

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND COPING MECHANISMS OF PUPILS IN MODULAR DISTANCE LEARNING

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Abstract

This descriptive study aimed to know the profile of the modular distance learners of Reserva Elementary School, District of Baler, SDO Aurora in the school year 2021-2022, their coping mechanisms in their studies, and to gauge if the coping mechanisms are related to their profile. The responses of the 285 pupil participants selected thru purposive sampling were obtained thru a two-part questionnaire. The responses were validated using the LESF forms and semi-structured interviews. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson correlation coefficient. Results showed that most of the learners were females, were in Grade 3, have parents who have secondary education, and who earn an average monthly income in the lowest economic decile. Further interviews conveyed that the learners' families highly value education and support the schooling of their children. Findings also showed that the participants have "high" capabilities (in terms of autonomy, competence and relatedness) to cope with their modular distance learning because of the flexible but authoritarian type of parenting, the support provided by the school and the community, and the availability of online platforms. In terms of relationships, all of the profile variables except grade level were significantly related to the coping mechanisms of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. To further enhance coping mechanisms, the provision of checklists of study activities for the pupils to monitor their progress may be helpful. It is recommended that the school intensify the campaign for adult reproductive health and career guidance to inspire pupils to strive for a better future, continue the Purok Learning System for stakeholders' coordination, enhance practices such as online kumustahan, regular meetings, and orientations, and to have further studies related to coping mechanisms of different types of learners during the transition from pandemic to post-pandemic period.

Keywords: modular distance learning, autonomy, competence, relatedness, Purok Learning System

Demographic Profile and Coping Mechanisms of Pupils in Modular Distance Learning

Various changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic have affected all social functions. Included is the educational system delivery.

The Province of Aurora is situated in a terrain composed of coastal, plain, and mountainous areas. This geographical state hinders smooth internet connectivity. Along with this, with health and life as the utmost priority, the parents of Reserva Elementary School in the District of Baler, Schools Division of Aurora, have chosen modular distance learning as the mode most applicable for their children to continue schooling. This option, having arrived at based on the commonalities found in the learner Enrolment and Survey Form (LESF), has placed home as the main venue of learning.

In this regard, the researcher found it timely to look into the strategies of homes to cope with the challenges of being the major players in educating children. How far could the parents and guardians oversee the pupils' learning journey? Given the educational backgrounds of parents, it is interesting to investigate how they will cope with the new task of supervising the learners.

Literature Review

The researcher investigated the pupils' coping mechanisms in relation to their demographic profile namely sex, grade level, sibling number, the highest education of father and mother, and their average monthly family income. The paragraph below discusses previous study findings on the demographic profiles included in this research.

First of the demographic profiles is the sex of the participant pupils. As to sex, the Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS) found that there are more female learners in elementary as compared to males (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2011). In

terms of enrolment in every grade level, Undersecretary San Antonio cited that in 2020, there is a notable decrease in kindergarten enrolment. On the other hand, studies on sibling numbers showed that in 2017, children in Filipino households have an average of 2-3 (Philippine Statistics Office, 2017). As to parents' educational attainment, the Philippine Statistics Authority (2010) showed that more than half of Filipinos up to age 16 are able to gain high school education while more than one-fourth of those aged 17-24 was able to gain college and post-graduate education. Based on the findings of Shabbir and Hina (2018), attaining higher education is positively related to employment. In connection, Maligalig et al (2010) posited that the higher the educational attainment of the household head, the bigger the possibility of children attending school. The last profile included is the average monthly income of the participant' families. Studies show that Filipino family has an average monthly income of Php 12, 498.00 from January to June 2021 (Caraballo, 2022 in The Manila Times).

While the demographic profile is a necessary element of this study, it is also proper to be elucidated on the area of coping mechanisms. According to the American Psychological Association, "coping" is the utilization of cognitive and behavioral strategies to manage situations that are beyond an individual's capacity to endure. It is also an action done to decrease the negative effects of a situation.

In this study, the "coping" highlighted is the aspect of adjustments of pupils of Reserva Elementary School during the pandemic because of COVID-19 threats. As school closures were required and learning was to be done in the homes, this study targeted investigating the coping mechanisms of pupils in the hope of obtaining data helpful in planning measures to assist the learners.

According to Willis (2020), the transition from classroom-based to online and other home learning modes was abrupt. The parents, teachers, and children, the author stated, are facing new challenges and opportunities. There may be technological and cyber challenges. The disruption in children's lives may have caused them stress at which more negative behaviors may arise and social isolation could possibly bring out confusion, frustration, and fright on their part.

The Independent Rapid Response Report of Brown, te Rielle, Shelley, and Woodrooffe (2020), maintained that almost half the school student population is at risk of having their learning and well-being significantly compromised by not being at school because they are in a vulnerable group, due to their young age, social disadvantage, specific needs or family context.

In terms of distance learning, the study of Kutluk and Gulmez (2012), revealed that students are satisfied with distance learning because of its convenient system in terms of time and cost. On the contrary, a multinational study on students' perceptions of distance education conducted by Fidalgo, Thormann, and Lencastre (2020), gave three major concerns. These are time management, motivation, and English skills. Another study proved that students in distance education have significantly lower scores as compared to those in the full –time learning during the first year of study. Said score gap, fortunately, was also found to diminish and become comparable as learning continues. In addition, the management of learning while the learner is not in a classroom was a disadvantage discovered (Fojtik, 2010).

Considering the above findings, there really is a need to know if the parents, guardians, and learners will be able to cope with the new normal. Below discussions will delve into different coping mechanisms employed in similar stressful situations as the pandemic scenario.

Nyatsanza and Mtezo (2013) cited the definition of Lazarus and Folkman (1988) of coping mechanisms. Based on the latter, a coping mechanism is “changing cognitive a

behavioral effort to manage specific external and /or internal demands that are seen as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person”. The authors also cited Muersing (1996) and Puhl and Brownell’s (2003) definition of the term as” any behavior or thought processes unconsciously brought into use by an individual to protect himself/herself against painful or anxiety-provoking feelings, impulses and perceptions.

The above authors indicated three coping mechanisms used by the respondents in line with education, namely: physiological activities (some form of exercise or physical labor); cognitive/psychological approach (taking things slowly, seeking psycho-social support from the system, learning from mistakes, being organized, anticipating problems and keeping calendars); and interpersonal and organizational activities. There may be a dilemma in the impact of parents on their children’s learning because of the educational attainment of the parents. It was explained in the study of Martinez-Montilla, Amador-Marin, and Guerra- Martin (2017), that stressful events alter the dynamic balance in a family. Taking into consideration that an average Filipino family has 2-3 children (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2013), balancing needs and coping with changes might prove challenging. Martinez-Montilla et al (2017) emphasized that family adjustment and labor and financial problems are among the main stressful situations and that the main family coping strategies were either positive or negative. On the positive, finding information, searching for family, social or spiritual support, acceptance, and improved self-esteem was given. In the negative, denial, concealment, disconnection, self-blame, emotional detachment, and substance are on the list.

Ntoumanis, Edmunds, and Duda (2009) cited that individuals usually seek to engage in exercise activities that foster most or all of their psychological needs. It is because exercise

activities reflect personal choice, provide opportunities for task accomplishment and facilitate meaningful interpersonal interactions with others.

Giving due consideration to distance learning modalities, it is appropriate to look into some studies that describe varied experiences. Kutluk and Gulmez (2012), found in their study that students are satisfied with distance learning because of its convenient system in terms of time and cost. On the other hand, in a multinational study on students' perceptions of distance education conducted by Fidalgo, Thormann, and Lencastre (2020), three major concerns were cited by the majority of the respondents, namely; time management, motivation, and English skills.

On the positive side, Curtis (2002), in his article, cited study findings that primary children who are taught at home learn more than those in schools and are more confident. Accordingly, research revealed that 80.4 % of home-educated children were at the same level in their studies as the top 16% of school-educated children. The said children, the researchers say, however, came from families with wider socio-economic reach.

In the case study of Carlson (1998), it was found that homeschooling has the following advantages: better quality education, the teaching of religious values, more family time, and a flexible schedule. On the other hand, the disadvantages are the lack of available resources (financial and educational) and the teaching ability of parents at a higher level of academic subjects.

The above findings bring the discussion to the theoretical background of this study, the Self-determination theory (SDT) of Ryan and Deci (1985, 2002). By understanding underlying concepts of human behavior in relation to coping strategies, the direction of this research will be more clear to the end users.

The Self-determination theory (SDT) of Ryan and Deci (1985, 2002) states that individuals are active organisms that seek challenges in their environment in an attempt to achieve personal growth and development. This theory posits that man has three fundamental and universal needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Autonomy, according to the authors, reflects a desire to engage in activities desired by the individual himself. Competence, on the other hand, refers to an individual's need to obtain a feeling of "belongingness" as the person engages with the people around him/her. Relatedness is the need to feel that a person is in connection with others in a certain group or setting.

As posited by McCombs (2017), the connection between student motivation and self-determination is very important. According to research, motivation is related to whether or not students have opportunities to be autonomous and make important academic choices. Being able to make choices make young adults feel empowered, and that they are having control of their own learning. These help the learners develop a sense of responsibility and self-motivation. In addition, Dogan and Mirici (2017) found that learner autonomy has become a central ability to develop in learners (for a fruitful language learning/teaching process in EFL). In the Filipino family context, however, Alampay (n.d) posited that parents generally are authoritarian in their parenting.

In terms of competency, the following personal skills may be assessed in relation to any engagement activity and competency: reflection and application, communication, collaboration, teamwork, problem-solving or critical thinking, project management, and academic and non-academic career preparedness (Arizona Board of Regents, 2020).

As to relatedness, Furrer and Skinner (2003) maintained that relatedness (to teachers) is a strong predictor of engagement among boys. They also found that girls have higher relatedness to teachers as compared to boys.

It was concluded by Niemiec and Ryan (2009) that the strategies for enhancing autonomy include providing choices and meaningful rationale for learning activities, acknowledging students' feelings about the topic, and minimizing pressure and control. For competence, providing effecting-relevant feedback and optimally challenging tasks. Lastly, in terms of relatedness, conveying warmth, caring, and respect to students are among the examples cited. This is similar to the findings of Zimmer-Gembeck and Skinner (2016) that most homes apply "approach strategies" where cognitive and behavioral strategies are used to allow an individual to respond positively to the "stressor". Relatively, Blair (2014) found that Filipino parents value their children's schooling but their obligations to the family compel them to put the individual needs (such as checking if they were able to follow the directions in the modules) of children aside.

Based on the above findings, it could be surmised, then, that the learners (and their parents), in the midst of the global pandemic, are experiencing stress. As the Department of Education is pushing forward for the continuity of education, the learners and the parents will inevitably need to seek ways how to adapt to new normal situation for the children to learn.

For the direction of this study, with the help of the above-cited literature, the conceptual framework of this study is presented in Figure 1. It is anchored on the Self-Determination Theory of Ryan and Deci (2002), the proponents.

Simply put, the conceptual framework below expresses the researcher's primary premise that the Input (the profile variables of the respondents) contributes to the Process (the extent the

learners show Autonomy, Competence and perceive Relatedness in connection to modular learning). This connection between the Input and the Process describes the Output (coping styles and mechanisms applied during immersion in modular distance learning) in the new normal situation.

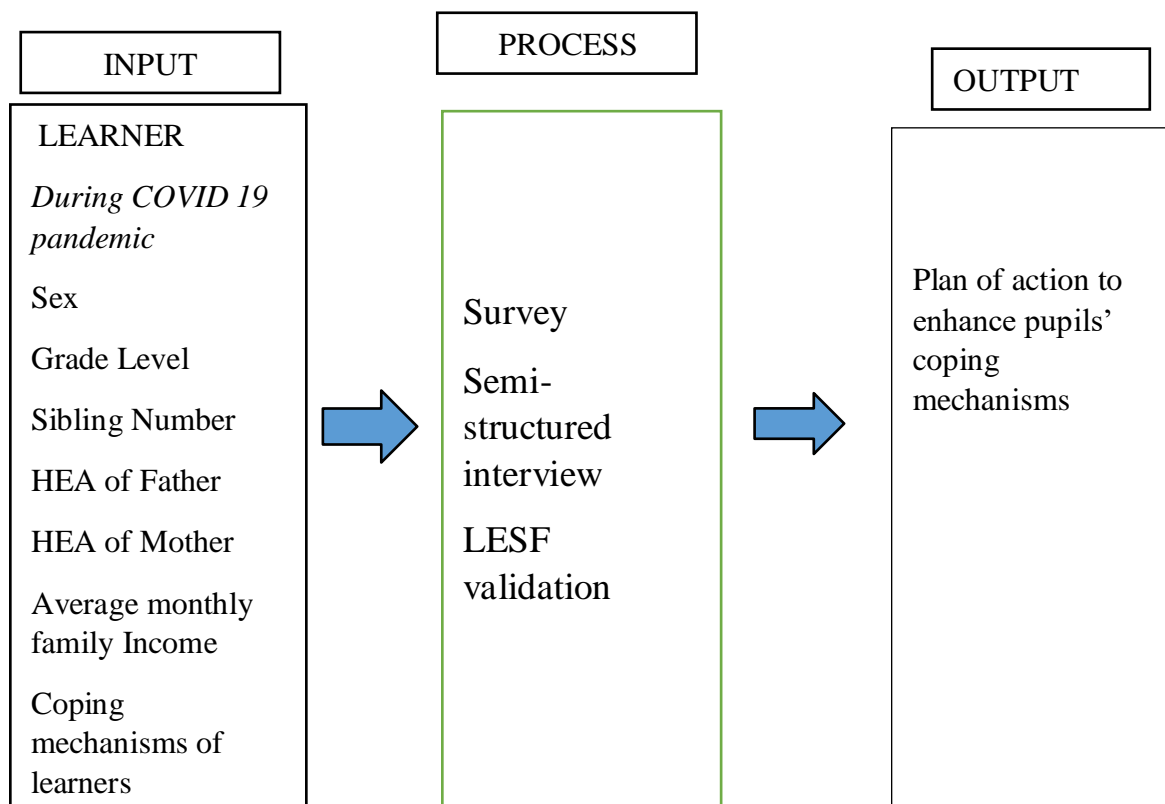


Figure 1. The conceptual framework shows the relationship between the variables.

Research Questions

Bearing in mind the challenges posed by the New Normal during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the main objective of this study was to look deeper into the adjustments the learners (and the home) have applied to meet the requirements in modular distance education.

1. How may the demographic profile of the learners be described in terms of:
 - 1.1. Sex
 - 1.2. Grade Level

- 1.3. Sibling number
- 1.4. Highest Educational Attainment of Father
- 1.5. Highest Educational attainment of Mother
- 1.6. Average Monthly income of parents
2. How may the coping mechanisms of learners to modular distance learning be described in terms of:
 - 2.1 autonomy
 - 2.1 competence
 - 2.3. relatedness
3. Is there a significant relationship between the learners' profile and their coping mechanisms towards modular distance learning?
4. How may pupils' coping mechanisms in modular distance learning be enhanced?

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the learners' profile and their coping mechanisms toward modular distance learning.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study are deemed beneficial to the following, to wit:

Learners. They will be able to understand their strengths in modular distance learning and the areas they need to improve. They will discover the capacities and drives that could help them succeed in the context of modular distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Parents. The parents, as the children's partners in learning, could develop strategies that will make learning at home more systematic and enjoyable for the child.

Teachers. Learning the different stressors and coping skills of homes in the implementation of modular distance learning will provide ideas for teachers to develop and/or revise resources that would help make home studying more effective.

Policy Makers. The results of this study may be utilized as the basis for improving policies that could help serve learners and educators in making education meet desired goals.

Researchers. The results of this study may be used as a reference for broader scientific queries in modular distance learning in other fields or age groups.

Scope and Delimitation

This study was conducted at Reserva Elementary School in the District of Baler, SDO Aurora. The respondents were those enrolled in said schools room Kindergarten to Grade 6 in School Year 2021-2022. Thus, the sampling does not represent the whole district of Baler and results will therefore be applied only to the learners and their families of the schools under study.

Methods

Type of Research

This study used the descriptive type of research using the survey method. According to Walliman (2021), descriptive research is the observation of data collection while Combes (2020) defines it as an accurate and systematic description of a population, situation ,or phenomenon. Unlike experimental research, it does not control or manipulate any of the variables, but only observes and measures them.

As per Koh and Owen's (2000) definition, descriptive research believes that problems can be solved and practices improved through observation, analysis, and description. It includes the use of questionnaires, personal interviews, and normative surveys.

In connection to the attempt to know if significant relationships or differences exist between research variables, the proponent chose the descriptive type, specifically the causal-comparative design. This is a type of descriptive research, the main objective of which is to focus on the comparison of groups and to investigate potential cause-and-effect relationships without the manipulation of variables (Pacquing-Nadera, 2007).

Therefore, the researcher looked into the profile of the learners as to sex, grade level, sibling number, highest educational attainment of mother and father, and the average monthly family income. Moreover, the study identified the coping mechanisms of learners toward modular distance learning in terms of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The significant difference in respondents' coping mechanisms towards modular distance learning vis a vis their profile and the significant relationship between and among the variables was dealt with in this study.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were the 285 Kindergarten to Grade 6 pupils enrolled for the school year 2020-2021 at Reserva Elementary School in the District of Baler, Schools Division of Aurora, who were selected using purposive sampling.

Sampling

The 285 respondents were chosen thru purposive sampling. The consideration given is the availability of the respondents to be reached online for the survey in adherence to the safety protocols of the local community.

Sources of Data

This study utilized three data sources. The first source is the two-part questionnaire prepared by the researcher. The second is the Learner Enrolment Survey Form (LESF) and the

third is the information gathered thru structured interviews. Such were the sources of data used to obtain a wider view of the responses gained in the survey.

Instruments

The main instrument used was a two-part questionnaire checklist crafted by the researcher. Part I contained information on respondents' profile variables, namely: sex, grade level, sibling number, highest educational attainment of father and mother, and average monthly family income. Part II is a list of indicator statements grouped into three. The first group is statements about practices that show autonomy, the second group contains statements about competence and the third statements indicators about relatedness. Each indicator was rated by the respondents on a scale of 1-4 1-never, 2- sometimes, 3-often, and 4- always (depending on what applies to them), each with a designated transmuted description where 4 is the highest and 1 is the lowest.

The questionnaire was administered to pupils in other schools to test its reliability before the final usage by the intended respondents.

The data was augmented by validating the profile (Part I) with the Learner Enrolment Survey Form (LESF) submitted to the school during the enrolment period of SY 2021-2022 and the researcher's notes during semi-structured interviews with the respondents and their parents.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To determine the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted. The questionnaire was administered to 35 kindergartens to grade 6 pupils (with the help of their parents) in another school within the district. The results were analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha reliability method. The Alpha reliability coefficient of .05 or lower was used on the basis that the instrument crafted by the researcher is valid and reliable.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher submitted the research proposal to the Schools Division Office –Research Evaluation Committee, for review and approval. Upon approval, the disinfected letter of consent/assent was distributed to the parents to know if they will allow their children to become participants in the study. The disinfected questionnaire was then floated, interviews were conducted and verification of data for the profile was done using the LESF files. The responses were listed using an appropriate coding system and data were tabulated for better presentation. The collected questionnaires were again subjected to disinfection before storing them in an enclosed plastic container.

Ethical Considerations

Since the study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher knew that only minimal physical contact is allowed. Digital platforms were applied as practicable as possible to reach all the respondents. In the case of respondents with internet connectivity problems, the disinfected questionnaires were administered. The researcher ensured that minimum health standards were observed as well as keeping responses with utmost confidentiality was practiced.

To ensure the safety of information about parents and pupils, copies of consent letters were provided in view of the approved request from the Schools Division Superintendent. Ensuing research ethics and rules were also observed to avoid problems that may arise, namely: plagiarism, intellectual dishonesty, and other related issues.

Data Analysis

In interpreting data, the researcher applied mixed methods (Newby, 2010), that is, quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire were interpreted using the Statistical Packages

for Social Sciences (SPSS 15.0) while the qualitative data from semi-structured interviews were examined using descriptive statistical procedures to be able to draw conclusions.

To achieve systematic profiling of the respondents (Question 1), frequency and percentage were used. To analyze Question 2, a weighted mean was utilized. To interpret the capability of coping, the weighted mean was given a description as follows:

- 1.0-1.75 – Very low
- 1.76-2.25 – Low
- 2.26-3.25 – High
- 3.26-4.00 – Very high

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was applied to know if the profile variables are significantly related to the coping mechanisms or not.

The above statistics were applied assuming the normality of data obtained from the survey. On the other hand, should the data appear skewed on the normal curve, a nonparametric test like the Mann-Whitney Test will be applied (Dodge, 2008).

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents as to sex. The data reveals that the majority of the student population of the schools under study are females, gaining a total of 170 or 59.6 (more than 50 %) while the males only totaled 115 or 40.4%.

This shows confirmation of the findings of the Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS) on the higher number of elementary female completers as compared to males (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2011).

Table 1
Profile as to Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	115	40.4
Female	170	59.6
Total	285	100.0

Table 2 shows the profile as to grade level. It could be gleaned from the table that the biggest number of enrollees are in grade 3 with a total of 75 or 26.3%, followed by grade 4 with a

total of 43 or 15.1 %. The least number is the pupils in kindergarten totaling only 18 or 6.3%.

This data reveals the decreasing number of entrants which is much lower than the number of outgoing grade 6 learners affirming USec San Antonio's report of the kindergarten enrolment decrease in 2020.

As per interviews with the parents in the community where the schools under study are located, the prevalence of parents working overseas causes a low birth rate, thus, resulting in to decrease in kindergarten enrolment in most schools. This is in contrast to the findings of Maligalig, Caoli-Rodriguez, Martinez, and Cuevas (2010). Further information scrutiny proved that enrolment decreases were also caused by economic reasons. The migration of families to other provinces where the parents work entails transferring out of the enrolled pupils, thus, the decrease in pupil population.

Table 2
Profile as to Grade Level

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage
Kindergarten	18	6.3
Grade 1	28	9.8
Grade 2	42	14.7
Grade 3	75	26.3
Grade 4	43	15.1
Grade 5	41	14.4
Grade 6	38	13.3
Total	285	100.0

The sibling number data is shown in Table 3. As was revealed, the majority of the study participants were first-born children in the family. Their number composed almost half (47.4%) or 135, this is seconded by those second born, with a total of 56 or 19.6 %. Those born third numbered 37 or 13% while there are 32 or 11.2% who was the fourth child. The least were those born fifth with a total of 21 or 7.4%. This data shows that most of the children's families have one to three children on average. This is consistent with the 2017 statistics that households in the Philippines consist of an average of 4.2 persons (Philippine Statistics Office, 2017). This means

that most parents have an average of 2 to 3 children.

Table 3

Profile as to Sibling Number

Sibling Number	Frequency	Percentage
1st	135	47.4
2nd	56	19.6
3rd	37	13.0
4th	32	11.2
5th	21	7.4

In Table 4, it is shown that the majority of the pupils' mothers are either high school graduates or had at least experienced secondary schooling. Their number totaled 153 or 53.7%. There are also 65 or 22.8 % who have elementary education or had graduated at the level. This is followed by college level or college graduates with a total of 65 or 22.5% while a meager 3 or 1.1% had either finished or had units in master studies. This is in conformity with the educational attainment survey of the Philippine Statistics Authority data for 2010.

This result implies that the mothers have acquired basic education and that they have the basic skills in reading, writing, and numeracy which are helpful in guiding their modular distance-learning children. The result also shed light on the fact that a decade or more ago, many female elementary and high school students in the community of Barangay Reserva and the nearby areas were not able to pursue tertiary education.

Table 4

Profile as to Highest Educational Attainment of Mother

Highest Educational Attainment of Mother		
Level	Frequency	Percent
Elementary	65	22.8
High School	153	53.7
College	64	22.5
Masteral	3	1.1
Total	285	100.0

Table 5 portrays the highest educational attainment of the father. The data reveals that more than half of the pupils' fathers (162 or 56.8%) are either high school graduates or had experienced secondary schooling. Those who had elementary level experience or finished elementary gained second rank with a total of 81 or 28.4% while 31 or 10.9% had either finished or gained college units. The least in the group were those with a masters degree or units in the level totaling 11 or 3.9%. This means that most of the fathers have the basic knowledge that could help them in guiding their children who are at the elementary level. This result is positively related to the findings in the paper presented by Maligalig et al (2010) that the higher the education level of the household head, the more possibility of the children to attend school. Again, the results convey that a decade or more ago, many male students from Barangay Reserva and the nearby communities were not able to continue their studies in college or to even take vocational courses.

Table 5
Profile as to Highest Educational Attainment of Father

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Elem	81	28.4
High School	162	56.8
College	31	10.9
Masteral	11	3.9
Total	285	100.0

Table 6 presents the average monthly income of parents. As shown in the table below, the majority of the parents earn an average of Php 1,000.00 to Php 10,000.00 every month. This group has a total of 251 or 88.1%. The Php 10,001.00 to Php 20,000.00 bracket earners group showed 29 or 10.2 %, only 3 or 1.1 % earn Php 30,001.00 to Php 40,000.00 monthly while there is 1 or 0.4% each for the earnings of 20,001.00 – Php30,000.00 and 40,001.00 and above monthly. This data is reflective of the highest educational attainment of fathers and mothers.

The level of education attained in life is a great predictor of employment possibilities (Shabbir and Hina, 2018).

It is worth noting, however, that despite the ninety-seven (97) combined total of either college-level or college-graduate parents, the income bracket to which the majority claimed they belong was in the Php1,000.00 to Php 10,000.00 average monthly income. This result is much lower as compared to the PSA (2021) findings that the average monthly income of Filipino families is at the Php 12,000.00 level. This means that the said parents were not able to find employment or businesses that matched their educational attainment. As was suggested by Shabbir et al (2018), employment directions in governments need structural reforms to address unemployment.

In light of children's education, the above findings imply that despite the economic constraints, the respondents' parents highly value education and that they are willing to exert more effort to ensure that their children attend school. This shows the parents' strong support for their children's education.

Table 6
Profile as to Average Monthly Income of Parents

Monthly Family Income	Frequency	Percentage
1,000-10,000	251	88.1
10,001-20,000	29	10.2
20,001-30,000	1	0.4
30,001-40,000	3	1.1
40,001 and above	1	0.4
Total	285	100.0

Table 7 shows the participants' coping mechanisms while undergoing modular distance learning in terms of autonomy. Data shows that the participants are "often" free to select the subjects they want to study first ($W=3.05$), they can decide on which part of the house they will study ($W= 2.89$), choose the stories they want to read again ($W=2.85$) and choose the person

whom they like to help them in their studies ($W = 2.82$). In checking their responses. The weighted mean is 2.32 implying that they “sometimes” do it.

The above results show that during the implementation of modular distance learning, the role of the home and its members is crucial. The “often” responses imply that there is a certain degree of control in the studies of the participants. Considering the physical absence of teachers during the period and the need to accomplish the modules weekly, family members are exercising flexibility to be able to encourage learners to study. This clearly affirms that most homes apply “approach strategies” (Zimmer-Gembeck and Skinner, 2016) where cognitive and behavioral strategies are used to allow the pupils to respond positively to the “stressor” which is the bulk of modules they have to accomplish weekly. The planning part is allowing the pupils (at times) to make the choice, then providing them assistance in the forms of reminders, clarifying points, providing materials, and returning the accomplished modules to the Purok focal person. On the other hand, the “often” response of the majority also gives a glimpse of the remaining minority which means they “do not have an opportunity to choose”. For one, this minority embodies those who belong to families living in poverty where both parents are occupied with work to earn a living. This also represents those learners who only live with an elder sibling or aging grandparents and those who reside in one-room houses where the living room also serves as the kitchen and bedroom. In these situations, the learners do not have any choice but to try their best to study the modules on their own, many while taking care of younger siblings and doing household chores as their guardians are out earning a living. More often than not, the modules of learners from these environments are poorly done. This confirms the findings of Blair (2014).

Meanwhile, checking the responses got the lowest mean. This shows that only a few are able to re-check their responses against the answers key provided. This may be attributed to the fact that accomplishing the modules is very taxing for the pupils and checking the responses is an additional burden. Moreover, many opt not to do the task considering the lack of guidance and their limited capacities to read and understand. There is also the mentality that checking is the task of teachers. In summation, all of the indicators in terms of autonomy show that they are within the 2.26-3.25 range. This data reveals that during modular distance learning, the participants have “high” capabilities to cope despite the pandemic situation. This reflects the findings of Fidalgo et al (2020) on the three major concerns that pose difficulties in distance education, the conclusions of Brown et al (2020) on the risks of learners not in school, and that of Nyatsanza et al (2013) on coping mechanisms. The pandemic has compelled families to adjust (Martinez-Montilla et al, 2017).

The above results reveal that during modular distance learning, the learners are only allowed a fraction of freedom. This confirms the findings of Alampay (n.d.) on the authoritarian parenting styles of their families. The restrictions also reveal that the respondents’ families see themselves as part of the learning journey of their children. This reflects the position of Blair (2014) on parenting and children’s schooling. This may have contributed to the high capabilities of the pupils to go on with their studies during modular distance learning implementation.

Table 7
Coping Mechanism as to Autonomy

Item No.	Indicator		Frequency				Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Description of Ability to Cope
			Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)			
1	am free to select which subject to study first.	<i>F</i>	87	127	68	3	3.05	Often	High
		<i>%</i>	30.5	44.6	23.9	11			
2	can decide where in the house will I study.	<i>F</i>	80	87	127	11	2.89	Often	High
		<i>%</i>	58	30.5	44.6	3.9			
3	choose the stories I want to read again.	<i>F</i>	65	123	86	11	2.85	Often	High
		<i>%</i>	22.8	43.2	30.2	39			
4	choose the person whom I like to help me study.	<i>F</i>	75	109	77	24	2.82	Often	High
		<i>%</i>	26.3	38.2	27	8.4			
5	get to check the answers I made with the Answer key.	<i>F</i>	56	58	92	79	2.32	Sometimes	High
		<i>%</i>	19.6	20.4	32.3	27.7			

Table 8 shows the learners' coping mechanisms as to competence. The results show that the majority (WM=2.76) often can read, write and talk to others about their lessons, follow the steps in the module (WM=3.07), can remember the lessons they studied (WM=2.74), and do the activities like art, and music, dances and physical activities (2.92). The table also showed that the majority can sometimes solve the problems in the modules (WM=2.52). As to the description of the pupils' ability to cope, the weighted mean in the five indicators were all in the 2.26-3.25 range, thus showing that the participants have "high" capabilities to cope with the modular distance learning challenges as to competence.

The above results show that the participants were able to face the challenges of modular distance learning but had difficulty solving problems. This poses the adjustment of the pupils from learning in the face-to-face mode to studying without the classroom teacher to provide guidance when they have difficulties. To address the situation, parents reported that the distance learning mode encouraged many learners to use social media platforms to communicate with their peers, classmates, family members, and school teachers. Thus, performance tasks are

presented via messenger, clarifications are forwarded thru chats, and monitoring of learning is at times done online. Reminders were also posted in chat groups thereby keeping the learners updated on their lessons and activities. Said activities exemplify coping strategies applied by the pupils and their parents which portray the connection between self-motivation and self-determination (McCombes, 2017, Arizona Board of Regents, 2020).

Table 8
Coping Mechanism as to Competence

Item No.	Indicator		Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Description of Ability to Cope
1	can read, write and talk with others about the lessons given to me.	<i>F</i>	89	66	107	23	2.76	Often	High
		<i>%</i>	31.2	23.2	37.5	8.1			
2	can solve activities in different subjects by myself.	<i>F</i>	36	113	100	36	2.52	Sometimes	High
		<i>%</i>	12.6	39.6	35.1	12.6			
3	can follow the steps for activities given in the module.	<i>F</i>	107	95	80	3	3.07	Often	High
		<i>%</i>	37.5	33.3	28.1	1.1			
4	can remember the lessons we studied.	<i>F</i>	59	99	121	6	2.74	Often	High
		<i>%</i>	20.7	34.7	42.5	2.1			
5	Can do activities like art, music, dances and physical exercises.	<i>F</i>	81	106	93	5	2.92	Often	High
		<i>%</i>	28.4	37.2	32.6	1.8			

Table 9 shows the pupils' coping mechanisms as to relatedness. Results showed that in terms of liking to study with family members ($W=2.52$) and loving studying with friends and neighbors ($W=2.39$), the respondents claim they sometimes like it. Meanwhile, the means for indicators of liking it when teachers ask them how they are ($W= 3.11$), feeling happy when receiving happy face marks ($W=3.21$), and getting help and study tips from older members of the family ($W=3.25$) have the verbal description "often". The results imply that the pupils really need to feel that there are people who are supportive of them (Fuhrer and Skinner, 2003). The

“sometimes” responses indicate the control of the family which is, to some degree, being practiced in the home. The weighted means of the five indicators on coping as to competence all fell in the 2.26 -3.25 bracket. This shows that the pupils have “high” coping capabilities in terms of relatedness. The results also convey that the learners welcome news from their teachers, be it a simple “how are you” or putting happy face marks on their test papers. These remarks, the parents claim, made the pupils happy and excited to attend school again. The above result is in consonance with the findings of Yusof, Awang-Hashim, Kaur, Abdul Malek, Shanmugam, Abdul Manaf, Voon Yee, and Zubairi (2020) on the creation of a positive learning environment thru the presence of lecturers and peers.

Table 9
Coping Mechanism as to Relatedness

Item No.	Indicator		Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)	Mean	Verbal	Description
								Interpretation	n of Ability to Cope
1	like to study with my family (<i>mother, father, brothers and sisters, aunt, uncle, and cousins</i>) because we get free snacks or could watch tv after.	<i>F</i>	69	50	125	41	2.52	Sometimes	High
		%	24.2	17.5	43.9	114.4			
2	love studying with my friends and neighbors.	<i>F</i>	41	54	157	41	2.39	Sometimes	High
		%	14.7	18.9	51.6	14.4			
3	like it when my teachers ask my family how I am doing.	<i>F</i>	114	99	61	11	3.10	Often	High
		%	40	34.7	21.4	3.9			
4	get more inspired when I receive happy face marks in my tests.	<i>F</i>	139	80	54	12	3.21	Often	High
		%	48.8	28.1	18.9	4.2			
5	get help and study tips from older family members	<i>F</i>	151	66	55	13	3.25	Often	High
		%	53	23.2	19.3	4.6			

Table 10 portrays the relationship between the coping mechanism Autonomy and profile. The results show that the coping mechanism autonomy is significantly related to profile variables sex ($p=0.013$), sibling number ($p=0.036$), highest educational attainment of the mother ($p=0.016$ and 0.000), the highest educational attainment of the father ($p=0.000$, 0.006 and 0.036) and average monthly income ($p=0.001$). It can be noticed that the profile variable grade level is not significantly related to autonomy.

The above results convey that the degree of autonomy or freedom a learner could experience while undergoing modular distance learning is affected by the learner's sex, sibling number, the education level of the parents, and the family's average monthly income.

The findings reflect the findings of Mardjuki (2018) and Schoeppe, Duncan, Badland, Oliver, and Curtis (2013). The sexes have different strategies for addressing challenges in learning. Also, the capability to assist the children in their studies differs based on the parents' educational attainment (and occupation) and sibling number. Moreover, the bigger the average monthly family income, the better choices a learner could have in terms of selecting the availability of learning spaces to choose from at home. Living in a one-room house leaves no one a choice, as was observed during home visitations conducted by the researcher. This also proves the point of Niemec et al (2009) on strategies for enhancing autonomy.

Table 10
Relationships Between the Coping Mechanism Autonomy and Profile

Item No.	Indicator Statements While studying at home, I....	Profile Variables					
		Sex	Grade Level	Sibling Number	HEA of Mother	HEA of Father	Ave. Monthly Income of Family
		p-value (2 -tailed)					
1.	am free to select which subject to study first.	0.013	0.393	0.404	0.016	0.096	0.753
2	can decide where in the house will I study.	0.227	0.274	0.293	0.000	0.000	0.331
3	choose the stories I want to read again.	0.429	0.529	0.090	0.519	0.143	0.521
4	choose the person whom I like to help me study.	0.109	0.493	0.036	0.000	0.006	0.668
5	get to check the answers I made with the Answer key.	0.041	0.955	0.110	0.732	0.036	0.001

Table 11 shows the relationship between the coping mechanism competence and profile. Except for grade level, all the profile variables, namely: sex ($p=0.046$), sibling number ($p=0.028$, $p=0.000$), highest educational attainment of the mother ($p=0.010$, $p=0.000$), highest educational attainment of the father ($p=0.000$, $p=0.001$) and average monthly family income ($p=0.000$, $p=0.011$) are significantly related to the coping mechanism competence. The results imply that the said profile variables affect the competence of the participants such as reading, writing, and talking about their lessons, solving activities, following module steps, remembering the lessons, and doing art, music, dances, and physical exercises. These may be attributed to the observations that during the modular distance learning implementation, families who are more financially capable have the option to hire tutors for their children while they are at work. Also, these families have more opportunities to provide conducive study areas in their homes, ample food, and better mobility provisions as compared to their counterparts. Indeed, these are similar to the findings of Abuhatoum and Howe (2013) and the study of Hernandez and Napierala (2014).

Table 11**Relationships Between Coping Mechanism Competence and Profile**

		PROFILE VARIABLES					
Item No.	While studying at home , I....	Sex	Grade Level	Sibling Number	HEA of Mother	HEA of Father	Ave. Monthly Income of Family
		p-value (2 -tailed)					
1	can read, write and talk with others about the lessons given to me.	0.046	0.471	0.692	0.148	0.725	0.052
2	can solve activities in different subjects by myself.	0.478	0.054	0.028	0.010	0.055	0.408
3	can follow the steps for activities given in the module.	0.280	0.855	0.194	0.000	0.000	0.972
4	can remember the lessons we studied.	0.240	0.297	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000
5	can do activities like art, music , dances and physical exercises.	0.674	0.637	0.000	0.000	0.987	0.011

Table 12 shows the relationship between the coping mechanism relatedness to the profile variables. Again, it could be gleaned that all of the profile variables except grade level have a significant relationship with the coping mechanism relatedness. These results convey that the family structure, the economic status of the family, and the educational background of the parents influence the way the pupils interpret their relatedness to others. The results support the findings of Shabbir and Hina (2018) on education and employment, Maligalig et al (2010) on parents' education and children's schooling, the report of PSA Usec Mapa (2018), Roy et al (2022) on challenges faced by pupils in distance learning and the study of Yusof et al (2020) on the presence of lecturers and peers.

Table 12
Relationships Between Coping Mechanism Relatedness and Profile

Item No.	While studying at home, I....	PROFILE VARIABLES					
		Sex	Grade Level	Sibling Number	HEA of Mother	HEA of Father	Ave. Monthly Income of Family
		p-value (2 - tailed)					
1	like to study with my family (<i>mother, father, brothers and sisters, aunt, uncle, cousins</i>) because we get free snacks or could watch tv after.	0.046	0.862	0.006	0.000	0.035	0.222
2	love studying with my friends and neighbors.	0.993	0.192	0.000	0.080	0.035	0.023
3	like it when my teachers ask my family how I am doing.	0.835	0.137	0.026	0.135	0.403	0.426
4	get more inspired when I receive happy face marks in my tests.	0.004	0.433	0.524	0.000	0.000	0.120
5	get help and study tips from older family members.	0.000	0.691	0.177	0.002	0.853	0.008

Conclusions

The following conclusions were made based on the study findings:

1. Most of the learners of Reserva Elementary School are females, firstborn children, were in Grade 3 whose parents have a high school education, and who belong to the lowest income decile. The pupils' families have an average of 2-3 children and are relatively young. They have acquired basic education skills helpful in assisting children in their modular distance learning. Despite the minimal financial income, the pupils' parents value and support the schooling of their children.
2. The pupil participants have "high" capabilities to cope with their modular studies in terms of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This is because of the authoritarian type of parenting. There is a degree of freedom allowed for the learners but both parents and children are aware that the flexibility of control is always present. Another, the competence of the learners to navigate their lessons was enhanced by the interplay of

interpersonal interactions and utilization of social media. Lastly, the pupils were able to cope with their studies despite the pandemic restrictions because of the support received from family members, school teachers, and personnel and from community members such as the Purok focal persons.

3. All the profile variables, except grade level, are significantly related to the coping mechanisms of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This conveys that the better the status of the pupils' families in terms of education, income, and social stature, the better their capabilities to cope with modular distance learning challenges.
4. Giving the pupils the opportunity to take charge of their modular learning thru the provision of checklists where they could monitor their own progress could help enhance their efforts to cope with distance learning. This sends the children the message that there is a degree of trust accorded to them. The school home visits, online meetings and casual greetings encourage pupils and their families to feel a sense of relatedness and connection.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered:

1. Considering the family scenario of the majority of the respondents, schools may intensify their campaign for adult reproductive health and career guidance. This is to inculcate among the learners the importance of education and financial stability in a family. This may help lessen having the pupils repeat the fate of their parents of immersing into family responsibilities without adequate education and financial freedom to support their children.

2. The Purok Learning System be sustained pandemic or no pandemic. This close coordination between the school, home, and community inspires young learners to value cooperation and unity, positive values which will enrich their personhood as they journey in life.
3. Online Kumustahan, regular meetings, and orientations with parents be sustained by schools. These types of communication encourage learners and their families to continue supporting the school and their children's education because they feel they are given importance.
4. Further studies related to coping strategies of different types of learners in the transition from the pandemic to the post-pandemic period be investigated to obtain richer information on the topic.

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1. Kasarian _____ Lalaki _____ Babae
2. Antas _____ Kindergarten _____ Grade 4
_____ Grade 1 _____ Grade 5
_____ Grade 2 _____ Grade 6
_____ Grade 3
3. Pang ilang anak sa pamilya: _____ 1st _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____ 4th _____ 5th
4. Pinakamataas na Edukasyon ng Nanay
_____ Elementary _____ High School _____ College _____ Masteral Degree _____ Doctoral Degree
5. Pinakamataas na Edukasyon ng Tatay
_____ Elementary _____ High School _____ College _____ Masteral Degree _____ Doctoral Degree
6. Regular na kita ng pamilya sa bawat buwan
_____ Php 1000.00 – Php 10,000.00
_____ Php 10,001.00 – Php 20,000.00
_____ Php 21,001.00 – Php 30,000.00
_____ Php 30,001.00 – Php 40,000.00
_____ Php 40,001.00 and above

Part II. Basahing mabuti at lagyan ng tsek (/) ang kolum na naglalarawan sa iyong kasanayan.

A. Mga bagay na kaya kong desisyunan (autonomy)

Aytem Blg.	Habang nag-aaral ako sa bahay , ako ay.....	Palagi (4)	Madalas (3)	Paminsan -minsan (2)	Hinding- hindi (1)
1.	Malayang nakapipili kung aling subject ang uunahin kong pag-aralan.				
2	Nakakapili kung saang bahagi ng bahay ako mag-aaral.				
3	Nakakapili ng mga kuwentong gusto kong basahin.				
4	Nakakapili ako ng taong gusto kong makasamang mag-aral ng aking mga modyul.				
5	Natse-tsek ko ang aking mga sagot gamit ang Answer key.				

B. Mga bagay na kaya kong gawin (competence)

Aytem Blg.	Habang nag-aaral ako sa bahay ,	Palagi (4)	Madalas (3)	Paminsan -minsan (2)	Hinding- hindi (1)
1	Kaya kong basahin, isulat at isalaysay sa iba ang mga araling ibinigay sa akin.				
2	Kaya kong lutasing mag-isa ang anumang pagsubok at gawaing kasama sa mga subject na pinag-aaralan ko.				
3	Nasusundan ko ang mga hakbang na ibinigay para sa mga gawain sa modyul.				
4	Naaalala ko ang mga araling pinag-aralan nang nakalipas na araw.				
5	Naisasagawa ko ang mga gawain sa sining, musika, sayaw at iba pang pisikal na gawain tulad ng ehersisyo.				

Aytem	Habang nag-aaral ako sa bahay ,	Palagi (4)	Madalas (3)	Paminsan -minsan (2)	Hinding- hindi (1)
1	Gusto kong mag-aral kasama ang aking kapamilya o kamag-anak dahil may libre kaming miryenda at maaari pang manuod ng TV pagkatapos.				
2	Gustung-gusto kong mag-aral kasama ang aking mga kaibigan at kapitbahay.				
3	Natutuwa ako kapag kinukumusta kami ng aking mga guro.				
4	Lalo akong inspiradong mag-aral kapag nakakatanggap ako ng masayang mukha (happy face) sa aking mga test o pagsusulit.				
5	Nakakahingi ako ng tulog at study tips mula sa mga nakatatandang miyembro ng aking pamilya.				

Part I. Please check the information that applies to you.

4. Grade Level _____ Kindergarten _____ Grade 4
 _____ Grade 1 _____ Grade 5
 _____ Grade 2 _____ Grade 6
 _____ Grade 3

3. Sibling number 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th

4. Highest Educational Attainment of Mother

____Elementary____High School____College____Masteral Degree____Doctoral Degree

7. Highest Educational Attainment of Father

____Elementary ____ High School____College____Masteral Degree____Doctoral Degree

8. Average Monthly Income of Parents

_____ Php 1000.00 – Php 10,000.00

_____Php 10,001.00 – Php 20,000.00

_____Php 21,001.00 – Php 30,000.00

_____ Php 30,001.00 – Php 40,000.00

_____Php 40,001.00 and above

Part II. Read the statements and check the column that best describes your practices.

D. Things I Decide (autonomy)

Item No.	While studying at home I.....	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)
1.	am free to select which subject to study first.				
2	can decide where in the house will I study.				
3	choose the stories I want to read again.				
4	choose the person whom I like to help me study.				
5	get to check the answers I made with the Answer key.				

E. Things I Can Do (competence)

Item No.	While studying at home , I....	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)
1	can read, write and talk with others about the lessons given to me.				
2	can solve activities in different subjects by myself.				
3	can follow the steps for activities given in the module.				
4	can remember the lessons we studied.				
5	Can do activities like art, music dances, and physical exercises.				

F. People I Like (relatedness)

Item No.	While studying at home, I....	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)
1	like to study with my family (<i>mother, father, brothers and sisters, aunt, uncle, and cousins</i>) because we get free snacks or could watch tv after.				
2	love studying with my friends and neighbors.				
3	like it when my teachers ask my family how I am doing.				
4	get more inspired when I receive happy face marks in my tests.				
5	get help and study tips from older family members.				