Voice of Resilience: A Case Study on Parental Experiences and Educational Interventions for a Homebound Learner with Cerebral Palsy

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ABSTRACT

This case study explored the lived experiences of a parent supporting the education of a homebound learner with cerebral palsy, focusing on the educational interventions, resources, and coping mechanisms they employed. Through an interview with a mother of a 7-year-old child with cerebral palsy, the study highlighted the challenges of balancing caregiving and teaching roles, the barriers to accessing tailored educational materials, and the limited support from educational institutions. Findings revealed that while the school-provided modules helped, they were not adapted to meet the specific needs of children with disabilities. The parent faced financial and geographical barriers to accessing specialized resources and therapy services. The study emphasized the importance of regular teacher check-ins, parent training programs, and community support in addressing these challenges. The research drew on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Resilience Theory, offering a comprehensive view of the complex factors affecting homebound learners. Recommendations included creating more inclusive educational materials, regular communication between parents and teachers, and providing affordable resources and training. This study contributed to understanding the dynamics of home-based education for children with cerebral palsy and provided practical recommendations for improving support systems for families in similar situations.

Keywords: Homebound learners, cerebral palsy, parental experiences, educational intervention

INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental human right, yet many children with disabilities, particularly those with cerebral palsy (CP), encounter significant barriers in accessing quality education (Oguntade et al., 2022). Cerebral palsy, a lifelong neurological condition that affects movement, posture, and motor skills, presents unique challenges that require tailored educational strategies and support systems (Novak, 2014). For homebound learners with CP, these challenges are compounded by physical limitations, lack of access to inclusive learning environments, and the unavailability of specialized resources and adaptive technologies (Almazroui, 2023). In such cases, parents often assume the dual roles of caregivers and educators, becoming pivotal in their children's educational journey. Despite their essential role, the voices of these parents are often underrepresented in educational research, leaving critical gaps in understanding their lived experiences, struggles, and the support systems they need to facilitate meaningful learning for their children.

Parents of homebound learners with CP face numerous challenges, including financial constraints, emotional stress, and the need to navigate complex healthcare and educational systems (Beasley, 2020). These challenges are often exacerbated by the lack of tailored educational interventions and insufficient guidance on

implementing effective strategies in home-based settings. According to Cochrane Effective Practice and Organisation of Care Group (2023), although various academic programs and interventions for learners with disabilities have been developed, research on their effectiveness and accessibility for homebound learners with CP remains limited. Furthermore, existing studies frequently isolate either the medical or educational aspects of cerebral palsy, neglecting the intricate ways in which these factors interact to shape educational outcomes (Lindsay, 2016). This fragmentation leaves a void in understanding the holistic needs of learners with CP and their families (Ftizgerald, Follet, & Van Asperen, 2009).

Homebound students with cerebral palsy and their families encounter particular difficulties that are frequently ignored by educational policies and practices (Almazroui, 2023). Many current policies prioritize including children with disabilities in regular school environments, which leaves a big vacuum in meeting the needs of people who are unable to go to school because of mobility, health, or other limitations (Katzmann, 2010). Additionally, Nanquil (2021) stated that there is still a lack of specialized training for parents and teachers to assist in home-based education, which makes it more difficult for families to satisfy their children's learning needs. The absence of strong support networks, such as community-based services and adaptable technology, increases the strain on families, who must deal with these issues mostly alone (Edwards-Fapohunda & Adediji, 2024). Current methods contribute to educational disparities that disproportionately impact homebound students with cerebral palsy and their families by ignoring these systemic obstacles.

This study addresses these gaps by amplifying the voices of parents who demonstrate resilience in the face of these challenges. First, it examines the lived experiences of parents supporting the education of their homebound children with CP, providing a comprehensive understanding of their daily realities and struggles (Lindsay, 2016; Almazroui, 2023). Parents often report feeling isolated and overwhelmed by the dual responsibilities of caregiving and facilitating their child's education, highlighting the need for greater emotional and social support systems (Beasley, 2020). Second, it evaluates the accessibility and efficacy of educational interventions and resources currently available to these learners. Despite advancements in adaptive technologies and individualized education programs, many parents find these tools either unaffordable or inadequately suited to the unique needs of homebound learners (Cochrane, 2023; Nanquil, 2021). Third, the study explores how parents cope with the multifaceted demands—physical, emotional, and financial—of providing home-based education. Coping mechanisms vary widely and are influenced by factors such as socioeconomic status, the availability of community resources, and personal resilience (Edwards-Fapohunda & Adediji, 2024). Finally, the study identifies parents' recommendations for addressing systemic gaps in educational policies and practices. These recommendations are crucial for informing targeted interventions that can alleviate the burden on families and improve learning outcomes for children with CP (Oguntade et al., 2022; Katzmann, 2010). By addressing these areas, this research provides a holistic perspective on the educational experiences of homebound learners with CP and their families, offering valuable insights for creating inclusive, supportive, and effective educational frameworks

Theoretical Lens

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Resilience Theory are used to analyze this study in order to offer a thorough framework for comprehending the experiences of parents and educational interventions for homebound students with cerebral palsy. Insights into the intricate, multi-layered factors influencing these students' and their families' educational journeys are provided by these complementary ideas.

According to *Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory*, interactions between many environmental layers—from the local microsystem (family and home) to the larger macrosystem (cultural and societal influences)—shape a child's development (Velez-Agosto, 2017). This theory is especially pertinent when analyzing how parents function as the microsystem's primary caregivers and educators and how external systems—like healthcare providers, educational institutions, and policy frameworks—affect the availability and caliber of educational interventions (Kirpitci & Arabaci, 2024). Using this perspective, the study aims to comprehend how interrelated systems work together to help or hurt homebound students with cerebral palsy as they learn.

Additionally, *Resilience Theory* focuses on the capacity of individuals and families to adapt and thrive despite adversity (Master, 2018). This lens highlights the strengths, coping mechanisms, and strategies employed by

parents to navigate the challenges of raising and educating children with cerebral palsy in a homebound setting (Hubach, 2020). Resilience Theory allows for an exploration of how parents sustain their roles under physical, emotional, and financial pressures, while also identifying protective factors that enhance their capacity to overcome these obstacles (Van Breda, 2018).

When combined, these theories offer a comprehensive knowledge of the phenomenon being studied. Resilience theory emphasizes parents' inherent qualities and adaptability, while ecological systems theory places their experiences in a larger social and institutional framework. This dual viewpoint guarantees that the study not only documents the structural obstacles and factors that impact parental duties, but also honors the fortitude and initiative of parents in promoting the education and welfare of their children.

Conceptual Flow

The researchers depicted the conceptual flow based on the important milestones in finishing this investigation. A key informant was chosen by the researchers through convenience sampling. An identified parent of a homebound learner with cerebral palsy was interviewed in-depth by the researchers. Following that, the researchers utilized narrative analysis to analyze a single interview response and then provide their findings along with a discussion. A qualitative research technique called narrative analysis is used to evaluate and analyze people's stories in order to comprehend their social reality, values, and experiences (Josselson & Hammack, 2021). In order to find deeper meanings and patterns in how people interpret their lives and the world around them, this method focuses on the structure, content, and context of tales (Herman & Vervaeck, 2019). Based on the findings, the researchers suggested implications for theory and recommendations to encourage educational key players to take part in assisting or enhancing the innovative teaching approaches of teachers in teaching students with special needs. Figure 1 shows the conceptual flow of the study.
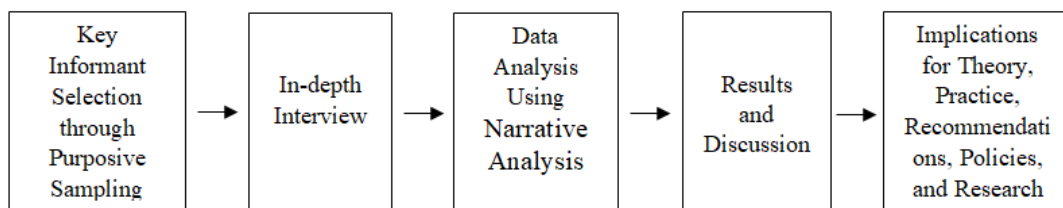

Figure1. Conceptual Flow of the study

Research Questions

This study explored parental experiences and educational interventions for homebound learners with cerebral palsy. The following questions were considered for a thorough discussion:

1. What is the lived experience of a parent in supporting the education of their homebound child with cerebral palsy?

2. What educational interventions and resources are currently accessible to a homebound learner with cerebral palsy?

3. How does a parent cope with the physical, emotional, and financial demands of providing home-based education for their child with cerebral palsy?

4. What recommendations can a parent provide to address the gaps in supporting the education of their homebound child with cerebral palsy?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In the pursuit of this research, a case study was employed. This case study aimed to comprehensively explore parental experiences and educational interventions for homebound learner with cerebral palsy. The research

design is qualitative, utilizing a holistic case study approach to delve deeply into the intricate dynamics, contextual factors, and experiences surrounding the innovative teaching approaches of teachers in teaching students with special needs (Crowe, Cresswell & Robertson et al., 2011).

Research Locale

This study was conducted at Matina Pangi Elementary School, situated within the Maa District of Davao City Division. Matina Pangi Elementary School served as the primary setting for investigating parental experiences and educational interventions for homebound learner with cerebral palsy. The choice of this locale provided a specific and focused context within the educational landscape of Davao City, allowing for an in-depth examination of the parental experience and educational interventions for a homebound learner with cerebral palsy in this particular elementary school. The school's unique characteristics, demographic composition, and institutional resources will contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the application of Ecological Systems Theory and Resiliency Theory in special education within the local context.

Sampling Techniques

This study used the convenience sampling strategy to select "information rich" key informant for the key informants' interview, which included one (1) parent of a SNED student with cerebral palsy. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where participants are selected based on their easy accessibility and proximity to the researcher. This method involves choosing readily available individuals (Khan, 2020).

Research Instrument

A researcher-made interview guide was used as the main instrument to describe the parental experiences and educational interventions for a homebound learner with cerebral palsy. The central theme of this study was directed by its several sub-questions. The interview guide was validated and enhanced by three (3) Master Teachers, who were equally competent in their respective field of work, research experts, well-specialized in teaching language, and with backgrounds in Special Needs Education. After this, the validated guide questions were tried out with two Special Needs Education parents who were not part of the qualitative sample.

Data Collection Procedure

This study followed a methodical approach to gathering data. The first stage was to formally obtain permission to conduct the study from the School Principal of Matina Pangi Elementary School, Maa District, Davao City Division. This was done through a formal letter. Second, after the approval, an informed consent form was provided to the key informant. Third, in-depth interviews were done with the key informants to collect thorough data. Fourth, Narrative analysis was used to analyze the response of the key informant of the case study by the researchers. Lastly, the resulting themes were tabulated and presented with in-depth conversations that accompanied them.

Data Analysis

The research transcribed the recorded audio and video tapes. This involved a detailed process of converting spoken words and visual content into written form, ensuring accuracy in capturing the nuances of the participants' responses. Then Narrative analysis strategy was used. It focused on how people make sense of their experiences through stories where the goal is to weave together the responses in a way that highlights the meaning behind the informants' accounts, capturing both the content and the structure of the narratives (Lim, 2024).

In the context of a case study, researchers started by becoming familiar with the data through repeated readings and open coding. Key statements were identified, and thematic clusters were formed to highlight patterns within the information. These themes were organized into categories, contributing to the development of a comprehensive description of the case under investigation. Throughout this process, researchers aimed to

maintain rigor and coherence in the analysis. The final results were validated by comparing them with the original data, ensuring the accuracy and fidelity of the findings to the specifics of the case study.

Ethical Considerations

In the course of conducting this study, meticulous attention was given to ethical considerations, encompassing informed consent, confidentiality, justice, and conflict of interest. Informed consent, a crucial ethical tenet, involves a voluntary and comprehensive process, ensuring participants are adequately informed about the research, understand the information provided, and have the freedom to choose whether to participate or decline (Conelly, 2014). The researchers secured participants' agreement after a detailed explanation of the research process, using channels such as Facebook Messenger and face-to-face communication. Confidentiality, integral to participant protection, was maintained by safeguarding and protecting the identities of the participants, thus upholding the principle of confidentiality (Arifin, 2018). The principle of justice, emphasizing fairness, was upheld by respecting participants' convenience during data collection, ensuring no exploitation or coercion took place (Orb et al., 2001). Moreover, to mitigate potential conflict of interest, researchers maintained objectivity by positioning themselves outside the participants' responses, thereby avoiding any personal, financial, political, or academic influence on the study (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings from the analysis of the interview data are presented in this chapter. The narratives that come out of the analysis are presented. The topics are accompanied by in-depth talks that address the study's goals. In this chapter, we talked about the narrative that emerged from the collected data. The primary presentation of the results is the background and description of the participants, who were given pseudonyms to maintain anonymity.

Lived Experiences of Supporting a Homebound Learner

The mother's day-to-day life revolves around her child's education. She reflects, *"Each day, I set aside time to work on the modules with my child. We go through the lessons together—I read the instructions, help them understand the tasks, and guide them as they answer."* Despite her best efforts, the process is not without challenges: *"It's not always easy because their condition makes it harder for them to focus, but we take it slowly."*

For her, the reward lies in her child's small victories: *"The most rewarding part is seeing how proud my child is when they complete a module."* However, the dual role she plays as a teacher and caregiver is demanding: *"I rarely have time for myself because I'm either working or helping my child with school. Socializing with friends or taking a break feels like a luxury I can't afford."*

The dual role of being both a caregiver and an educator is a common challenge for parents of children with disabilities, as they often must adapt to the educational and developmental needs of their children while balancing personal and professional responsibilities (Wall, 2010). Engelen (2017) highlights that parents in such roles frequently experience heightened levels of stress and reduced personal time, as caregiving responsibilities can dominate their daily lives. Despite these challenges, the intrinsic rewards of witnessing their child's progress and achievements serve as a vital source of motivation and resilience, echoing findings that parental involvement fosters not only the child's learning but also strengthens the parent-child bond (Gonzalez-DeHass, 2019).

Barriers in Educational Accessibility

The mother depends on school-provided modules, which she describes as *"helpful but very basic, and they don't cater to the specific needs of children with disabilities."* Access to additional tools or therapy is constrained by financial limitations and rural location. She shares, *"The modules are free, which is a big help given our financial situation. However, the format can be challenging because they aren't adapted for children with cerebral palsy."*

Another notable barrier is the infrequency of teacher visits: *"The two-month gap between teacher visits feels too long, leaving me with unanswered questions about how to improve my child's learning."*

The reliance on generic, school-provided modules often fails to meet the unique educational needs of children with disabilities, as such materials are typically designed for neurotypical learners rather than those requiring specialized approaches (McCormack, 2019). Studies emphasize that limited accessibility to tailored resources and professional support, especially in rural areas, exacerbates the challenges faced by parents, leaving them to adapt and modify educational tools independently (Darling-Hammond, 2020). Additionally, infrequent teacher engagement, such as bi-monthly visits, can hinder consistent progress and leave parents feeling unsupported, underscoring the importance of regular, individualized guidance in home-based education settings (Robertson, 2006).

Coping Mechanisms and Support Systems

The mother has developed practical strategies to manage her dual roles. She says, *"I schedule our day so that I can balance my barangay health duties with my child's needs."* Emotional stress is alleviated through faith and small joys: *"I pray a lot, and that helps me stay strong. Watching a movie with my child or talking with other parents in similar situations also helps."*

Support from her family, particularly her husband, provides relief when tasks become physically demanding. Community support, while limited, is valued: *"There's a small parents' group in our barangay for families with special needs children, and it's been helpful to share experiences and advice with them.*

Parents of children with disabilities often employ adaptive coping mechanisms, such as structured routines, emotional regulation strategies, and reliance on social support networks, to navigate the complexities of caregiving (Akande, 2024). Walsh (2015) highlights that faith and community engagement are key sources of emotional resilience, helping parents manage stress and maintain a sense of purpose despite the challenges they encounter. Family support, especially from partners, plays a crucial role in alleviating the physical demands of caregiving, reinforcing the value of shared responsibilities (Schulzet al., 2020). Additionally, Breiner, Ford, & Gadsden (2016) emphasized that even limited community support, such as parent groups, fosters a sense of belonging and offers practical advice, which can greatly enhance coping strategies and the overall well-being of parents.

Recommendations for Improved Support

The mother highlights the lack of tailored resources: *"The modules are designed for neurotypical students, so I have to adjust them on my own."* She suggests, *"Training programs for parents on how to teach children with special needs would also help. It would be great if teachers could visit more frequently or provide regular check-ins online or by phone."*

On educational policy, she recommends, *"Providing free or low-cost learning tools and therapy services for homebound learners."* She advocates for more inclusive materials and better community support, emphasizing, *"With more support, our children could reach their full potential."*

The mother's reflections underscore the critical need for more inclusive educational resources and specialized support for children with disabilities (Beñalet, 2024) . This consistently highlights the gap between the available resources and the specific needs of children with cerebral palsy, emphasizing that materials designed for neurotypical learners are often insufficient (Walker et al., 2020). Their suggestion for parent training programs aligns with studies that show how equipping parents with the necessary skills enhances the educational outcomes of children with special needs (Fischer, Barnes, Kilpatrick, 2019). Additionally, the call for more frequent teacher visits and affordable resources resonates with broader recommendations for improving educational equity (Ishimaru, 2019), particularly for families in rural or underserved areas, to ensure that children with disabilities have access to the support they need to thrive (Wahyudi, 2024).

IMPLICATIONS

Implications for Theory

The combination of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Resilience Theory provides a nuanced framework for understanding the experiences of parents supporting homebound learners with cerebral palsy. Bronfenbrenner's theory emphasizes the interconnectedness of various environmental layers, such as family, healthcare, and educational systems, which collectively influence a child's development. This perspective allows for a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics between parents, their immediate environment, and external systems like schools and policy frameworks that affect the educational opportunities available to homebound learners.

On the other hand, Resilience Theory focuses on the adaptive capacities of individuals and families facing adversity. It highlights how parents employ coping mechanisms and strategies to manage the physical, emotional, and financial challenges of raising and educating children with cerebral palsy. Together, these theories suggest that supporting homebound learners requires a holistic approach that addresses both individual resilience and the larger social and institutional systems influencing these families' experiences.

Implications for Practice

This study highlights several important changes that can improve support for homebound learners with cerebral palsy and their families. First, schools should create educational materials that are specifically designed for children with cerebral palsy, so they can better understand the lessons. Teachers also need special training to help parents who are both caregivers and educators at home, making sure they have the right tools to support their children.

The study also shows that parents need more regular support from teachers and healthcare providers. Instead of waiting for a visit every few months, parents should have more frequent check-ins, either in person or online, to get advice and support. Local community groups for parents can also help by sharing experiences and offering guidance. Finally, government policies should focus on providing affordable learning tools, therapy services, and training for parents, so families can give their children the best education possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teaching and Non-Teaching Personnel - Teachers and school staff should be trained to better support students with cerebral palsy, especially by adapting lessons and materials to fit their needs. They should also stay in regular contact with parents, offering guidance on how to help their children learn at home. Non-teaching staff can assist by helping families access resources, like special learning tools or therapy.

School Leaders - School leaders should focus on creating a more inclusive environment by developing resources for students with disabilities. They should make sure teachers visit or check in with parents more often to offer support. It's also important for school leaders to work with local organizations to give families the extra help they need.

Stakeholders - Community groups, including healthcare providers and local organizations, should work with schools to support homebound learners. They can provide extra services like therapy and educational materials, helping families who face financial and other challenges. By working together, these groups can create a stronger support system for students.

DepEd Leaders / Policymakers - The Department of Education (DepEd) should make sure that schools offer learning materials specifically designed for students with disabilities. They should also provide training for parents so they know how to help their children with special needs. Policymakers should find ways to provide more affordable learning tools and therapy services, especially for families in rural areas.

Future Researchers - Future researchers should look into how home-based education affects the learning and social development of children with cerebral palsy. They could study what kind of support (like teacher visits or training for parents) works best for these students. Research could also explore how online tools can help students with disabilities continue their learning at home.

Consent

In adherence to ethical standards, all authors affirm securing explicit, written informed consent from the study participant (or authorized representatives) for the publication of this study and any accompanying images. This rigorous consent process underscores our commitment to respecting participants' rights and privacy in disseminating research findings.

Ethical Approval

All authors assert the scrupulous adherence to ethical standards throughout the study's execution. Proper citation and acknowledgment of all relevant authors were diligently undertaken, with a meticulous approach to paraphrasing articles to substantiate findings while maintaining content integrity. Furthermore, strict confidentiality protocols were rigorously observed in the course of this research.

Competing Interests

The authors assert the absence of any competing interests.

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