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Duality of roles: understanding the work performance of teaching mothers on modular distance learning in the first District of City Division of Santa Rosa, Laguna

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Abstract. Teaching is hard to perform specially during this trying time of the COVID 19 pandemic. Much more if the teachers themselves as performing dual roles as both teacher and mothers. This qualitative phenomenological study determined how teachers who are also mothers hurdle their dual roles and the factors that affect performance as a mother and teacher. Fifteen (15) purposely selected participants comprised the sample for this study. The participants were selected along the following inclusion criteria namely, an elementary school teachers in Santa Rosa Laguna, mothers with or without husbands or partners, have children of school-age and also attending home-schooling through virtual learning and other alternative learning modes, have expressed difficulties in coping with stressors in performing roles due to several factors of economic and psychosocial in nature and with teaching experience of not less than three (3) years; and under the implementation of modular distance learning. From the interpreted meanings nine (9) themes emerged as follows: (1) The Need to be Creative and Innovative; (2) Positive and Negative Sides of Technology; (3) Adapting to new Emerged Teaching Strategies is not easy; (4) Own Children need not be Sacrifice; (5) Compliance with the School Requirements; (6) Economic Condition and Teacher-Mothers Challenges; (7) Performing Dual Roles is Stressful; (8) Balancing Role as Teachers and as Mothers; and (9) Teaching is more difficult to Perform. On the whole, the results of this study can serve as basis for finding alternative solutions to unburden the mothers in their situation; provision of support to teachers in maintaining their effective professional qualities; consideration in upgrading salary of teachers; creation of stress management program; enhancement of teacher’s self-worth; and improvement in teachers’ practice and time management.

Keywords. duality of roles, work performance, teaching-mothers, modular-distance Learning

Introduction
The role of teachers cannot be discounted as easy to perform; more so if the teachers themselves are mothers. Even before the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, performing these duals roles brought big impacts on the mental, physical, social and economic status of working mothers globally (Vahratian, Blumberg, Terlizzi,&Schiller, 2021; Kirwin & Ettigner, 2021; Quickfall, 2020; Ehsan & Jahan, 2021) The contribution of stress to anxiety and mental disorders were revealed also in other studies (Wang et al., 2020; Huang & Zhao,2020; Vindegaard & Benros, 2020; and Pappa et al., 2020), as cited by Ehsan & Jahan, 2021). On
the other hand, Li et al., (2020) found that economic factors significantly contribute to how working mothers experienced stress.

Aside from these, there are critical demands on teachers who are also mothers namely, dealing negative behavior of students and frequent absenteeism, administrative demands and lack of teaching materials (Lambert et.al). Moreover, these teachers face issues like feelings of distress due to closure of schools and overwhelming experience by the change of teaching modalities from the face-to-face modalities to virtual teaching; social confinement had substantially transformed the work scenarios of the educators; and affected the health of teachers of all levels (Carnese, 2020; Di Vincenzo, 2020; Favant, 2020; Fernández, 2020; Figueroa-Díaz, 2020; Santoro, 2020; Vallejos, 2020).

MacIntyre et al., (2020) suggests that school teachers who are also mothers should receive support from the school, community and specialized training; higher risk of occupational stress in those teachers who perceived high demands and low resources (Kebbi, 2018); uncertainty about the duration of the pandemic and its possible impact on the economic situation especially connected with increases in prices and low teacher salary, the physical distancing from social support networks, among others (Sánchez Mendiola et al., 2020).

From the above, it was clearly pointed out that teachers who are also mothers could be the most burdened working mothers, This is because, the demands on them do not only center on their own or family’s welfare but also on their students learning and development. Hence, supporting teachers is important in order for them to perform well in both their roles as mothers and as teachers too, particularly during the implementation of the modular distance learning (Gorlewski, 2020; Weisberger, 2021; Dali, 2020; Tolliver, 2019).

The challenges could be related to coping on the demand of technology integration in teaching-learning assessment process and other psychological and social contributory factors; failure to cope well with the stress of performing multiple roles can result in physical and emotional exhaustion which will eventually lead to poor performance in both roles. In these situations, there is a need to understand the sources of stress and how teacher-mothers could identify appropriate coping strategies (Gorlewski, 2020; Weisberger, 2021; Dali, 2020; Tolliver, 2019).

The purpose of this study is to describe the work performance of teacher-mothers involving the mechanisms, strategies or actions they did or are doing to cope with the challenges and the meaning and essence of such experiences. Another is to recommend an action plan for teachers and school administrators to effectively deal with stressors and address the difficulties related to teachers’ performance.

**Literature Review**

Teaching-mothers faced issues in terms of maintaining their work-life balance, managing space and resources for online teaching, and learning a new set of skills in order to teach online, which affect their mental health (Kaloom, 2021; Utami et.al., 2021). One solution to maintain sound mental health is to get positive influences in the teaching professions through proactive changes like promoting self-esteem and encouraging students, parents, co teachers to talk about their worries and air their concern to school authorities for possible support system; they are important in productive work outcomes (Murphy, 2018).

Studies point to some contributory variables such as teachers’ socio demographic profiles to their ability to complete task, job satisfaction and or performance (kim, M, 2021). Other variables are affecting teachers performance are teachers’ membership, mentoring experience, genders, job satisfaction, classroom climate and teacher collaboration;
moderated by teacher's self-efficacy; sex, age; educational attainment; length of service in teaching, number of seminars and trainings attended; role of educational activities, learning instruction and use of modules (Perera, Claskins & Part, 2019; Paschal, 2021; Salvan & Hambre, M., 2020; Francisco, 2020; Grissom, Jason et al., 2021; Seyedi et. al, 2019; Zaib, 2020).

As to necessary qualifications for school teachers or school heads in the elementary and secondary schools have the necessary qualifications required by their positions but are lacking in organizational skills; high qualification in terms of experience is important; leadership practices and teacher performance are likewise important (Radjuni & Abubakar, 2022; Grissom, Jason A et al, 2021; Abun et al, 2021; Seyedi-Andi et. al, 2019; Zaib, 2020; Cherry & Fabelico, 2021).

The onset of COVID 19 PANDEMIC has brought tremendous stress and burnout on teachers in almost all nations in all educational levels which resulted in modifying their way of working (Rubilar & Oros, L., 2021). As such maintain sound personal and interpersonal qualities are becoming increasingly important (Robinson, 2017; AITSL, 2017; Drago-Severson & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2018). However the most challenging aspect of teaching and learning for teachers performing varied roles during the new normal is the application of social media learning. There is a need to adapt to emerging use of technology; create a system of transparency through feedback mechanisms; and decision to consider which social media platform is best to apply in teaching and learning (Wilde & Hsu, A., 2019; Yang, et.al., 2016; Elliott & Hollingsworth, 2020; Elliott, 2019; Cho et. al, 2021; WeiBenfels et. al, 2021).

When teacher collaboration is focused on improving instruction in schools, it is more likely to establish real competence and so strengthen teachers' belief that they have the potential to meet student learning goals; there is a need to change specific area of a school, organization, or system, rather than a change to people's belief systems or work habits; and, develop self-awareness and personal well-being (Domenech et.al, 2017; AITSL, 2017; Drago-Severson & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2018).

A teacher’s use of coping strategies may directly impact on their levels of stress, attrition, job satisfaction, and quality of work. These strategies are especially important for teachers (Kebbi and Al-Hroub, 2018; Embse and Mankin (2020; Mahrooqi and Denman, 2018). Teachers used of combination of multiple emotional coping styles including several strategies are offshoot of their experience, growth and development (Levy and Kassabri, 2021).

During the epidemic, many countries' colleges, secondary schools, and elementary schools embraced an online education technique (Lestari & Gunawan, 2020; Wu, 2021). The phenomenon of distance learning is globally being felt, so as in the case of the Philippine educational system (Child-hope Philippines Incorporated, 2021). In the context of the online teaching and learning in the Philippines, Toquero &Talidong (2020) said that the Filipinos even before the onset of COVID19 pandemic have been using digital technology for social communication.

However, pure online teaching has not been the prevalent practice prior to the emergence of the pandemic because the most applied instructional methods were roll call, lectures and in-class assignments; many students including teachers do not have access to internet and lacked technical expertise making teaching and learning a struggle for them; collective efficacy is associated with teachers’ instructional techniques like peer support and sharing of expertise; and the need for assessment of impact of instructions; manifest extensive use of teaching materials, which is an indicator of the extent of possession of teachers in both theory and practice; and integrate theory and practice with social media learning tools (Wu, S.
Teaching and learning should adapt to the continuous innovative practice such technological innovations as one of the most important innovations in the present time as there are many positive outcomes on the use of social media learning to students’ performance; increased social connectivity and belonging, personal contentment and self-esteem, emotional; on the other hand, social media use takes away the attention of the children to their concentration in their studies particularly when students multitask like emailing, texting, games and Facebook; internet helps in sharing information, for entertainment and research; and mobile phones should be used mainly for communication and not doing school work (Charmaraman and Richer, 2018; Felisoni et al., 2018; Chawinga, 2017; Moghavvemi et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2017; Liu, Kirshner & Karpinski, 2016; Cobanoglu & Yurek, 2018). In consideration of these teachers and other educational managers’ practices should be defined to address the demands of the new normal (Leithwood et al., 2020; Aureada, 2021; Owusu-Fordjour & Koomson, 2020; Dutta & Smita, 2020).

Although there have been several recent intervention studies in the domain of teacher stress, there has been no systematic review to compare the type and effectiveness of teacher stress interventions. (Embse et al, 2019). It is essential that teachers have the skills they need to be able to introduce technology into their teaching practice particularly in delivering lesson and evaluating performance of students (Batanero et al, 2021).

**Methodology**

This study applied the qualitative phenomenological method (Van Mannen, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018); which described the essence of the lived experience of 15 teachers from three elementary schools in Santa Rosa, Laguna, Philippines. The participants were selected along the following inclusion criteria namely, an elementary school teachers, mothers with or without husbands or partners, have children of school-age and also attending home-schooling through virtual learning and other alternative learning modes, have expressed difficulties in coping with stressors in performing roles due to several factors of economic and psychosocial in nature and with teaching experience of not less than three (3) years; and under the implementation of modular distance learning. The treatment and analysis of data, the researcher utilized Moustakas’ (1994) data analysis and procedures and guidelines for assembling the textural and structural descriptions; and likewise adapted the concept of validity and reliability as espoused by Wolcott (2010) and Creswell and Poth (2018). One strategy to understand researcher’s bias is through reflexivity (Johnson and Christensen, 2000, p. 207). The actions carried out in this work complied with the international ethical recommendations for research with human beings (American Psychological Association, 2017).

**Results and discussion**

Nine (9) themes were culled from the significant statements of the participants. These themes were the interpretation that revolved around two general questions of textural (What), what is the participants’ lived experience in performing dual roles as both mothers and teachers during the implementation of modular distance learning approach? And Structural (How), how do the teaching mothers cope with their teaching and parenting roles while conducting modular distance learning?

From the answers of the participants nine (9) themes were culled as follows:
The need to be creative and innovative- New times call for new innovation in order to adapt, teacher Elsa said “as a teacher to deliver an effective lesson to the students, teaching strategies need to be creative and innovative. As a result of this predicament, a new phrase in academia has emerged: emergency remote education. (Lestari & Gunawan, 2020; Wu, 2021).

Positive and Negative Sides of Technology- Among the many benefits of social networks are their ability to facilitate interaction between teachers and students in the educational setting, avoiding face to face interaction, however, not all mobile devices are used for educational reasons; young people who are well-adept at the use and application of mobile technologies and use this technology for games and other social media entertainment. But, can lead to the empowerment of the people and the government; integrating social media into the classroom can be a powerful pedagogical strategy (Molle et.al, 2017).

Adapting to new Emerged Teaching Strategies- There are difficulties in adapting to new emerged modalities of teaching such as on-line teaching modular and blended teaching and learning through the use of internet and computer. As Elsa said: “Virtual teaching and learning offers several benefits for a teacher like me who wants flexible schedule.” On the other hand, Online learning flat forms have lots of attention such as adaptability issue, technical issues, inadequate knowledge and skills on the use computer and its applications and time management problem (Sánchez Mendiola et al., 2020; Quickfall, 2020).

Own Children need not be Sacrifice- It was revealed that mothers who are teachers, due to their commitment as teachers, have to let their own children to study be themselves making them independent; hence making them feel guilty that in a way they are neglecting their own children. This was affirmed by Flor who said: “Since I am working mother/teacher who spends half of my time at work, it is challenging for me to meet all the demands of my four children; while Malen said: We do have many roles like teaching and doing household chores.” In these regard San Jose, Concepcion (2022) recommends that the Department of Education give attention and support through tutorial assistance and tapping or assistance of the Local Government Units in finding alternative solutions to unburden the mothers in their situation. Furthermore, there are demands not being addressed such as students’ behaviors and administrative demands of teaching administrative demands specially connected with teaching in the new normal conditions; effective change need to be applied (Lambert et. Al, 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2020; Kebbi, 2018)

Compliance with the School Requirements- modular distance, blended learning, and preparation of modules, arranging for the application of on-line teaching, teachers have problems with compliance with the demands of the school in terms of paper works, plus the need for educational supervisions of their own children, thus children are being sacrifice. As Janice said: “As a mother of two young children and as a teacher, I sometimes experienced struggles it’s because I have to balance my work and at the same time I have to fulfil my task as a mother.” Aside from these mothering roles, teachers perform supervision, evaluation of instruction and the monitoring student progress; completion of the school’s mission, management of curriculum and instruction, supervision and support teaching, monitoring of student development, and establishing an effective instructional climate are all functions of the school head, (Leithwood et al., 2020; Aureada,2021).

Economic Condition and Teacher-Mothers Challenges- Another concern was expressed by participant Soledad who said: “During pandemic we’ve experience virtual or online learning and all I can say is that it is very challenging, not all of my pupils have an internet connection and as expected I cannot have a 100% complete attendance due to so many problems.” According to an article published by Child Hope Philippines Incorporated in 2021,
there are different factors that create disparity of learning among Filipino school children; and one of such factors is due to economic reasons. Many of underprivileged school children are having hard times due to access to technology and adapting to other modes of distance learning modalities. The onset of the pandemic significantly caused extreme concerns on teachers; they need to identify the causes and to deal with those, the application of technology contributes to stress, performance is impaired due to overlapping roles (Rubilar and Oros, 2021; Carnese, 2020; Di Vincenzo, 2020; Favant, 2020; Fernández, 2020; Figueroa Díaz, 2020; Santoro, 2020; Vallejos, 2020).

Performing Dual Roles is Stressful - As another participant “Stress management is important for a teacher and as a parent like me, I would say that stress decreases my ability to educate my students properly. Too much leads to reports to be submitted immediately are so stressful. If the stress left unaddressed it can lead to anxiety and negatively impact in work performance.” The combination of stressors and coping affect work performance particularly after repeated exposure to stressor; as such behavior management is important and school’s intervention and school authorities for possible support system (Embse et al, 2019; Batanero et al, 2021; Kalsoom, 2021; Murphy, 2018; Utami et al, 2021). These stressors demand appropriate coping behavior since failure to address stressor impact job satisfaction and quality of work, coping strategies are important and crucial; and impact decision making abilities (Kebbi and Al-Hroub, 2018; Embse and Mankin, 2020; Mahrooqi and Denman, 2018; Levy and Kassabri, 2021). In order to address these, teachers have to grasp of their self-worth, personal well-being and self-awareness (including emotional intelligence, empathy, and resilience, social awareness and management; and the ability to adapt to new situations is critical. (Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStefano, 2016; Drago-Severson & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2018). A well-defined set of cognitive, social, and psychological personal resources is required. (Leithwood et al. 2020).

Balancing Role as Teachers and as Mothers - It is understood that teachers need to balance their commitment towards teaching and parenting. As one participant pointed out “I have to address the needs of my learners, as well as assisting my child in answering her activities and prepare her needs too.” In addition to this, Nadia said: “During modular distance learning, we have to report to school for distribution and retrieval of modules, answer students’ questions as well as make announcements about my students; online class”. Work and life balance is manifested through the self-efficacy of the teaching mothers. Self-efficacy of leaders is important in adapting and meeting challenges involve in practice (Elliott & Hollingsworth, 2020); knowing the extent of one’s self-efficacy could lead to focus on how to improve self and boosting student results (Elliott, 2019), which could be done only when teachers and other educational leaders are able to use knowledge as an educational tool for decision-making (Robinson, 2017).

Teaching is Difficult to Perform - Only 2 of the 15 participants have said that being a mother is harder than being a teachers. Jennie said: “For me, I believe that being a teacher is stressful because teacher work longer hours which often leads to burnout and anxiety.: Another is uttered by Minda who said: “As someone who have experienced stress connected with teaching and parenting, what recommendation I think the most stressful is as a teacher. It’s because you have so many things to consider like attitudes, discipline, parents involvement and so many others s could you give to other teachers who are also mothers in for them to cope with the stressor.” While Meldy said: “I think I am more stress being a teacher. There’a lot of measuring pattern, there where they believe they could measure effectiveness, so I’m a bit stress than being a mother. Because I believe there is no perfect formula as mother.” Although there have been several recent intervention studies in the domain of teacher stress, there has been no
systematic review to compare the type and effectiveness of teacher stress interventions. (Embse et al, 2019). It is essential that teachers have the skills they need to be able to introduce technology into their teaching practice particularly in delivering lesson and evaluating performance of students (Batanero et al, 2021).

Conclusion

From the verbatim accounts of the participants, nine (9) themes emerged from which the following conclusions were derived.

Teaching during the New Normal needs creativity and innovation in the part of the teacher-mother. This is because of the call of the time, which we are not prepared due to observance of social distancing which is necessary in observance of the health protocol as mandated by our government. One of such innovative approaches required of the teachers is knowledge and skills in the use of communication technology; however, achieving of such entails internet connectivity, lack of gadgets and most of all not everyone can afford it. Out of the idea of using social media as a platform for educational purposes, necessitate application of emerged teaching strategies like online education or the use of internet, blended learning or the combinations of limited face-to-face approach with strict following of health protocol being imposed by the government; and the modular distance learning, or the application of prepared lessons in modules distributed to the learners, partially through the help of online method for clarifying difficulties of the learners.

However the application of such brings additional burden to teacher because they of giving enough attention to their own children. Yet, they need to maintain balance in acting both roles as teacher-mother. Added to this is the demand from meeting standards of the school as to requirements and other paper work. Much more is the low salary they are receiving, which do not compensate for all efforts they are rendering. Aside from these stressors and coping affect both performance of the teachers, in schools at home. Hence, it is understood that teachers need to balance their commitment towards teaching and parenting. But, teaching is a more demanding task, however, given the demand of the profession it does not mean neglect on the role as mother.

Recommendations

This study recommends that the Department of Education to give attention and support through tutorial assistance and tapping or assistance of the Local Government Units in finding alternative solutions to unburden the mothers in their situation

School Management to provide support to the teachers in maintaining their effective professional qualities by giving positive supervision, effective students monitoring and assessment model as well as maintaining a healthy working environment to the teachers. The Government should observe salary standardization system that promotes equity and equality especially to teachers

The combination of stressors and coping affect work performance particularly after repeated exposure to stressor; as such behavior management is important and school’s intervention and school authorities for possible support system

Teachers need to specify what causes their stress and work on making use appropriate coping strategies, School should give support to teachers in terms of uplifting teachers’ self-worth through recognition of their effort, giving proper incentive and discouraged teachers extra work to be done at home.
School administrator must not overload teachers, they need to measure time and how time should be divided so as not to affect performance as teachers and as mothers; for teachers practice time management.

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