



# Community Support on Education During the Pandemic

<sup>1</sup>Nelissa M. Solina & <sup>2</sup>Sergio F. Tolentino III

## Abstract

This study explored the community support to education during the pandemic using participatory qualitative research design, deemed as the most appropriate as it refers to all the techniques and approaches that involve the direct collaboration of researcher and those affected by the social issues being studied to bring about an action that will result in a positive change. Simply put, it is an umbrella term for research methods or frameworks that involves working with the research subjects to collect data, analyze it, and make recommendations. Based on the findings of the study, various issues and challenges were experienced by the stakeholders in rendering support in order to assure the continuity of education during the pandemic. The themes under challenges include financial constraints, limited social mobilization, health protocols that caused delays, limited resources and disparate opinions with other stakeholders. However, various best practices were identified which can be utilized by schools to strengthened school-community partnerships especially during crisis. Identified themes indicate that recognition, keeping the stakeholders updated and the expression of gratitude have vital role to encourage more support from the community. Additionally, this study proposes a sustainability plan which can be utilized to encourage more community support. It also provides insights and recommendations to strengthen school-community partnership to assure continuity of education in whatever circumstance but most especially during crisis.

**Keywords:** *Community Support to education, Education during the pandemic, Issues and challenges, Sustainability plan*

## Article History:

*Received:* April 30, 2023

*Accepted:* June 5, 2023

*Revised:* May 20, 2023

*Published online:* July 31, 2023

## Suggested Citation:

Solina, N.M. & Tolentino, S.F. (2023). Community Support on Education During the Pandemic. *Industry and Academic Research Review*, 4 (1), 450-455.

## About the authors:

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding Author. Master of Arts in Education, Teacher I at Gibon Elementary School, Nabas, Aklan, 5609 Philippines. Corresponding email: [nelissa.mercano001@deped.gov.ph](mailto:nelissa.mercano001@deped.gov.ph)

<sup>2</sup>Doctor of Philosophy, Associate Professor II, Director of Alumni and Public Relations, Aklan State University, 5600 Philippines

*\*This paper is presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Multidisciplinary Industry and Academic Research (ICMLAR)-2023*



© The author (s). Published by Institute of Industry and Academic Research Incorporated.

This is an open-access article published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license, which grants anyone to reproduce, redistribute and transform, commercially or non-commercially, with proper attribution. Read full license details here: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

## Introduction

COVID-19 has profoundly altered education at all levels-with extensive schools' closures, remote instruction, and controversies over public health policies in schools. But innovative responses to the pandemic have also revealed the strength of communities in tackling disrupted learning, and ensuring educational success more broadly. Schools should welcome community members and see them as the source of innovation, inspiration, and support that they have proven to be (Banerji and Selah, 2022). The Department of Education Secretary Leonor Briones which the researcher fully agrees with: "We must act together and learn from the past." Effective strategies wouldn't bear much fruit, however, without innovativeness and cooperation among all school stakeholders. This calls for maximum support from all possible linkages that schools had established. The school needs partners to minimize the burdens it carries and help it to build linkages to provide possible solutions to concerns. The community can be recognized as an asset where they could share their resources, time, and talents as a contributory factor to support the school (Nacino, 2022).

To cope with the new normal, Gibon Elementary School was demanded with major adjustments in the process of teaching, drastic shift of teaching modality and multiple turnarounds were at hand when the pandemic had broken up. Through a convergence meeting held with the members of the community the school presented issues that needs to be address together with the school's stakeholders. School preparations, additional resources for learning material production, delivery of instruction and parent's involvement in home learning are some of the many issues that need urgent response.

During the course of the pandemic, school's internal resources cannot cope up the needs and demands in order to deliver quality education in the absence of face-to-face instruction. More so, many more factors have to be considered for the success of implementation. External support from the community can alleviate the burden among teachers and school head.

In this lieu, the researcher aims to know what are the community supports extended, identify the issues and challenges that impede the flourishing and generation of community support, and what are best practices employed by the school authorities to encourage support and enable school's stakeholders into action in supporting the continuity of education. Additionally,

the findings of this research study will serve as basis as how community support in times of pandemic and beyond.

## **Methodology**

Participatory Research, a qualitative research-to-action approach that emphasizes direct engagement of local priorities and perspectives (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). Participatory Research can be defined as an umbrella term for research designs, methods, and frameworks that use systematic inquiry in direct collaboration with those affected by the issue being studied for the purpose of action or change (Cargo & Mercer, 2008). Participatory Research prioritizes co-constructing research through partnerships between researchers and stakeholders, community members, or others with insider knowledge and lived expertise (Jagosh et al., 2012).

Participants in this study were invited for an individual interview, the researcher used guiding questions to determine the community support, the issues and challenges encountered by the participants, and the best practices that encouraged them to render support to education during the pandemic. This study was conducted at Gibon Elementary School, in the municipality of Nabas, Aklan with a total population of 379 pupils, 15 teachers and 1 school head. The school has a total land area of 6,188 sq. meters.

The participants of this study were seven community members/stakeholders of Gibon Elementary School and whom I purposively chose based on the criteria. Participant #1 is a Local Government Unit Member and Barangay's Co-chair of Committee on Education; Participant #2 is the president of General Parent-Teacher Association; Participant #3 is a Senior Pastor for Christ is the Answer Church-Gibon; Participant #4 is an Alumni Officer representing Alumni Association of Gibon ES; Participant #5 is one of parents of Gibon ES; Participant #6 also one of the alumni of the school and represents social group particularly Triskelion Brotherhood; and Participants #7 is an entrepreneur that represents business sectors who support the school. I used pseudo names to protect the identity of the participants.

The following criteria are considered in choosing the participants: Participant is a community member of Barangay Gibon; Participant is willing to participate; and Participant rendered support in school during the pandemic. The participants were properly oriented regarding the nature of the study and its purpose. The benefits and advantages of the research were also discussed to the participants. Checking and thorough scrutiny were made to warrant that every instrument upon retrieval is fully accomplished.

To ensure confidentiality, the researcher personally conducted the survey. After the questionnaires were accomplished, questionnaires were examined to find out if there were questions left unanswered. Incompletely answered questionnaires were returned to the respondents personally for completion. The data gathered were recorded.

## **Findings**

The pandemic had raised various demands in order to assure the continuity of education. The support of the community during the pandemic is a huge help for the school to leverage the effect of the situation. However, some of the stakeholders also experience the upshot of the pandemic and experience financial constraints. On the other hand, the importance of spiritual support was emphasized. In rendering their donations following the instructions and protocols must be observed to ensure the welfare of pupils as identified in one theme. They also express their readiness to support the school during the pandemic.

There were several issues and difficulties encountered by the stakeholders in rendering their support. Some had issues on the limited social mobilization. Some expressed that health protocols caused delay. Some had limited resources and some came across about the disparate opinions with other stakeholders.

There were best practices employed and were personally experienced by the participants. It helped to encourage more support from the community by keeping the stakeholders updated of the donations/support, stakeholders are well recognized and school's expression of gratitude through social media.

After identifying the challenges encountered, I came up with a Sustainability Plan which will bear the plan of actions to strengthen the school and community partnership and build a well-founded reliance especially during uncertain situations.

## **Conclusion**

The community has an important role in the success of the school children. Their support is vital in achieving the goal of education. Though the participants had encountered issues and challenges in rendering their support during the pandemic, their readiness to support is commendable.

The issues and challenges experienced by the community in rendering support to education were just normal because of the adjustments caused by the pandemic. It shows that the stakeholders-participants ventured and were willing enough just to support the education during the pandemic.

Best practices are the most sensible way to proceed. It is an effective tool to create a system of easy yet effective way to achieve the goal. The best practices employed by Gibon Elementary School is of great help it paves way for boundless opportunities for education to continue amidst the pandemic.

A well-established partnership between the community and school can be strengthened when there is a proper planning and cooperation among members of the community which includes various sectors like religious sector, NGO, Parent Association, Alumni, LGU and etc.

## References

- Alomes, B. (2020). "The Importance of Stakeholders When it Comes to Creating Successful Learning Outcomes." <https://naturalpod.com/the-importance-of-stakeholders-when-it-comes-to-creating-successful-learning-outcomes/> (2022, December 10)
- Banerji, B. & Saleh, A. (2022). "The Power of Community as a Catalyst to Tackle Disrupted Learning". <http://www.adi.org.journal/CurrentIssue/CurrentIssue.pdf> (2022, July 9)
- Coppola, I., Rania, N., et al (2021) Spiritual Well-Being and Mental Health During the Covid-19". <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33868047/> (2022, July 9)
- Henderson, A. (2020). "Covid-19 Outbreak Highlights Critical Gaps in School Emergency Preparedness". [http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB11\\_ParentInvolvement08.pdf](http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB11_ParentInvolvement08.pdf) (2022, July 30)
- Hughes, D. (2021). "The importance of Stakeholder's Communication in Special Education". <https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-importance-of-stakeholder-communication-in-special-education.html> (2022, December 10)
- International Survey Associates (2016). "Why Community Involvement in Schools is Important." <https://www.pridesurveys.com/index.php/blog/community-involvement-in-schools/> (2022, July 30)
- Iyengar, (2021). "Rethinking Community Participation Post Covid-19" <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11125-020-09538-2> (2022, July 10)

- Li, D., Nyhan, K., et. al. (2022). “School Closures and Re-Openings During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Scoping review Protocol”. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8811274/> (2022, July 9)
- Marston, C., Renedo, A., et. al (2020). “Community Participation is Crucial in a Pandemic.” <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7198202/> (2022, December 10)
- Nacino J. A. (2022). “Stakeholders Collaboration in the New Normal Education: A Necessity!” <https://www.deped-ne.net.ph/2022/02/10/stakeholders-collaboration-in-the-new-normal-education-a-necessity/> (2022, July 10)
- Rothschild, L. (2021). “Engaging the Stakeholders During the Covid-19” <https://universitybusiness.com/engaging-stakeholders-during-covid-19/> (2022, July 30)
- Roundy, L. (2022). “Urie Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological System Theory.” <https://study.com/academy/lesson/brofenbrenners-ecological-system-theory-of-development-definition-example.html>
- Saavedra, L. (2020). “Educational Strategies and Opportunities of Covid-19 Pandemic”. (2022, July 9)
- Saunders, H. (2020). “Global Partnership of Education”. <https://uk.linkedin.com/in/heather-saunders-66b03030>
- Schleicher, A (2020). “The Impact of Covid-19 to Education: Insights from Education at a Glance” <https://www.oecd.org/education/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-education-insights-education-at-a-glance-2020.pdf> (2023, January 7)
- Strausser, R. (2022). “It Takes a Village: Understanding and Explaining the Concept”. <https://www.steeredstraight.org/it-takes-a-village-to-raise-a-child/> (2022, July 29)
- Vegas E., & Winthrop R., “Beyond Re-opening Schools: How the School Can Emerge After Covid-19”. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/beyond-reopening-schools-how-education-can-emerge-stronger-than-before-covid-19/> (2022, July 9)
- Vaughn, L. M., & Jacquez, F. (2020). Participatory Research Methods – Choice Points in the Research Process. *Journal of Participatory Research Methods*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.35844/001c.13244/> (2022, July 9)