



RESEARCH ARTICLE

LIVED EXPERIENCES OF PISAY SCHOLARS UNDER THE DISTANCE LEARNING MODALITY: ADAPTING TO CHANGE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the lived experiences of Pisay students who enrolled in the distance learning program at Philippine Science High School-Caraga Region Campus during the school year 2021–2022. The researcher employed a qualitative research design with a phenomenological method to learn about and understand the experiences of Pisay Scholars. The Colaizzi seven-step analysis method was used to examine the responses. Thematic analysis of the recordings indicated two themes that emerged from the Pisay scholars' remote learning experiences. These are the positive and negative experiences. There were six sub-themes generated within each of the themes. The positive experiences were: (a) convenience of staying at home; (b) flexibility of accessing the learning guides/modules; (c) availability of online resources; (d) support from the family and the school; (e) availability of teachers' intervention; and (f) adapting to change. On the other hand, the subthemes of negative experiences were: (a) home environment disturbances; (b) poor time management; (c) lack of resources; (d) absence of parents; (e) stigma against teachers; and (f) physical and mental exhaustion. According to the findings, students need a school-based intervention program to help them improve their academic performance, with a focus on providing effective assistance for struggling distance learners.

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 pandemic and challenged the global scale more than two years ago. The government and corporate organizations were forced to operate with the highest restraints as a result of this unparalleled disaster. Many countries, like the Philippines, have shuttered all schools and institutions as a result of this (Tria, 2020). The coronavirus sickness was probably the catalyst for a seismic upheaval in educational history. As a result, for the school years 2020, 2021, and 2022, the Philippine Science High School redesigned its curriculum to respond and commit to ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of learners, teachers, and personnel during COVID-19 while also finding ways for education to continue despite the crisis (PSHSS Memorandum No.077-A). Curriculum changes, learning material alignment, numerous delivery modes, and extensive online teacher training to accommodate remote learning are all included. According to Gumerova *et al.*, (2020), this event is a test of the educational system's readiness for mass distant learning. The pandemic has changed the study and social lives of distance learning students (Aristeidou *et al.*, 2021). Academic institutions must make timely adaptations to comply with the health constraints in order to retain and deliver high-quality education.

In contrast to traditional face-to-face classrooms where every student and teacher interacts socially and individually, learners can no longer experience and expand their social skills and must instead rely on modular instructions and learning methods (Cheng, 2020). "I strongly believe that the views and lived experiences of the students must be our most intensive focus for future research," writes Higgins (2019). Only the Higgins study has looked at student opinions and actual experiences recently. Academic integrity, academic dishonesty, and faculty experiences with distance learning, including the frequency and forms of academic dishonesty, have all been investigated in other studies. None of these research (Baron & Crooks, 2015; Bisping, Patron, & Roskelley, 2018; Burke, & Chisel, 2017) have looked specifically at student experiences in a distance learning environment. Furthermore, this research focused on the Pisay Scholars' real experiences with distant learning. The researcher wanted to see how they reacted to the circumstance and learn about their good and negative feelings regarding distant education that employs a mixed approach to teaching and learning. Determine what methods, interventions, or solutions PSHS-CRC may employ to assist children who are struggling with this new learning style.

Theoretical Framework: Pisay students who struggle with this new learning method may experience negative consequences in their academic standing. The day-to-day experiences of students studying in this mode of learning might be

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challenging. People create their own rules or constructions to understand events based on their prior experiences, according to George Kelly's Personal Construct Theory (1980). People create internal representations of reality called constructs based on observation and experimentation, according to Personal Construct Theory. Constructs help people understand and explain their surroundings. Constructs begin as wobbly concepts that evolve and solidify as people gain more experience and proof. According to George Kelly, comes from the various ways we anticipate and interpret occurrences in our surroundings. According to his Particular Construct Theory, people create their own personal mental models or theories about the world in order to comprehend and negotiate their personal situations. People put these theories to the test by comparing them to their personal experiences, eliminating those that do not provide significant world interpretations. This study supported the main theory with Jean Piaget's Adaptation Theory and the Phenomenological Theory. In the 1920s, Piaget argued that children move through a sequence of cognitive stages similar to how they progress through physical phases. According to Piaget, cognitive development is the consequence of two processes: adaptation and equilibrium. Assimilation and accommodation are two sub processes of adaptation, which refers to a child's ability to modify and adjust to changing circumstances. Assimilation occurs when a youngster uses prior knowledge to new information (Cherry, 2021). Pisay scholars must adjust to the new normal in this situation since they are obligated to carry out the government's directive. They gradually get complacent or delay in the new environment, believing that they can engage and comply with the standards in the same way they could in a conventional face-to-face situation. Academics adjust their techniques or interactions in response to these new experiences, adopting new styles or strategies to improve their academic status. Equanimity is the desire of "balance" between oneself and the outside world, and it entails the child's adaptive functioning being adjusted to the surroundings. The balance of a person keeps him or her on the path of development, allowing for ever-improving developments.

Besides that, the Phenomenological Theory clarifies that this method provides the greatest opportunity for our species to learn from the experiences of others; feelings and personal experiences are viewed as inferior knowledge sources (Thomas *et al.*, 2013). This theory is all about understanding the life experiences of others. It combines a philosophy, a point of view, and a method of investigation (Converse, 2012; Porter, 2008). These philosophical underpinnings, which are characterized by intimidating terminology and initially mind-boggling examinations of the nature of human existence, may discourage some researchers from employing phenomenology as a research method, which is unfortunate given the breadth of educational questions that phenomenology can address. By understanding the fundamental concepts of phenomenology, educators and scholars can gain access to a wealth of valuable information and knowledge. Phenomenology is widely recognized as "the science of instances" Raffanti (2018) used a transcendental phenomenological approach to investigate the perspectives or experiences of students participating in distance learning. Like any other students, scholars at Philippine Science High School-Caraga Region Campus have difficulty adjusting to this new normal school setup. While some students are thriving with this new learning setup, in the

school year 2020–2021, a record shows that Pisay students have difficulty studying for a variety of reasons. At least one offline or online scholar was included in the "No Grade (NG) or Low-Grade (LG) List". A few of the reasons observed were mental health issues; emotional distress due to parent/s passing away caused by COVID-19 and other malignant diseases; household chores conflict; parents being laid off due to the company's economic instability; parents not knowing how to assist their children's academics; fondness for online games; students not understanding the lessons without the teacher's presence; no available gadgets and tools for online learning; no network/telecom signal around their vicinity; slow to no internet connection; no printers or printed materials to support offline activities; and even frequent power outages resulting in significant barriers to learning.

Conceptual Framework: The life experiences of Pisay scholars enrolled in distant education were analyzed and defined in this study. To do so, the researcher enquired about and evaluated the Pisay scholars' diverse experiences with remote learning during the pandemic. The participants were asked about the hurdles they faced, their coping mechanisms for these obstacles, and the alternatives they considered were preferable to online classes given the current situation to aid the researcher reach a relevant conclusion.

The study also attempted to provide a set of suggestions based on the findings to assist informants in examining and analyzing their experiences, difficulties, and insights related to distant learning.



Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Study

To realize the study's goal, the researcher made use of the Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework to show the process and flow of this paper. Furthermore, the schematic paradigm demonstrates that the input box represents Pisay Scholars' lived experiences. Box 2 depicts the Process variable box, which contains the procedure for resolving issues and research problems using qualitative research design, phenomenological approach, purposive sampling technique, preparation and approval, and consent form distribution to participants; conducting in-depth interviews; and data collection process via online or face-to-face communication. Also, data analysis and interpretation using theme analysis. Finally, the output box displays the proposed intervention or assessment for the PSHS-CRC distance learning system, as well as recommendations or proposals to improve Pisay scholars' performance and good experiences.

Statement of the Problem: The study assessed and determined the lived experiences of the Pisay scholars in the Philippine Science High School-Caraga Region Campus under the distance learning modality in the school year of 2021 to 2022.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following:

- What are the lived experiences of Pisay Scholars under the distance learning modality?
- What intervention and recommendation can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Scope and Limitation: The Phenomenological Approach was applied in this study, which focused on the lived experiences of Scholars of Philippine Science High School-Caraga Region Campus enrolled in Social Science via distance learning in the midst of the Philippine pandemic. The study's informants were four offline and four online scholars, ranging in grade levels from seventh to twelve, for a total of eight participants. The research was restricted to the present academic year (2021–2022). Participants in the study expressed their feelings, ideas, and replies about their distance learning experiences, learning, and challenges.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design and methodologies utilized in the study are discussed in this section.

Research Design: In the school year 2021 to 2022, this study used a qualitative method and a phenomenological approach to examine and comprehend the lived experiences of Pisay Scholars at Philippine Science High School-Caraga Region Campus via remote learning. Their emotions were investigated using descriptive phenomenology. Phenomenology is a qualitative research approach that focuses on the shared experiences and perceptions of a group of people. The approach's main purpose is to arrive at a description of the nature of the occurrence in question (Creswell, 2013). The meanings, concepts, definitions, and descriptions of things are the subject of this form of inquiry. Qualitative research is concerned with gathering and analyzing non-numerical data (Crossman & Cole, 2017). This method also helped the researcher understand, interpret, and find new information about the real-life experiences of Pisay Scholars in the distance learning mode.

Research Locale: This study was conducted at the Philippine Science High School-Caraga Region Campus (PSHS-CRC), the thirteenth among the sixteen campuses of the Philippine Science High School System under the umbrella of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST). It is one of the leading science high schools in the Asia-Pacific Region and was established in 2012. Currently, its 6-year program caters to 538 scholars from grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. PSHS-CRC offers a scholarship for secondary education with an emphasis on science among the cream of the crop learners in the Caraga Region.

Research Respondents: The researcher purposefully selected 4 offline and 4 online Pisay Scholars who completed an in-depth interview via online and face-to-face for a total population of 538 enrolled in the academic year 2021–2022. Each participant was given a pseudonym in order to protect their identities. These informants are "information-rich" people who can best assist in determining the scholars' experiences, obstacles, and coping methods, as well as how they affect the effectiveness and process of distant learning (Patton, Creswell, 2013).

Moreover, the selection of participants will be made purposively through the following criteria:

- Must be a bona fide student of PSHS-CRC;
- Must be enrolled as an online or offline Scholar; and
- Might have incurred a No Grade or Low Grade for S.Y. 2021-2022.

Purposive sampling is a strategy in which particular settings, people, or events are selected deliberately because they warrant inclusion and provide important information that cannot be obtained from other choices (Maxwell, 1996).

Research Instrument: To capture the students' lived experiences of distance learning during the pandemic, the researcher used an open-ended in-depth interview guide question. Some of the questions and their order were pre-planned, while others arose spontaneously during the conversation. The conversation lasted about 30 minutes. The following resources were used in this study: a consent form given to identified scholars prior to the interview; an interview guide and interview questions given to participants; and a personal data sheet and agreement form given to participants, informing them that their responses would be used for this study. In accordance with RA 10173, the Data Privacy Act of 2012, all personal and sensitive personal information acquired and processed must be treated as confidential information. The responses of the participants were recorded, transcribed, gathered, and interpreted.

Data Gathering Procedure: A letter was sent to the PSHS-CRC Director requesting permission to conduct the study. The letter also included a description of the study, its objectives, and the determined guide questions. The identified participants who expressed their commitment to participate in the study signed an informed consent form. The data collection stage was the next step. The researcher did a one-on-one in-depth interview using audio and video recordings, which were afterwards transcribed and translated. After the transcribing, the respondents returned the data and validated it. Expert assistance and consultation were also sought by the researcher. The data was then analyzed using thematic coding as the last step. This aided the researcher in identifying the data's themes. Finally, the researcher compiled all of the information acquired. The Colaizzi Method, which consists of seven steps, was utilized by the researcher to confidently interpret people's experiences.

Data Analysis: After the distribution, collection, and completion of interviews, the researcher transcribed verbatim and interpreted all the responses being gathered. Coded themes were generated. Themes were analyzed through the use of thematic analysis. This study used a Thematic Analysis. This is a common method for qualitative data in this study. The fields of philosophy and psychology are responsible for the development of phenomenological research, which is an approach to inquiry in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals in relation to a phenomenon as described by participants. The description encapsulates the thoughts and feelings of a number of different people who have all had similar experiences with the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). The conduct of interviews is a common component of this design, which is distinguished by its robust

philosophical foundations. On the other hand, thematic analysis is little more than an organizational strategy for qualitative data. It endeavors to identify the themes that are most prominent in a text at various levels, and thematic networks are designed to make the structuring and description of these themes easier to accomplish (Braune & Clarke, 2012). Further, the researcher used the Colaizzi's approach created by Edward (2011). Colaizzi's data analysis approach is rigorous and resilient, making it a qualitative method that assures the credibility and dependability of its findings. It enables the researcher to identify emerging themes and their interconnected links. Researchers that use a descriptive phenomenological approach should regard this method as a clear and logical procedure for exploring the basic structure of an experience. Colaizzi's phenomenological technique may be utilized to comprehend people's experiences with confidence. This might aid in the development and comprehension of Pisay Scholars' problems and experiences under the distance learning modality. Lastly, the researcher transcribed the audio or video-recorded interviews of the participants' replies to their experiences and problems. The researcher took into account the nonverbal clues observed throughout the interview.

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

There are two themes under the experiences of the Pisay scholars under the distance learning modality. These are the positive and negative experiences. There were six sub-themes generated within each of the themes.

Themes		
Positive	Experiences	Negative Experiences
Sub Themes	Convenience of Staying at Home	Home Environment Disturbances
	Flexibility of Accessing the Learning Guides/Modules	Poor Time Management
	Availability of Online Resources	Lack of Resources
	Support from the Family and the School	Absence of Parents
	Availability of Teachers' Intervention	Stigma Against the Teachers
	Adapting to Change	Physical and Mental Exhaustion

Theme 1: Positive Experiences

Sub Theme 1: Convenience of Staying at Home: Pisay scholars felt the convenience of staying at home while learning face-to-face was still not feasible during this pandemic. They also save money on fares and allowance for food. Since, they do not need to spend on class materials and other school essentials.

"You don't have to travel as much from school back to the house, cause I'm also a dormer. I have to return every weekend before. Especially now that gas prices are rising, it's not good... In online, it also depends but you can be little bit comfortable cause it's more lax on what to wear or your room.-Ashlyn

"Since it's online, you can just be convenient by staying at home. I like staying at home. Going out could be costly too."-Nam

My place is very far away. The school right now is inaccessible for me because I live far, I have to drive hours and waste money. Like you used money and it's very much of a hassle.-King

"It's better to be with them at home, so they will not think of a separate budget for me."-Aoife

Students preferred online classrooms due to access and involvement, time and space ease, and cost savings, according to Shetty, Shilpa, Day, and Kavya (2020).

These findings corroborate with Nguyen's (2021) findings that students prefer online educational settings. These findings show that online instruction is preferable and that secondary school need more video conferences.

Sub-Theme 2: Flexibility of Accessing the Learning Guides/Modules: In the learning process, flexibility refers to students' capacity to set their own learning time and pace. The flexibility of class participation time was the most crucial aspect in participants' positive experience. Participants in this study stressed the convenience of not needing to schedule their studies on their own. Students could access any study area they wanted, both offline and online, at any time.

"As an online student, it's like just this schedule of like papers being sent to my house for a week meeting with containing of everything to answer concerning that specific week. Cause most of the requirements are grouped week by week. I have to pass a set of papers. They sent like last week and then they'll give me the next set of figures. And sometimes I have to answer stuff like online."-Regan

"I think it is, uh, showing my advantageous side and how to be a uh versatile in my, in my modules.-Nam

Another positive experience found in this study was flexibility with self-paced study. The participants were given complete control over when they studied the required knowledge content in their lessons. It was regarded as a significant benefit for the scholars and their parents.

"I kind of like of assessment one you submit. I kind of like the assessment where you work on it but you can submit by the end of the week. That type of thing. Because there might be that you don't know after the discussion and you have time to like really think deeper to that subject or the problem. Because when the traditional approach, you can have a time limit and you might make mistakes, the otherwise wouldn't have... Well, when I'm self-studying, it feels nice, because you can be more in depth of the subject like your own perks and your own like uhm questions about it."-Ashlyn

Flexibility in the learning process refers to students' ability to choose their own learning time and pace. The most important factor in participants' favorable experience was the flexibility of class participation time. The convenience of not having to schedule their studies on their own was emphasized by participants in this study. Students may go to whatever study area they desired at any time, both offline and online.

Sub-Theme 3: Availability of Online Resources: The pandemic honed the scholars' ability to self-initiate means in order to learn because of the scarcity of learning materials. According to Hsieh and Cho (2017), online education and resources have had a significant effect on traditional pedagogical practices. "Since I have no one to help me understand the lessons, I am able to learn through the resources on the internet."-Aoife. Livari (2020) also mentioned that the utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) tools can increase students' comprehension of instructional materials during distance learning. Additionally, they can replicate actual processes and allow students to conduct virtual experiments (Lee, Hsiao, and Ho, 2014).

"We also find out more other alternatives using websites to get more resources and on YouTube and video through video, we uh handpick several YouTubers, which give a, um, sufficient na information namaka help sa subjects namo, especially in Grade 10, since chemistry, biology and physics, those three are the most difficult. Those YouTube videos really help" (We are also looking for more alternatives or websites to get more video resources on YouTube. We carefully selected several You Tubers who could provide us with enough information to help us understand the topics, particularly the three most difficult subjects—chemistry, biology, and physics.)-Nam

The new normal educational environment necessitates learning and instructional resources comprising a variety of technologies and modules. According to Espinar and Ballad (2016), secondary education entails the utilization of instructional resources that facilitate independent learning.

Sub-Theme 4: Support from the Family and the School

The support that the scholars get from their immediate environment is very crucial in the learning process of the learners. From the responses of the participants, they expressed their gratitude that during this pandemic they get not only support from their family but also from the school.

"I had help from my mom and ah psychiatrist and also the school. Thankfully they are supportive."-Ashlyn

"I would say 30% plus positivity. It's positive for me in a way because it makes me understand my parents more and makes me understand what mistakes I did. I was just very irresponsible. I got to cope up with it because the teachers were very forgiving."-King

"The school lent me a laptop and provided printed modules at the same time." -Bern

"The school offered me a scheduled consultation with the subject teachers and even assistance to meet a therapist. The guidance counselor also always checks on me. They also offered to lend me a gadget and send printed copies of the modules via LBC. For now, I am availing myself of the dorm accommodation program, teachers just visit and provide me with printed modules."-Aoife

"Their concerned for me is what drives them to pushing me to do stuff because it's reasonable, like family members to be concerned. I appreciate their efforts. The fact that they're trying their best to push me to be able to answer stuff."-Regan

The importance of learning continuity must be communicated to parents and guardians, as well as advise on home learning options (UNICEF, 2020). Parents and guardians are the closest people to whom students have easy access.

Sub-Theme 5 Availability of Teachers' Intervention: The pandemic had a significant impact on learning and teaching, in addition to affecting economies and health and drastically changing people's lives. Teachers are continuously inventing techniques to interact with and teach kids, despite the enormous disruption to schooling. These links will help students and teachers re-establish relationships once schools reopen, as well as provide teachers a clearer idea of how much their kids have learned while they were gone. Teachers must be involved in adapting and delivering home/distance learning curriculum and lessons, as well as promoting student and parent adoption of these modalities (UNICEF, 2020).

"I had subject consultations, ma'am. I learned a lot during the consultation. Just like last week, I had a face-to-face consultation with Sir Key, Ma'am New, and Ma'am Levi. I was able to avail myself of the daytime accommodation in the school to cope with my missed requirements. It was very helpful for me."-Cian

"I am very much grateful for my teachers in Mathematics, Physics, and Biology because they always respond to our call and help us everytime we need elaboration about the topics."-Nam

Sub-Theme 6:Adapting to Change: Active learning does not imply physical movement but rather the active engagement of a student's mind in the learning process. Students are active participants in their learning, with opportunities to connect prior knowledge to new discoveries, resulting in deeper connections that increase the likelihood that they will understand and retain the knowledge. Scholars devise strategies that can be utilized to adapt to and address some of the challenges, if not all of them, during this kind of learning setup. The scholars mentioned issues. It is critical to understand the tactics they will employ to adapt to and address some, if not all, of those challenges. The following are numerous coping methods Pisay scholars use to minimize their challenges and ease their efforts with the existing learning arrangement.

"I'm able to like schedule some stuff for me, which manages my time in a sense that I would focus more on multiple things at the same time in a healthy manner."-Regan

"Yes. After the bridging program, I learned how to adjust, how to manage my time more efficiently."-Nam

Distance learning materials genuinely helped learners enhance their self-efficacy, which would lead to improved performance and positive experiences. Several types of research by Miltiadou & Savenye (2018) have found that students who

have a strong feeling of self-efficacy have a better probability of succeeding in an academic setting than students who have a low sense of self-efficacy. The use of learning modules will increase students' self-efficacy. Overall, the sub-theme above shows that more positive learning experiences are associated with greater fulfillment of psychological needs and higher acceptance of online tools. Similar to the findings of Hsu *et al.* (2019), that discovered need fulfillment was positively related to all aspects of self-reported competence. The favorable experience in terms of convenience is consistent with the flexibility benefits of distant learning that have been discussed in prior publications (Appana, 2008; Bczek *et al.*, 2021; Barbour, 2013; Basuony *et al.*, 2020; Harvey *et al.*, 2014). Some students prefer online or synchronous classes to traditional classes because they can engage more with their lecturers and peers and better absorb the lectures. Meanwhile, some students stated that a modular approach or an offline environment is preferable to them because it is more flexible and they do not have access to resources such as an internet connection. They also preferred offline settings since it allowed them to respond later or at their leisure. They believe that synchronous and asynchronous internet technologies are less expensive and more flexible for their own time. Despite the fact that it is well known that input formats for learning success typically rely on students' attention and interest, the researcher author discovered that these distance learning tools or modality preferences could influence students' overall experiences of learning environments, as well as their learning strategies and performance (Rapanta *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, some participants stated that they had experienced both learning modalities (offline and online), implying that students who have mostly received offline instruction report greater gains in autonomous learning and smaller gains in social skills, both of which are immediately plausible given that offline settings are characterized by high levels of autonomy and fewer opportunities for social exchange. Students who predominantly received online teaching, on the other hand, reported a higher increase in course content interest than students who mostly experienced offline teaching, showing that content-related interaction with others enhances the evolution of interest in a particular topic.

Theme 2: Negative Experiences: The technical nature of its actual use reveals the negative effects of online education. This includes the fact that technology is not always efficient; it makes it more difficult for students to grasp the concepts being taught; online learning can lead to social isolation; and it can prevent students from developing necessary communication skills. There are also prevalent issues mentioned by the respondents that negatively affect their academic performance or experiences in the distance learning modality.

Sub-Theme 1: Home Environment Disturbances: The school is the ideal learning environment for a formal education. Since the pandemic, educational schemes have shifted from face-to-face to home schooling. The role of the environment in the learning process can increase students' attention and focus, facilitate meaningful learning experiences, encourage higher levels of student performance, and motivate students to exercise higher-level critical thinking skills. Respondents, on the other hand, said that the many distractions at home make it hard for them to focus on distance learning classes.

"I think, uhm, lots of distractions because I have siblings and I have a little sister who always wants to play a lot. So, she could distract me".-Ashlyn

"Um, studying alone makes me very bored and makes me want to do something else aside from studying. Like going through the internet and looking at stuff or just play games. It's a very bad factor to have like distractions in your vicinity while studying...I can't do my studies at home because there's so many things I have to do. I have to make our home stable [orderly]... I have pets there that could mess... I have sister who is always playing around with her toys and make a mess also..."-King

For the formality and causality of the study, the interviews were conducted in English or Visayan-English. Follow-up questions were asked in response to the participants' responses. The interviews lasted between 30 and 50 minutes. Participants were invited to speak openly and in their own terms about their personal experiences. The researcher went to considerable measures to preserve the confidentiality of the information provided by the participants in order to protect their anonymity. Instead of using their own names, the researchers employed fictional names. Any information collected will be kept strictly confidential in order to comply with the RA 10173. (Data Privacy Act). An individual's life experiences are often influenced and directed by environmental circumstances. The environment provides various cues and important extrinsic motivation factors to initiate action and energize intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, when it came to their learning environment, the Pisay Scholars expressed difficulties with distance learning. Cognition, affect, metacognition, and the environment are four interrelated dimensions associated with learning, according to Hartman (2011), cited in Kawachi (2016). Other researchers have highlighted student characteristics (Howland & Moore, 2017) and the architecture of the learning environment as important determinants (Clark, 2017; Dwyer, 2013; Song *et al.*, 2014). The design of the distance learning environment is another key aspect of the distance learning experience.

Sub-Theme 2: Poor Time Management: As shown in the narration of the Pisay scholars' responses, the students expressed concern about their abilities to manage time. The challenges seemed to arise from the amount of communication that accompanied the distance learning modality. Their sense of their own abilities in this area influenced their experiences. In this instance, students need to understand how to manage and regulate their time.

"I can do whatever I want to do [when at home]. Maka cellphone ko ana, ma'am. Mao nasiyaynaka contribute nadili ko maka focus ogmaka procrastinate ko" (I can do whatever I want to do when at home. I'm tempted to use my cellphone and browse unrelated things on the internet instead.)-Cian

"It depends my tendency of like, not having, uh, the will to do stuff sometimes. Uh, there's also stuff where I get, uh, difficulties stuff or like I get occupied. I have the tendency to go with whatever raises to my head, and like sometimes, uh I get this idea for what should I do, and something raises in my head and I get a bunch of ideas. Basically, I don't have the loyalty when it comes to an idea. Then I whenever I went to the

“computeran”, I ran through random articles and random stuff I basically lost in my own curiosity. So when it came into that deadline, I cram, like uh 12 o’ clock, like all of my projects in one go written and all, then pass them the next day.” -Regan

People who learn how to manage their time become more productive (Claessens, Eerde, & Rutte, 2017). This subject refers to the respondents' time constraints when completing activities in distance learning classes.

The respondents were also questioned if they followed their daily plans or if they needed to work extra hours to finish all of their chores. Aside from school-related responsibilities, the researcher wanted to know if they had any additional responsibilities. The responses to these two questions were very different. Some Pisay scholars claim to devote their entire attention to their studies and to stick to a strict schedule. Some people organize their actions in advance. Then, for some, they become sucked into pointless extracurricular activities.

Sub-Theme 3: Lack of Resources: One of the most significant issues that emerged from the participants' replies was the lack of learning tools. They cope with a lack of resources by searching for information on various websites on the internet. Many students, according to Santos (2020), still use the internet for extra research on more challenging assignments. They look for information using search engines like Google. The role of the internet connection was significant in the participants' experiences. It is considered one of the most significant instruments to utilize as a source of extra material for their lessons in the new learning scheme. Other constraints associated with the internet or technical intervention emerged as a result. Loss of internet connectivity, lag in gadgets, limited storage capacity in gadgets, and frequent power outages were all factors that influenced learners' interest and excitement for their distance learning studies.

“Distance learning, I always feel struggling during synchronous meetings cause of the internet connection every time I always get disconnected missed some discussions of all of my teacher. Due to this, I’ll have some confusion to my assessments every time I answer every week.” -Iris

“It is very difficult, now that the school setup is not face to face. There is no one who will help me understand the lesson. I still need to browse the internet so I can understand the lesson. We don’t have network coverage here during daytime. Network coverage only get through when it’s midnight.” -Bern

“Yes, ma’am. There’s always internet interruption here at home. I also experience frequent power outages that can really hamper my attendance at the synchronous meetings.” -Aoife

Adonis (2020) also stated that students thought to drop a class due to a bad internet connection, as millions of pupils and parents battled to become acquainted with the new learning platforms triggered by the new coronavirus epidemic. The Philippines' sluggish internet connection provided a significant barrier to learners, particularly those from distant areas.

Sub-Theme 4: Absence of Parents: In light of the distance learning method, the only people they may quickly seek for help with their learning are their parents and friends. Estrada

(2021), cited that the distance learning modality is strongly reliant on the More Knowledgeable Others (MKOs) capacities, or the adults in these students' homes. This new reality has significant implications for parents' roles. In fact, parents' role is more important than ever in this massive shift to online learning. Parents, for example, play an important role in organizing learning spaces, particularly in a crowded home where adults and children compete for physical space, access to devices, and connectivity. When parents are absent, children miss the adult supervision and support they need to learn. In the absence of live teachers, where parents have cultural capital (for example, a good university education), their children benefit from their guidance (Jansen, 2020). From the responses of the participants, they expressed that they feel constant pressure from their busy parents to comply with the missing requirements or to be good in their academics. Another response also stated that their parents could not help them because they didn't know the lesson content.

“My mom would freak out that I would fail because of a simple mistake like that. So I was very pressured and overwhelmed by her anger and ‘cause she never did that to me before when I was a kid. It's start in that it started to, and that's where it started, where I got this, I got slower in submission and performance because of my parents getting mad at me.” -King

“I cannot grasp the lessons because I have no one to explain the concept to me. I am more of an audio learner, so I really need a teacher to explain the lessons to me. My parents cannot help me either because they are busy and they don't know the lessons.” -Bern

Scholars have difficulty adjusting to the new normal school setup. They are not used to it due to the current pandemic. This has an effect on the transition and capacity of their learning processes in online new normal classes, distance learning, and blended learning. It indicates that support must be given to them, especially on the part of the parents and family members, in order that their learning perspective in the new normal will not be affected (Mallilin et. al., 2021).

Sub-Theme 5: Stigma Against the Teachers: Teachers and other people in the student's environment are critical to their academic success. They are responsible for assuring the quality of distance learning modes as well as monitoring students' well-being and academic success. Unfortunately, some students were unable to meet their teachers because they began high school at the same time as the epidemic disrupted the conventional face-to-face setting. This raises the stigma associated with approaching teachers, since they dread being reprimanded if they have done something wrong in the past. Furthermore, they are excessively scared of their performance due to the perceived threat of failure. Even minor achievements are overshadowed by the fear of failing the next assignment or test.

“Whenever I went inside synchronous meetings, I would be very scared to open my mic, my cam, or just do anything. I would just listen there and get, and whenever my name got called and I would, my heart would race so much because I think I did something wrong and stuff like that. My teachers were like distant to me. If they reach out, I would not uhm, replied to them because I feel like I did something wrong to

them and their responses were very cold. They are like robots.”-King

“Ah, every time I join the synchronous meeting, I always feel nervous, ah, that’s me I don’t want to be called to answer, cause I’m afraid I might be wrong. But I’m also wrong that I will not answer. Sometimes, I’ll leave the meeting so I can skip the questions.-Iris

“Whenever I attend a synchronous class too, I always feel nervous that my teacher might call me to answer a question. I don’t really like answering questions, especially in front of other people. It increases the anxiety I’m feeling.”-Cian

“I feel pressured and ashamed of the teacher reminding me always.”-Aoife

“When it comes to the teacher, you look the teacher as a sort of serious.”-Regan

Fear can cause students to have negative physiological (e.g., shortness of breath), cognitive (inability to focus or concentrate, obsessive thinking, replaying problematic incidents from previous classes in their minds), and emotional responses, according to Bledsoe and Baskin (2015). (Easily agitated, overcome by excessive nervousness, frustration, and other negative feelings). When people are this nervous, they are more likely to act out in class, forget their homework, miss a lot of classes, or drop out as soon as something goes wrong.

Sub-Theme 6: Physical and Mental Exhaustion: Due to the academic weight, a lack of relaxation time, and frequent examinations in a stressful atmosphere, students are more likely to face stressors. Normal lessons were canceled, and students were unable to participate in social events, impairing their academic performance and aggravating stress levels (Mosleh *et al.*, 2022). In the new normal, students' physical and mental problems have an impact on their learning process. According to the American Psychological Association (APA) (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic among high school students in the Midwest of the United States has caused 81 percent of Gen Z youth (ages 13–17) to endure more extreme stress. The responses of the Pisay scholars revealed that they experienced physical and mental exhaustion while attending the distance learning modality, and that this directly affected their academic performance.

“It’s definitely my mental health, and procrastination, lots of distractions. Firstly, cause you’re not responsible for your learning at times, even when online.”-Ashlyn

“I procrastinate a lot, which is why I am not able to comply with my requirements. I always run from my responsibilities, and I don’t know why.”-Aoife

“I found it hard to keep up with the submissions, like the activities po, ma’am um, because I don’t know, I lack the motivation to do things, especially like, I’m used to do po, like really like to study, like no joke, ma’am. I really like to study, pero when the pandemic started, and started the classes online, I just couldn’t have the motivation to do anything.”-Cian

The participants discussed their home study experiences and challenges, as well as other issues that affect their academic standing. Time management issues, a lack of resources, a lack of parents, teacher stigma, and physical and emotional tiredness are just a few of them. They struggled to keep up with the lessons because no teacher could assist or advise them. They also have difficulty completing assignments, tasks, modules, and examinations. Disconnections, latency in devices, and a lack of resources all contributed to their bad experiences. The Pisay scholars' responses are similar to Friedman's (2020), who stated in his article that challenges in online learning include technical issues, distraction and time management, staying motivated, understanding course expectations, lack of in-person interaction, adjusting to unfamiliar technology, and uncertainty about the future. Due to the nature of distance learning, students faced difficulties in concentrating in their classes. As the majority of students take online and offline classes at home, the environment and other factors have significantly influenced Pisay Scholars' lived experiences through the distance learning modality. The environment provides a number of clues and crucial extrinsic motivation components to trigger action and stimulate internal motivation. Furthermore, the Pisay Scholars noted issues with distance learning in their learning environment. Students who need to use internet cafés, in particular, become sidetracked. They also find it difficult to learn in their households. The Pisay Scholars encountered power interruptions since distant learning relies on electronic gadgets in this environment. This is especially problematic in locations where disruptions are often. Furthermore, unreliable internet access is one of the most typical issues faced by distance learning students. Geographical location is the most common cause of this problem. The weather can make it worse at times. Another issue that students frequently mention in their comments is a lack of learning tools, overload expectations, and ambiguous course content. As illustrated in the examples above, it has put pupils in a position where they are unable to synthesize concepts due to their skill level without immediate direction from their teachers, which can lead to misinterpretation or repetition of the issue, which can be alarming. In the distant learning approach, students' knowledge of their lessons transfers from teacher-guided to self-study. According to Chin (2020), one of the most common disadvantages of distant learning is a lack of attention and concentration. Students prefer to study at home with little or no supervision, and their attention is diverted rather than focused on their courses. Although distance courses appear to be comparable to face-to-face courses in terms of performance-based outcomes, Allen *et al.*, (2017) discovered that student satisfaction levels in distance courses are significantly lower than those in face-to-face courses, suggesting that these students are more likely to drop out (Levy, 2015; Simpson, 2014).

As shown in the narration of the Pisay scholars' responses, the students expressed concern about their abilities to manage time. The challenges seemed to arise from the amount of communication that attended the distance learning modality. Their sense of their own abilities in this area influenced their experiences. Aside from school-related obligations, the scholars reported that they have additional obligations. On the other hand, some Pisay scholars claim to be entirely concentrated on their studies and to stick to their regimen. While the convenience of home is appealing, distance learning

students have indicated difficulty managing job and family obligations. It separates their time. Their ability to concentrate and complete homework is harmed by their household commitments. Pisay scholars emphasize themselves as a drive to adapt and engage in independent learning as a result of the abrupt change in educational scheme from face-to-face to a distance learning modality approach. They said they deal with such difficulties by forcing themselves to finish and comprehend what they're doing in order to complete the essential activity. Furthermore, the teachers' deadlines worked as a drive for them to complete the assignments. Above all, they establish plans and efforts to address the challenges they have faced. Family is crucial at this stage in resolving pressing and different difficulties so that they can remain adaptable and floating in the face of the pandemic's obstacles. As a result, if they ran into problems, the subject teachers' patience provided them faith that they could keep their enthusiasm despite sporadic, lost, or poor internet access and late submission of learning chores. Surprisingly, family support, notably from their parents, aided them in overcoming such hurdles, boosting their optimism and resourcefulness in doing so, and providing as a personal desire to do better in their academic efforts. When they are unable to consult a family member or their teachers for assistance with difficult activities, they resort to using Google. Participants have stated that they request a load from their parents in order to search for words or content in their modules that they find difficult. Further, when asked if participants prefer distance learning modality classes over conventional learning styles or face-to-face classes, the majority of responses indicate that students prefer traditional learning styles over online programs. Some students, however, stated that they could handle both online and face-to-face lectures. Aside from that, the participants took note of the setting in the distance learning modality sessions and the physical interaction that comes with the conventional learning technique.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a synopsis of the research. It includes important information collected from the findings and debate. It offers generalizations and solutions to the difficulties and goals set out at the outset of the study. It also offers suggestions or remedies to issues raised throughout the research, which focuses on the Pisay scholars' lived experiences at the Philippine Science High School-Caraga Region Campus via distance learning.

Summary of Findings

The COVID-19 pandemic swiftly changed academic institutions all over the world. Administrators and teachers are forced to implement unfamiliar tactics to keep education going. This sudden change affected the learners most. This study specifically tackles the lived experiences of scholars in the Philippine Science High School-Caraga Region Campus (PSHS-CRC) under the distance learning modality. This study revealed that Pisay scholars experienced varied difficulties during the distance learning modality. Two main themes came up from the responses of the scholars. These are the positive and negative experiences. There were six sub-themes generated within each of the themes. The positive experiences

were: (a) convenience of staying at home; (b) flexibility of accessing the learning guides/modules; (c) availability of online resources; (d) support from the family and the school; (e) availability of teachers' intervention; and (f) adapting to change. On the other hand, the subthemes of negative experiences were: (a) problems at home; (b) poor time management; (c) lack of resources; (d) absence of parents; (e) stigma against the teachers; and (f) physical and mental exhaustion. According to the findings, a school-based intervention program is required to assist students in improving their academic performance and to focus on promoting appropriate intervention for struggling distance learners.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that Pisay scholars face a variety of issues and challenges when using remote learning. The majority of respondents said they had problems with internet access while taking synchronous classes. They don't have the resources or materials necessary to complete their distance learning course. They required more knowledgeable individuals to explain or narrow basic concepts. Due to the sporadic distractions that arise from time to time, the home learning environment is detrimental to their learning process when using the distant learning modality. Before they can comply with the school's task, they must attend to domestic chores and other equally vital personal problems. Their mental health was clearly one of the most pressing issues they faced during this period. From what they said, it is clear that they get nervous at the synchronous meetings because they are afraid, they will be called on to answer questions during the recitation. Despite all of these contacts, students create their own stress-relieving and burnout-prevention strategies. They ultimately adjust and deliberate on how to deal with the new school's obstacles. This distance learning modality aided the Pisay scholars in becoming more independent in their learning and learning more about new real-life ventures; the learning of new things they did not know were manifestations that their experiences on the distance learning modality were not merely a creation of their minds but true experiences. An intervention program is vital for these scholars to alleviate their negative experiences and improve their academic standing as well. School-based intervention programs may help influence scholars to have positive experiences during the school setup where face-to-face is not feasible yet. The learning process of students is aided by a pleasant learning environment. This includes the support of immediate family and friends, whom a scholar can contact at any moment. Parents, guardians, peers, and teachers make up this group. Teachers should receive intensive competence training, as well as parenting courses for both teachers and parents/guardians on how to deal with gifted children.

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