leadership for Parental Involvement in an Asian Context: Insights from Bourdieu's Theory of Practice. The School Community Journal, 19(2), 101-122.

Huang H., Tse S., Chu S., Xiao X., Lam J., Ng R., Hui S. (2019). The correlation between out-of-school and in-school reading resources with primary school students' reading attainment. ERIC - Education Resources Information Center, 24(3).https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1229379.pdf

Lartec, J., Belisario A., Bendanillo, J., Binas-o, H., Bucang, N., & Cammagay, J. (2014). Strategies and problems encountered by teachers in implementing mother tongue – based instruction in a multilingual classroom. IAFOR Journal of Language Learning, 1(1). https://doi.org/10.22492/ijll.1.1.04

Legard, R., Keegan, J., & Ward, K. (2003). In-depth interviews. Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers, 6(1), 138-169. Google Books. https://books.google.com.ph/books?hl=en&lr=&id=z5y0LCT8YNUC&oi=fnd&pg=PA138&dq=info:U9pRerpCP_sJ:scholar.google.com/&ots=q5bXIhO2E4&sig=goTKen1a3jf_pvGvAKrW3wzc7Y

Lim, C., Teo, Y., Wong, P., Khine, M., Chai, C. & Divaharan, S. (2003). Creating a conducive learning environment for the effective integration of ICT: Classroom management issues. Journal of Interactive Learning Research, 14(4), 405-423.

Luz, J. (2007, June 7). Literature and literacy: A nation of nonreaders. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. https://old.pcjj.org/stories/a-nation-of-nonreaders/

Maryline, D. (2021). ENHANCING THE READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS OF GRADE 4 THROUGH SANDWICH APPROACH. *International Journal of Arts, Sciences and Education*, *1*(1), 1–14. Retrieved from https://ijase.org/index.php/ijase/article/view/3

Marinak, B. A., & Gambrell, L. B. (2008). Intrinsic motivation and rewards: What sustain young children's engagement with text?. Literacy Research and Instruction, 47(1), 9-26. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388070701749546

Mol, S. E., & Bus, A. G. (2011). To read or not to read: A meta-analysis of print exposure from infancy to early adulthood. Psychological Bulletin, 137(2), 267-296. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0021890

Mudzielwana, N. P. (2014). The Role of Parents in Developing Reading Skills of their Children in the Foundation Phase. Journal of Social Sciences, 41(2), 253-264. https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2014.11893361

Official Gazette (2013). Republic Act No. 10533 otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013. https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2013/05/15/republic-act-no-10533

Official Gazette (2022). The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines – Article XIV (PHL). https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/constitutions/the-1987-constitution-of-the-republic-of-the-philippines/the-1987-constitution-of-the-republic-of-the-philippines-article-xiv/

Philippine Star (2010). How Do Filipino Students Rate in Reading? https://philstar.com/lifestyle/health-and-family/2010/03/02553720/how-do-filipino-students-rate-reading

Programme for International Student Assessment (2018). (Volume III): What school life means for students' lives | en | OECD. (n.d.). https://www.oecd.org/publications/pisa-2018-results-volume-iii-acd78851-en.htm

Reade, A. & Sayko, S. (2017). Learning about your child's reading development. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Special Education Programs, National Center on Improving Literacy. Retrieved from http://improvingliteracy.org

Ribeiro L., Cunha R., Silva M., Carvalho M., Vital M., (2021). Parental involvement during pandemic times: Challenges and opportunities. Education Sciences, 11(6), 302. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11060302

Taylor, C.L., Zubrick, S.R. & Christensen, D. (2016). Barriers to Parent-Child Book Reading in Early Childhood. IJEC, 48, 295–309. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-016-0172-2

Vecaldo, R., Asuncion, J.E., & Ulla, M. (2019). From Writing to Presenting and Publishing Research Articles: Experiences of Philippine Education Faculty-Researchers, Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 81, 147-164. https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2019.81.9

UNICEF (2021). Schools still closed for nearly 77 million students 18 months into pandemic – UNICEF. https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/schools-still-closed-nearly-77-million-students-18-months-pandemic-unicef

UNESCO (2021). Education: From disruption to recovery. https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse

Wheeler Report. (2020). Education and Covid-19 – Part II – Technology – TheWheeler-Report. American Journal of Qualitative Research. 4(3), 45-65.