

PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND LIVED EXPERIENCES ABOUT ONLINE LEARNING IN
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION: A TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study is to understand the perceptions and lived experiences of public elementary school parents concerning online learning instruction for their children in the Center for Adoption Support and Education. The study will include 15 participants. The study will help gain insight into the experiences that parents have when their children take online courses. The theory guiding the study will be the community of inquiry framework. This theory supports blended learning and an online learning environment. It will also be relevant in evaluating public elementary school parents' lived experiences and perceptions concerning online learning instruction for their children. A transcendental phenomenology will be selected as the research design. It will be used to research the live experiences of the participants. The study will use interviews, a focused group, and document analysis in collecting data. The study will implement the modified van Kaam approach from a phenomenological perspective to analyze the data.

Keywords: Online learning, parents' perceptions, K-5 students, COVID-19 pandemic, self-efficacy, social

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Dedication

I am immensely grateful to God for the life and the energy provided to me and my educational journey from kindergarten through my doctoral.

I dedicate this work to my parents, who gave me moral lessons on discipline from an earlier age, which has helped me tremendously in my studies. Without them, my goals, hope, and aspirations have been lost. My parents, Mr. George Owusu and Madam Mercy Boatemaa, always call me to find out about the stage I have reached in my doctoral studies.

I also dedicate this work to my mentor, Dr. Sharon Michael-Chadwell. Dr. Sharon was the guiding light every step of the way as I researched for this dissertation. Her motivation and encouragement have been phenomenal.

To my wife, Hannah, God bless you, and to my daughter, Miracle, may you pursue knowledge throughout your life.

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I thank my family for helping me so much during this process. My wife, Hannah, has supported me from the day we married through my BA, MEd, and now my doctorate. Her endless support means more than she will know. My daughter, Miracle, inspired me to continue even when it seemed I would never make it. My parents, Mr. George Owusu and Madam Mercy Boatemaa have been my backbone and source of encouragement throughout my education journey. My supervisor at the Center for Adoption Support and Education, Mrs. Dawn Wilson, and my uncle Mr. William Tenkorang have been a great motivation for this doctoral educational journey.

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List of Abbreviations

Below is a list of abbreviations in the study.

Community of Inquiry (CoI)

Massive open online course (MOOC)

United States (US)

United States of America (USA)

Online collaborative learning (OCL)

Information Communication Technology (ICT)

Learning Management System (LMS)

Course Management System (CMS)

Central Research Question (CRQ)

Computer-Based Training (CBT)

Sub-Question (SQ)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Over the past, technology has impacted education by enabling the phenomenal growth of online learning in K-12 education (Dhawan, 2020). Parents of elementary students play a vital role in online education. With so many responsibilities they play, it is imperative to explore elementary school parents' perceptions and lived experiences concerning online learning instruction for their children. This chapter presents the background of the study. It will include supported relevant literature in the field and the industry. This chapter also incorporates theoretical concepts and principles covering the domain of the study, the problem statement, a purpose statement, the significance of the study, the research questions, definitions of terms, and a summary of the chapter.

Background

Online learning refers to using technology and appropriate pedagogy to achieve educational goals (Kong & Song, 2015). The pedagogy aspect demonstrates a process where learners in the learning environment use technology digitally to access and share resources. There has been a massive change in the field of online education. In the past, teaching and learning were limited to a physical classroom. Technological advancement and the availability of the internet brought a new way of instruction and learning (Sarkar, 2020). Students and teachers have been key players when it comes to online learning. However, when considering students in elementary school, parents cannot be exempted from the planning and implementation of such a program.

Parents play a vital role in ensuring that their children participate in online learning (Serhan, 2010). Online learning is growing from higher education to the K-12. More students

now enroll and take online courses. Therefore, it is crucial to pay attention to parents' concerns when their children are transitioning from brick-and-mortar schools to the online format. It is necessary to review parents' perspectives of elementary online learners (Serhan, 2010). Also, the background section presents the most relevant literature with emphasis on the historical, social, and theoretical context of online learning.

Historical Context

Online learning is traced back to 1960 at the University of Illinois in the United States of America. At that time, there was no internet availability. Students started learning from interlinked computer terminals that formed a network (Sarkar, 2020). Online learning is a form of providing education that enables users to collaborate irrespective of their locations. It is also a way of arranging learning opportunities for learners by employing the internet (Rhim & Han, 2020). The first fully online course was provided in 1984 by the University of Toronto. In the last two decades, online learning enrollment has increased in higher education, and many studies conducted (Allen & Seaman, 2017). There are studies conducted in the past about perceptions and preferences of online learning platforms. For example, the Kirby et al. (2012) study presented students' perceptions and preferences about online learning. However, few known works cover students and areas in elementary schools.

Elementary school teachers considering students learning progress will make pedagogical decisions and identify their weaknesses and strengths compared to peers learning outcomes. Online learning involves a collaboration of multiple teams to put together a diversity of teaching and learning avenues for ensuring quality implementation (Vandenhouten et al., 2014). A partnership is necessary for collaboration among online learning representatives involved in a school building

This study will investigate the lived experience parents of online learners have about online learning in elementary education. The study will also explore the available support and concerns parents have about online learning and likely provide a solution on how parents can share responsibilities with schools to ensure effective communication among parents and schools to ensure a productive online learning environment. According to Lee and Chae (2007), the problem of elementary students' parents' concerns about online learning has existed for decades. Many parents do not belong to the digital age citizenship like the children who are the generation with considerable technology experience. These parents may feel discomfort or uncertainty and lack a model when guiding and supervising their children's online learning sessions (Anastasiades et al., 2008).

Social Context

Parents might have issues using information communication technology (ICT) online learning at home. Also, some parents perceive it as causing damage to the social and physical aspects of the learners. These include reducing concentration, back pain, and lack of interpersonal skills (Cheuk, 2021). There are also potential threats when it comes to using the internet by minors. These include but are not limited to unsuitable adult content and violent scenes (Fleming et al., 2006). Kong et al. (2014) recommended that equipping students with the necessary literacy information to work socially and independently has the potential of resolving some of the major concerns.

Many parents do not belong to the digital generation and lack experience with online learning (Lee & Chae, 2007), which means they have minimal or no technology literacy. Parents of K-5 online learning students may feel discomfort and lack standards when supporting and guiding their children during online learning sessions and ICT applications (Anastasiades et al.,

2008). Notably, it is the responsibility of the schools to address any likely adverse aspects against students caused by using ICT and introduce parents or guardians to schools' procedures and strategies to tackle all the various concerns. There is a need to review perceptions to ascertain any problem concerning online learning and map out better implementation strategies (Nwankwo, 2015). It is crucial to research and make the necessary recommendation to help reform online learning approaches to ensure that students and parents are comfortable experiencing online learning.

This research will benefit both parents and online learning students because it will explore the online learning space and the necessary online learning procedures. These include how students can access online resources and identify the support they need within the online learning environment. Also, online learners or students can utilize digital technology tools to collaborate with their peers. Online learning has been in existence for decades. However, the online learning modality has gained more popularity recently following the global pandemic that caused many educational institutions to find means of resolving problems associated with in-person learning (Ritanjali et al., 2018). Online learning is in two forms: asynchronous and synchronous. These two forms ensure that diverse and individual needs are met (Jolliffe et al., 2012).

Chang (2016) found that online learning combined with in-person or onsite makes a positive impact when implemented in education systems and even in other institutions that need training and development. Despite the numerous benefits associated with online learning, obstacles impede its success. Alzahrani and O'Toole (2017) stated that one could achieve good learning success when online programs are planned well and implemented to include parents

when learners are in K-5 levels. This accession makes it necessary to dive into parents' perceptions about online learning in elementary schools.

Theoretical Context

Over the years, there have been many online learning theorists and advocates. Among these include but are not limited to Garrison (2000), Anderson (2001), and Archer (2001). They developed the community of inquiry (CoI) framework to help online teachers and instructors create online communities (Garrison et al., 2000). Online learning is focused primarily on how people use internet capabilities to enhance and support learning. Online learning works well for formal and informal learning formats (Harasim, 2012). It will be incomplete if connectivism is not recognized when discussing online learning theories and frameworks. Siemens (2004) is one of the pioneers of connectivism and one of the early massive open online courses (MOOC). Siemens believed that the internet has made it easy for learners to share knowledge among peers and communities.

Educational theory needs to effectively address the limitation and affordance of the context in which it has been designed (McDonald, 1998). The internet is a multipurpose technology supporting unlimited communication and information communication tools. Online learning has changed from context defined by interaction and text-only to fully supported media platforms with video conferencing tools integration. Most early work regarding instructional use of the internet concluded that asynchronous text-based interaction defined the medium (Smith et al., 1992). All these are techniques developed to maximize interaction using this relatively lean media. We are now in an era where video, streaming video, audio conferencing, and podcasts are immediately available for educational use.

Problem Statement

The problem associated with the proposed qualitative study is that little is known about public elementary school parents' perceptions and lived experiences concerning the online learning instruction for their children. In 2020, COVID-19 pandemic affected every country and industry; it did not spare educational institutions to maintain onsite learning programs. Most schools had to switch to online learning to ensure that their schools operated. This massive shift caused many parents in K-12 schools to complain. This perception might be that some parents believed students at the elementary level have difficulty concentrating within the online learning platform (Ferlazzo, 2020). Many parents and other stakeholders continue to question whether online learning programs are effective in K-12 schools or not. Parents' perceptions undermine the smooth implementation of online learning programs (Odhaib, 2018).

Although there are many benefits of implementing online learning in schools, there are equally many issues surrounding its implementation in K-12 school systems. Several research works have identified online learning issues to help resolve them. Aljaraideh (2019) identified inadequate technology skills and technical knowledge as some of the problems affecting teachers in implementing online learning plans successfully. Brikena and Gezim (2020) concluded that policymakers and teachers needed to work on existing challenges; these include a lack of ensuring diversity of students and designing learning programs to align to their individual needs.

Elliott-Engel (2021) suggested students need to be kept engaged to sustain their interests and be supported within the online learning environment to prevent them from being isolated. According to Elliott-Engel (2021), past studies have failed to explore public elementary school parents' lived experiences and perceptions concerning online learning instruction for their children. The exploration will be necessary for implementing any online learning program.

Parents are the individuals who will be with elementary students at home to provide them the necessary support when needed during an online learning session. That is why it is crucial to conduct research to gain parents' insight into online learning and explore their lived experiences.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study is to understand the perceptions and lived experiences of public elementary school parents concerning the online learning instruction for their children. The study will use fifteen participants. At this stage in the research, perceptions and lived experiences of online public elementary parents will be generally defined as the mindset and experiences parents have about online learning instructions for their children.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study will include providing K-5 schools with information about online learning and how its schedules affect parents' hours of working either remotely or onsite. It will also guide K-5 schools to consider the parents' perceptions of modifying their online school programs to improve students' online learning experience and performance. The schools will modify such a schedule if it deems it to be necessary. The study's outcome will enable K-5 schools to have strategies for planning for academic times accordingly. During the period of this study, there will be gathering of data. The gathered data will benefit the schools to initiate a collaborative measure among parents and stakeholders to enact plans that will help in advancing online education.

Theoretical Significance

This research will give a solution to the problem of elementary school parents' perceptions and their lived experiences that have not been explored. This problem affects online

learning instruction for their children in Maryland. The online learning process involves a cooperative environment where schools offering online learning programs need parents' support for effective implementation. Online learning allows flexibility and the use of space (Cole, 2000). The delivery method allows for flexibility of access anytime, anywhere. However, human resources and learning materials must also be well designed, organized, and aligned to help engage students to increase learning. According to Rossett (2002), an online learning format has many promises, but it takes commitment and resources like parents and teachers, and this must be done right.

Empirical Significance

Harasim's (2012) study provided information that focuses on collaborative learning. Harasim suggested that just like earlier theories, online collaborative learning is built upon previous theories and expand into new directions in response to contemporary societal and academic needs. Harasim also acknowledges that online collaborative learning enhances or contributes to instructional activities by presenting a theoretical framework to help design and enlighten online learning methodologies. This research outcomes will assist teachers in the evaluation and providing quality teaching services to students learning online.

According to Clark et al. (2005), teachers are able to apply the online learning model in their classrooms to create an effective e-learning course. For instance, teachers can support learners to drive their innate cognitive burden. This is done by dividing content into learnable units for students to gain knowledge step by step. Online learning environments engage students to control their learning in a self-paced manner (Clark et al., 2005).

Practical Significance

The study's findings may improve K-5 schools in planning and developing online education, ensuring that parents' perceptions are considered to eliminate any misconceptions about online learning. It will also help foster new ways of approaching online education with knowledge, attitude, and skills, which will prepare students to be competitive globally in the future. The study will increase schools' management leadership and teaching-evaluation approaches. There has been researching supporting online learning. Siemens's (2014) study on connectivism provided great insight into a learning theory for the digital age. Siemens (2004) also researched the online learning model that brought a tremendous shift in how information and knowledge grow and flow due to the introduction of communications networks. My study will improve contemporary online learning collaborations among parents, students, and teachers.

Research Questions

The research questions provide structure and make sure they narrow the purpose of the study (Creswell, 2013). The research questions will remain the core foundation of the research and will remain active throughout the research investigation (Moustakas, 1994). The questions are purposefully evolving and open-ended (Creswell, 2013). They focus on getting the essence of the lived experience (Moustakas, 1994). The identified central research question and the sub-questions that will guide the study are as follows:

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences and perceptions of public elementary school parents concerning online learning instruction for their children?

The central research question is the foundation of exploring public elementary school parents' lived experiences and perceptions concerning online learning instruction. This question is grounded on the community of inquiry theoretical framework (Garrison et al., 2000). The

community of inquiry has three essential elements very relevant to the study. These elements are cognitive, social, and teaching presence.

Sub Question One

What are academic support challenges faced by parents of public elementary school students receiving online instruction?

This first sub-question will identify the academic challenges parents of public elementary school students in online learning face. The question is grounded on the community of inquiry framework (Garrison et al., 2000). Beckman et al. (2019) found that challenges impact parental involvement in online learning. Parental involvement, which includes creating a conducive environment for their children at home during online learning sessions, can sometimes go beyond that responsibility. They also provide technical support where necessary. That could be challenging when parents have low technical skills in technology. The CoI model recommends integrating appropriate technology to support all participants within the online learning environment (Garrison, 2018).

Sub Question Two

How can parents of public elementary school students contribute to the effectiveness of online learning for public elementary school children?

The subs question two focuses on parents' contributions and how they impact online learning. According to Sedibe and Fourie (2018), parents support their children learning and plays a crucial role during online learning sessions. The question is grounded on the social presence of the community of inquiry theory. Open communication and group cohesion are essential elements of effective online learning. (Garrison, 2018).

Sub Question Three

What are the parents' recommendations to education leaders concerning the implementation of online learning for public elementary school children to ensure teaching presence?

The third sub-question will identify and discuss parents' recommendations to education leaders who implement online learning programs in public elementary schools. The recommendations are expected to ensure students' success. The question is grounded on the teaching presence of the community of inquiry theory. This element is the element of balancing cognitive and social issues that is consistent with intended educational outcomes (Cheng et al., 2020).

Definitions

This section provides terms pertinent to the study. They are defined and supported with literature and appropriate citations.

1. *Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory* – Bandura's theory places stress on the role of observational learning, social experience, and reciprocal determinism in personality development (Bandura, 1986).
2. *COVID-19* – a disease caused by a strain of Coronavirus (Cohen, 2020).
3. *Constructivist Theory* – This theory is based on the concept that learners are active participants in their learning journey and that knowledge is constructed based on experiences (Mezirow, 2000).
4. *Community of Inquiry (CoI)* – The community of inquiry theory emerged from social constructivist. CoI is an online learning theory developed by Garrison et al. (2000).

- This theory focuses on three different dimensions (a) teaching presence, (b) cognitive presence, and (c) social presence (Garrison et al., 2000).
5. *Distance Education* – a form of education where students and teachers are separated by distance or time and sometimes both (Yacci, 2000).
 6. *K-12* – An education system that starts from kindergarten to 12th grade (Education Corner, 2021).
 7. *K-5* – An education system that starts from kindergarten to 5th grade (Education Corner, 2021).
 8. *Learning Outcome* – identified statements a learner is expected to achieve at the end of a program or a course (Allen & Seaman, 2017).
 9. *Self-Efficacy* – The concept of self-efficacy is at the theoretical center of social cognitive theory. Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to succeed in a provided situation (Bandura, 1986).

Summary

Online learning has come to stay in education systems. It has existed for decades and continues to grow globally (Panigrahi et al., 2018). Although online learning practice has lasted for many years, the recent COVID-19 has increased its patronage. This increase in participation also comes with concerns from parents about online learning and its implementation.

Chapter One has provided the overview of the research, background to the study, situation to self, problem statement, and purpose statement. The chapter also tackles the significance of the study, research questions, and definition of terms. One of the problems this research seeks to explore parents of elementary learners' lived experiences about online learning have not been explored. Exploring their perceptions and lived experiences about online

education will enable elementary education authorities to provide a schedule for students that is convenient to parents who might need to support their children set up during online learning sessions.

This chapter has also presented theoretical frameworks which focus on online learning and education. One would agree that there are many online learning theories. The chapter identified the research problem as most parents have concerns regarding online learning implementations and effectiveness, especially when it has to do with elementary school students. The study aims to explore parents of elementary students' lived experiences about online learning.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

In this chapter, a systematic literature review will identify parents' perceptions and preferences about online learning. This review will establish the necessary measures to help resolve any issues connected to online learning and its related programs. The chapter reviews theoretical frameworks which have connections with the current literature and are similar to the current study. The section starts with online learning theories and frameworks relevant to the current study and focuses on online learning in elementary education.

The literature in this chapter will capture features of online learning, online learning environment, students' readiness, and pedagogy. Throughout the literature review, there will be a synthesis of recent literature on online learning in elementary schools. In addition to that, the chapter will capture the usefulness of online learning in improving students learning during global crises. This chapter will also present the usefulness of online learning during pandemics such as COVID-19. While reviewing the chapter, there will be an attempt to identify factors leading to a negative perception of online education in elementary schools across the United States. In the last section of this chapter, there will be a summary of any identified gap in the literature needing solution.

Theoretical Framework

A learning theory or framework forms part of educational systems. For effective implementation of any good course or program design and development, it will be crucial to consider the right theory or framework that will help ensure effectiveness. The research study employs a framework to enhance understanding of the participants' views and lived experiences. Research needs to involve conceptual thinking to provide readers with a direct connection

(Gredler & Shields, 2008). The theoretical framework in this research will be relevant in (a) defining the study problem, (b) organizing study design and implantation, (c) establishing theoretical coherence, and (d) outlining conceptual conclusions. The study's theoretical framework will be the community of inquiry (CoI).

Community of Inquiry (CoI)

The community of inquiry (CoI) is a conceptual framework suggesting that spoken and written language may hold distinct effects on thinking. It is relevant to understanding the characteristics of written communication that support a valuable educational experience (Resnick, 1991). The CoI emerged from the social constructivist. CoI is an online learning theory developed by Garrison et al. (2000). This theory focuses on three different dimensions (a) teaching presence, (b) cognitive presence, and (c) social presence (Garrison et al., 2000).

The cognitive presence is best comprehended when it is in the context of a general model of critical thinking (Garrison, 2018). It is presented in a variation on the critical thinking model originally suggested by Garrison (2000) and more thoroughly explained by Garrison and Archer (2001). It conforms to the limitations of a formal and relatively intrinsically affected educational experience where issues and concerns are typically artificially posed by a teacher and then examined and tried vicariously. Critical thinking or inquiry is seen here as a holistic multi-phased procedure associated with a triggering event (Garrison et al., 2000).

According to Garrison et al. (2000), this triggering circumstance is afterward by perception, deliberation, conception, and action. Garrison et al. assumed that learning how to think is entrenched in what to think, which means it is domain-specific and context-dependent. They emphasized that critical thinking and inquiry is not purely reflective process internal to one mind. The model presented here assumes an iterative and reciprocal relationship between the

personal and shared worlds. That is, there is a synergy between reflection and communicative activity. Critical thinking is the integration of contemplation and action that reflects the dynamic relationship between personal meaning and shared understanding (Garrison et al., 2000).

The social presence emerged from the literature and was shaped by the community of inquiry model (Garrison et al., 2000) and includes three categories. These are emotional expression, open communication, and group cohesion. These categories were refined through experimental analysis of a computer conference transcript. The first category of social presence indicators is an expression of emotion. According to Garrison et al., many of the words generally used to describe emotions were secondary meanings derived from primary concepts related to physical presence., closeness, warmth, and attraction. The capacity to express these emotions is reduced or eliminated when communication is text-based and taking place at a distance.

Kuehn (1993) stated that text-based, asynchronous conversationalists compensate for this loss of physical presence by using strange symbolic expressions, such as emoticons, to encourage their expressiveness in the medium. Gunawardena and Zittle (1997) discovered that conference participants improved their socio-emotional skill by using emoticons to convey lost nonverbal cues in written standard. Sentiments or emotions are inseparably connected to task explanation and diligence, and, therefore, to critical inquiry. In the Col, emotional expression is characterized by the ability and confidence to express feelings related to the educational experience. It has been noted that critical thinking is facilitated by the socio-emotional support of others (Brookfield, 1987). Ahmad, B. M. (2020) explained that teaching presence is essential in balancing cognitive and social issues consistent with intended educational outcomes. While these outcomes may well result from the active leadership of a formally designated teacher, teaching presence goes beyond this individual. It may be provided by any of the participants in a

community of inquiry domains that may include instructional management, building understanding, and direct instruction. Garrison et al. emphasized that there is a possibility of addressing structural concerns such as setting curriculum, designing methods and assessment, establishing time parameters, and employing the medium.

The CoI framework comprises John Dewey's work community and inquiry. The phrase *community of inquiry* was borrowed from Lipman in 1991. Lipman's work was based on John Dewey's work. According to Lau et al. (2021), Dewey believed inquiry was a social activity.

The CoI framework will be relevant in evaluating parents' perceptions about online learning. Also, the CoI framework is ideal in supporting online learning environment design for teaching and learning by presenting opportunities for course designers to equip themselves during the program development and implementation. Picciano (2017) stated that learning theory is designed to help course developers understand how students learn. As noted by Picciano, the CoI theory is the best online learning framework that supports the current study and helps parents at the center of online learning programs to achieve better wants.

Related Literature

This section is a review of current research in education and online learning to help find out what research has already been studied and identify what is unknown with the selected research topic. The chapter headings include the concepts of online learning, online learning theories, traditional learning versus online learning, benefits and challenges of online learning, online learning platform, components affecting students' performance in online education, students' readiness, online learning pedagogy, online learning best practices, parents' perceptions of online learning, and online learning implementation during COVID-19.

The Concepts of Online Learning

There has been an apparent shift in the concepts related to online learning. According to Bates (2001), the terminology for online learning is inconsistent, and different researchers and institutions have used words interchangeably. Kirshner and Paas (2001) reported the inconsistent meanings of a single concept of e-learning and decided to use web-enhanced learning to define it as learning. Online learning is the creation of education where the internet plays a unique role in the administration, delivery, support, and assessment of learning (Kirshner & Paas, 2001). Over the years, researchers have observed online learning being confused and synonymized with hybrid learning and/or blended learning. Most of the definitions suggested that teachers should start to provide some elements of their face-to-face class on the internet and then use that experience to gradually plan for a completely online learning class (Palloff & Pratt, 2001).

In defining the concept in 2002 and 2003, interactivity was an aspect of online learning. Email and messaging with students and instructors were used to describe the process. The use of chat groups, newsgroups, and online conferencing tools were also used to describe online learning (Curtain, 2002). Scagnoli (2019) asserted that online learning was also used in many cases as a synonym distance education because most distance education today is done online. The difficulty in defining online learning was re-articulated by Moore et al. (2011) through a review of literature. Definitions presented conflicting of descriptions, such as the one by Oblinger & Oblinger in 2005 that described online learning as *wholly* online. Others explained the technology and medium as one element in the context of use (Lowenthal et al., 2009).

Vandana and Thurman, (2019) indicated that in the year 2004, there was an agreement on including interactivity in expressing and comprehending the concept of online learning. Stated below are examples when they saw a mention and acknowledgment of the transformation of

knowledge and the actual learning process which include the concept of synchronous and asynchronous. According to Vandana and Thurman, online learning can be broadly defined as the use of the internet in some way to enhance the interaction between teacher and student.

Online delivery covers both asynchronous forms of interaction such as assessment tools and the provision of web-based course materials and synchronous interaction through email, newsgroups, and conferencing tools, such as chat groups (Vandana & Thurman, 2019). It includes both classroom-based instruction and as well as distance education modes. Other terms synonymous with online learning are e-learning and web-based education.

Later 2015, there was the popularity of flipped classroom as a type of blended learning defined in the context of online learning. Dhawan (2020) stated that teaching was shifted outside the classroom while the classroom time is employed to solve problems and work through the discussion/peer collaboration of students and instructors. This relatively new instructional process claims that flipping classrooms help engaging students more effectively in the learning process. In the advancement of definitions of online learning, in the earlier years, there was confusion in the use of terms, but later years were seen as an acknowledgment of it and the creation of new definitions, often with synonyms. Earlier explanations and discussions on technology and what it means usually included distance education and how online learning is related or not to distance education (Vandana & Thurman, 2019)

Online learning is usually depicted as providing a learning experience by employing the internet. It is said to be the most recent format of distance learning (Rhim & Han, 2020). Online learning has recently gained popularity worldwide to ease issues associated with the in-person form of education due to the global pandemic (Ritanjali et al., 2018). The primary means of providing online learning or education are in two forms: synchronous and asynchronous learning

environments (Jolliffe et al., 2012). These two can both ensure that learners' diverse needs are met.

There are instances where online learning and in-person learning utilized in the education system yielded successful outcomes (Chang, 2016). The situation during the 2020 global pandemic could not depend on the face-to-face approach due to the fear of contracting the COVID-19 virus. Therefore, the increased use of online learning formats. The purpose of online education is not just providing access to learning opportunities but is sometimes employed to reduce cost when it comes to the training and development industries (Rhim & Han, 2020). There is a transformation in online learning and teaching. Many theories about online learning have been developed, and numerous software for content management have also been designed and launched.

During the global COVID pandemic, many terms and phrases became known to the public. These include but are not limited to “online learning” and “video conference” (Rhim & Han, 2020). That said, the online approach to teaching and learning has come to stay. Educators, stakeholders, and policymakers must support its sustenance as another mode of providing quality education. The involvement of parents in the online learning programs for elementary school students is crucial since they become the center of help at home. Thus, making sure that their wards get connected to the learning environment. The concepts identified from the reviewed literature will be relevant to facilitate the current study on parents' perceptions and preferences of online learning.

Brief Garrison and Anderson's Model

Garrison and Anderson (2001) argued that the categorization of technologies in generations allows for a better understanding of their impact on the field if the organizing design

connects the technologies to the instructional procedures meant to serve. They further argued that precisely sequential categories might lead to the inaccurate notion that new technologies methodically replace older ones while they often accompany them. Print resources are still important component of e-learning today, although they are today offered electronically. The key to understanding technology use is explained by the fact that it is not the tool but the way the tool is used and the approach that identifies the outcome which accurately describes distance education modalities. Bransford et al. (2000), Garrison and Anderson (2001) and Greeno et al. (1996) outlined four generations model which connects technologies to make impacts in education.

The first generation which is behaviorism and correspondence courses of distance learning technologies was influenced by behaviorist guides according to which learning is the outcome of the experience. According to Greeno et al. (1996), learners must be helped in developing and adapting appropriate connections. Since this model does not consider social relations and interactions among learners as essential for learning, early forms of distance learning mostly self-paced and closely independent studies at a distance (Garrison & Anderson, 2001). Correspondence programs generally used post mail to deliver lesson packets to students who would read the material, prepare a set of answers to questions, write a paper, or perhaps attend a proctored test.

The second generation of distance learning technologies, the cognitive tradition, early computer-based training, and telecourses attempted to leverage cognitive explanations for learning mechanisms in which the brain functions as an information-processing. Learners are not empty vessels waiting to be filled with information but have pre-established conceptual understandings of many phenomena and concepts. Greeno et al. (1996) stated it is relevant to

expose the conceptions and use them as a springboard for further learning. The third generation is constructivism of distance learning technology. It took advantage of the tools such as email, discussion forums, and chat rooms to develop learning environments grounded in constructivist learning theory. According to Bransford et al. (2000), both synchronous and asynchronous discussion tools help facilitate dialogue among learners and the teacher. Constructivism started the change in teachers' roles from the center of the stage to the edge.

The fourth generation is integrated systems it combines the features of the three previous generations by allowing students to access web-based content through learning objects, conduct individual reflections using tools like blogs, and interact to construct knowledge through the social negotiation of meaning by using social networks. There is debate on the type of constructivism as a learning approach. Garrison and Anderson (2003) believe it is a learning theory. In overview, Garrison and Anderson's four-generation model provides a unique framework to understanding the connection between learning theories, technological progress, and the history of distance education field.

Brief History of Online Learning Field in the United States

In 1990, after the introduction of the internet in North America, online learning had substantial growth as both educational institutions and corporations began to use the web to deliver training, courses, and degree programs (Gunawardena & McIsaac, 2004). In the year 2000, the United States Congress established the Web-Based Education Commission to examine the impact and potential of the internet on education, from kindergarten to higher education, and including the corporate sector and local communities. The commission ended its 168-page report with a strong call to action and urged the nation to adopt an online learning plan as a cornerstone of its federal policy. This online learning plan was to assist local communities, state education

agencies, institutions of higher education, and the private sector to increase the power of the internet for learning (Kerrey & Isakson, 2000).

According to Dickard (2003), the commission recommended the repeal of those laws that prevented the American school system from taking full advantage of the educational possibilities of the internet, especially the “50%” rule enacted by Congress in 1992. This rule required that students take at least 50% of their courses face-to-face to qualify for federal loans. The Internet Equity and Education Act of 2001 was the first attempt to repeal this rule, but the Act never became law. A few years later, the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 succeeded in repealing the 50% rule, therefore greatly facilitating enrollment in online degree programs. In 2010, new rules were enforced to limit the amount of federal funding that for-profit schools receive based on their past students’ level of indebtedness (Burnsed, 2010).

Currently, online learning occupies a central position in the higher education landscape: “Over the past years, online learning and teaching have moved from the boundary to the center of university life (Feenberg, 1999) and are no longer bound to the university extension. In recent years, online learning has become a universal practice because of the spread of the internet” (Larreamendy & Leinhardt, 2006, p.570). Despite the growth, online learning still occupies a minor role in elementary education strategic planning (Allen & Seaman, 2010).

Online Learning Theories

Many theorists support online learning modalities. Piaget (1977) explored the approaches learners use to their understanding from experience centered on how they analyze the world according to their past encounters and interactions. The learner in this scenario is a constructor of knowledge whose learning process is automatically controlled by a situational learning context. Constructivist approaches also maintain that learning should be transferable, durable, and self-

regulated (Di Vesta, 1987). This approach includes interactivity and active learning situations that promote learning and engage the learners' interest (Burgstahler, 2015). Hence, this works well in online learning environments (Bryceson, 2001).

The use of internet technology has made it possible for knowledge to be shared among groups and communities to focus on specific activities or tasks. Siemens (2004) noted that this works in the learning process by combining former knowledge with the immediate or current knowledge to organize understanding and new meanings; this means knowledge is interrelated and can occur over technology-supported platforms in the form of websites and social interaction platforms. Over the years, technologies have changed and become more individualistic and personalized (McHaney, 2011). Online learning has the potential to shed light on how people learn within social and situated contexts. The early massive open online courses (MOOC) pioneers, Siemens (2004), became the main pioneer of connectivism, which brought a major shift in knowledge and information flows due to data communication networks.

Harasim (2012) developed online collaborative Learning (OCL) theory. OCL is centered on the use of internet capabilities to support learning. Harasim outlined it as a new theory of learning aimed to ensure that knowledge and concepts are shared without borders. This collaborative learning approach could be formal or informal. One good thing about this theory is that it integrates technology, relevant strategies, and stakeholders in its design. Since the theory integrates stakeholders in its designs, it will be relevant in planning and implanting an online learning program that considers parents' views and preferences. Parents actively getting involved will be beneficial to students, especially those in elementary levels where they need support in connecting their computers and other learning devices at home (Positive Action, 2021).

The theory is also known to be an effective framework for ensuring successful learning among students when applied in educational systems. The OCL learning theory provides the necessary strategies by integrating technology to support the online learning platform. Panitz (1997) identified the benefits of collaborative learning using a group work approach. Among the benefits are helping to reduce students' anxiety, nurturing good relationships, paving ways for learners to build high esteem, and improving critical thinking skills.

Other Learning Related Theories

Social constructivism emerged from constructivism ideas. Constructivism explores the approaches in which learners get their understanding from experience. Piaget (1977) and Vygotsky (1978) were constructivists. Constructivism focuses on how learners analyze the world according to past encounters and their interactions with things around them. The learner in this scenario is a constructor of knowledge and process learning controlled with a situational learning context. Constructivist maintains that individual learning should be transferable, durable, and self-regulated (Hare, 2019).

Vygotsky (1978) is a known theorist of social constructivism. Social constructivism acknowledges that every knowledge develops based on social interaction and language use (Lynch, 2016). The approach includes interactivity and active learning situations that promote learning and engage the interest of all learners (Burgstahler, 2015). Social constructivism maintains that the learning process requires the learners to participate in creative activities and individual preparation. Social constructivism does not only construct and present concepts socially. But it includes all entities (Latour & Woolgar, 1986).

Another online related theory is Bandura's social cognitive theory. This theory places a high degree on the role of observational learning and social experience (Bandura, 1986). One key

concept in this theory is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is an individual set of beliefs that suggest how well one can perform plan action in given a situation (Bandura, 1977). According to Bandura, individuals with such beliefs believe that they act, think, and feel differently from people who do not possess the self-efficacy beliefs.

People who have self-efficacy beliefs have a sense of power and control over what is happening in the world. The research will explore the lived experiences and perceptions of public elementary school parents concerning online learning instruction for their students. It will also factor in the social cognitive theory to identify how students are self-motivated for an online learning environment. Self-efficacy provides a confidence indicator determined by the person and affected by the environment that may include the online learning space (Johnson et al., 2008).

Traditional Learning Versus Online learning

There are many approaches or formats to teaching and learning working together to achieve a common goal. These approaches have changed over the years. These include distance education, face-to-face, blended or hybrid learning, and online learning (Singh et al., 2021). Distance education includes the various methods of study at all levels which has no immediate instructors present in a physical classroom with students, but which, yet gain from the preparation, supervision, and instruction from the institution (Larreamendy & Leinhardt, 2006). There are many related meanings for distance learning, e-learning, web-based learning, network-based learning, and online learning.

According to Allen and Seaman (2003), face-to-face learning mostly does not have online technology applications or use. No percent of courses are being delivered online within the traditional learning environments. Unlike face-to-face, the web facilitated courses employ

web-based technology to accelerate what is essentially a face-to-face course. A course management system (CMS) designed web pages host the course contents such as syllabus and assignments.

Another format of teaching and learning is hybrid or blended. In this teaching and learning, approach and aspects of the course activities are hosted and delivered online while a portion is delivered face-to-face. According to O'Rourke (2021), a substantial part of the content is delivered online and through the use of online discussions to reduce the number of meetings needed for face-to-face. Between thirty and seventy-nine percent of the course is delivered online in blended learning environments.

Teaching and learning formats have shifted to different approaches and align with technology advancement. The use of electronics has changed traditional learning into a new modality of learning known as Online learning. Many institutions maintain that online learning is a suitable learning format (Gros & Garcia, 2016), which is a contemporary model of education of using information communication technology (ICT) as a primary tool (Sangrà et al., 2012). However, different views about traditional and online learning effectiveness exist. Stanley (2017) claimed that online learning is better than traditional learning. Online learning is linked to technology. Advantages and disadvantages to both learning formats are important arguments among industry experts (Odhaib, 2018).

The online learning process can be repeated as learners may access any recorded sessions during instructions that are saved and shared with students. Unlike the online learning method, traditional learning is a one-time learning event where the teacher leads sessions; however, traditional learning gives the teacher total control of students (Nazarenko, 2015). According to Gros and Garcia (2016), the implementation of an online learning program does not require

physical presence among teachers and students, therefore causing a lack of interaction.

Notwithstanding, online learning seems worthier than traditional learning in terms of cost and opportunity for students to access learning content repeatedly (Odhaib, 2018).

Benefits and Challenges of Online Learning and Teaching

There are many benefits and challenges of online learning. The statements of Brikena and Gezim (2020) outlined that the benefits of online learning supersede the issue confronting it. Some of the benefits include self-paced learning, flexibility, students having available and downloadable learning resources, and some getting access to education. Learning platforms are rich with video and interactive content. The literature also identified challenges of online learning after the authors have conducted interviews online.

The challenges include teachers not providing detailed feedback to students' assignments or works. The researchers reported that it was common to see some content higher than their grade level. When they compare what students see online to the in-person classroom, other issues of online learning include but are not limited to poor receiving sound and internet connections. Aljaraidh (2019) identified teachers' age gap and lack of technical and technology skills are some of the issues that teachers have in implementing online learning programs. Also, educators and policymakers need to work around any existing challenges online learning might face ensuring that programs achieve targeted learning goals. Duffy and Kirkley (2004) explained that pedagogy and technology skills are two elements crucial to a successful online teaching and learning program. The education society largely agrees that the success of online courses and curricula depends on using student-centered pedagogical practices (Duffy & Kirkley, 2004). That means the online teacher must design, create, and facilitate rich interactions among students to ensure their motivations. When it comes to a well-designed online courses environment, students

are frequently asked to take on additional responsibilities, some of which used to be the privilege of teachers. That is the reason why the change has often been described as a shift from being the sage on the stage to the guide on the side (King, 1993).

Carver and Rivera-Singletary (2020) stated that teaching with technology is not a single dimension fitting all approaches as it depends on the types of technology in place at the time and the curriculum content in use. In addition to the pedagogical challenge of adjusting to online learning environments, and regardless of the technical assistance students may receive from their institutions, teachers need to be proficient in the technologies of online education to be able to select the tools that will allow them to carry out their instructional goals. According to Orlando and Attard (2015), this requirement may represent a significant challenge for teachers who entered the profession at a time when technological expertise was not a requirement.

Online Learning Platforms and Features

Online learning platforms are hosted with an internet connection. Alzahrani and O'Toole (2017) concluded from their research that students' views regarding online learning are important to consider when planning to achieve success when designing and implementing online learning programs. In addition to that, learners' experiences, and attitudes on using web learning platforms can potentially impact students' performance. Alzahrani and O'Toole recommended that an appropriate learning platform be used in ensuring online learning effectiveness. It is important to thoroughly evaluate any learning platforms an educational institution would like to use in synthesizing this literature.

Online learning mostly depends on a learning management system (LMS) for its effectiveness. The purpose of Ritanjali et al.'s (2018) study discussed LMS and content management systems (CMS) and their functions. Both LMS and CMS are used to support online

learning. LMS and CLMS have been accepted worldwide by many institutions to successfully organize online learning (Coates et al., 2005). LMS serves as the physical classroom. It helps to create and host content. It is integrated with interactive tools to complete assignments and quizzes. It is the best way of offering an interactive way of learning where teachers and students can collaborate on a topic or a task. LMS helps in registration courses, grading, and obtaining user reports (Ritanjali et al., 2018).

Amsle and Churchville (2022) stated that a collaborative content management system is a computer application that works on a document library to present content to the learning environment, making it friendly and easy to use passively. It also enables the user to post, forums and discussion. The literature reviewed provided a detailed description of the Learning Management System and Content Management System, which will be useful in defining the platform for online learning in the current study.

Huei-Chuan Wei and Chou (2019) found some key features of online learning. The authors identified flexibility, self-paced and personalized learning as among the key features of online learning. Students have freedom in how, what, when, and where they learn with the flexibility feature. Self-paced and personalized learning is where students can complete learning tasks at speed customized to their levels of mastery. According to Bray and McClaskey (2015), this means students may take longer with the material they struggle with, skip topics that cover the material they already know or repeat topics as needed. There is also technology integrated with learning platforms that allow students and teachers to effectively communicate and enable efficient interaction while they are away physically; among these are chat, video functionality, games, and interactive quizzes. Huei-Chuan et al. stated that learners feel motivated when

learning platforms have good and interactive features. It enables students to demonstrate good habits and fully participate in online learning.

IGI Global (2022) defined social media as a way of people using information communication technology (ICT) for socializing, communication, collaboration, and entertainment. It includes the second generation of web-based user-centered social networking tools that have become mainstream in the past ten years (Web 2.0). Examples include Facebook, YouTube, Wikis, Flickr, Zoom, and Skype. Social media have the potential to support instructional practices grounded in the sociocultural theory of learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Social media tools tend to be student-centered and allow educators to develop learning spaces where students are creatively engaged in the creation of content as opposed to passively receiving it (Mason & Rennie, 2008).

The adaptation of informal learning tools in place of university-sponsored course management products creates almost as many problems as it solves. The newly created learning platforms require a redefinition of teacher roles and mastery of supporting teaching practices (Mason & Rennie, 2008). These issues might soon find resolution with a new type of CMS that combines the features of mainstream social media and commercial CMS. In late 2011, Google and Pearson announced the launch of a new and free Learning Management System and piloted it at various higher education institutions (Fishman, 2012). Today, Google classroom offers a virtual classroom for online teachers and students.

The recent increased use of online learning platforms during the global COVID-19 pandemics demonstrated different online platforms and technology tools supporting distance learning (Sofyan et al., 2020). Some platforms have video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Meet, BigBlueButton, and Microsoft Teams. Also, the various platforms. For the proposed

research study, what is unknown is how parents see students' flexibility in having self-paced and customized learning.

Self-Efficacy in Online Learning Environments

Self-efficacy refers to views on one's abilities to arrange and execute the techniques of action required to produce given achievements (Bandura, 1997). That is the confidence level someone has to complete a task, activity, action, or challenge. It has to do with someone's beliefs about their capabilities to produce specified levels of performance that exert effect over circumstances that affect their lives. The self-efficacy impressions determine how people might feel, believe, be motivated, and consequently how they operate and act. According to Bandura, efficacy beliefs constitute the main factor of human agency. This section will discuss computer self-efficacy, internet self-efficacy, and learning management system (LMS) self-efficacy.

A study on self-efficacy has started before online learning has occurred, between the late 1970s and the early 1990s, which was before the birth of online learning (Hodges, 2008). In 2008, Hodges stated, study on self-efficacy in online settings is in its early stage. He recommended more research be conducted on self-efficacy in online learning in elementary. The reason is that most of the research on self-efficacy in online learning environments was conducted in higher education and not in elementary education. In explaining computer self-efficacy in online learning environment, Jan (2015) stated that research on self-efficacy and computers is mainly related to learners' certainty in their experience of employing computers and other types of technology. Jan conducted the study with 103 graduate students taking online courses in the USA. Jan measured academic self-efficacy, computer self-efficacy, prior experience with online learning, and student satisfaction.

Jan's (2015) research found a positive and substantial relationship between computer self-efficacy and prior experience with online learning, academic self-efficacy, prior experience with online learning, and academic self-efficacy and student satisfaction. Findings also show a positive and significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and computer self-efficacy, and between prior experience and student satisfaction. However, Simmering et al. (2009) also found that computer self-efficacy is not related to motivation to learn in online courses. However, computer self-efficacy was positively related to prior experience with online learning.

According to Joo et al. (2000), self-efficacy and the internet are closely related to learners' confidence in their capability of using the internet to seek information. This is related to information-seeking self-efficacy in online learning. Joo et al. investigated the relationship between internet self-efficacy and students' performance on the written and search tests in web-based instruction. Internet self-efficacy was identified to foresee students' performance on the search test. Womble (2007) also found a significant positive relationship between internet self-efficacy and student satisfaction in online learning environments. A study by Kuo, Walker, Belland, et al. (2014) found a significant but weak relationship between internet self-efficacy and student satisfaction; however, Internet self-efficacy does not predict student satisfaction in online learning environments.

In researching learning management (LMS) self-efficacy, Martin et al. (2010) developed an instrument to measure LMS self-efficacy. The instrument was to measure the confidence levels of learners using LMS and how it impacts performance. It included five technology parts: (1) evaluating the course content, (2) tests and grades, (3) asynchronous communication, (4) synchronous communication, (5) Advanced tools. They found that the self-efficacy of online learners was significantly higher than hybrid learners. Nevertheless, LMS self-efficacy does not

have a significant effect on-course performance for online learners. But it had a positive influence on-course performance for hybrid learners (Martin et al., 2010).

Elements Affecting Students' Performance in Online Education

Online education has made it possible for students to obtain a quality education. Compared to traditional classroom learning, web-based education has made it possible to offer classes worldwide through an internet connection. Although there are several advantages, online instruction still has its drawbacks. Some factors affect learners' performance in the online learning environment. Selma and Sajit (2005) explored factors that influence student or learner participation in two sections of an online course. Results showed that online learner participation is influenced by technology and interface features, content area experience, student functions and tasks, and information excess. In addition to that, technology, course interface, and the behavior of the learner group can influence participation and learning outcomes.

De Paepe et al.'s (2018) findings identified elements affecting online learning performance. The researchers also investigated connections between views, behavior, and educational purpose among internet users. It was revealed that there was a presence of positive views regarding online learning and the potential to increase performance and have more students choose online learning environments. Findings indicated that students recognize the value of online learning because it is self-paced and flexible in getting enrolled in online classes (De Paepe et al., 2018). The research also highlighted that almost all online education systems and online learning platforms support learners and teachers in sharing and transferring knowledge. All of these happen because of technological advancement.

A responsive online learning environment is a key to ensuring online learners' high performance and educational success. Al-Samarraie et al. (2018) research involved employing

diverse learning environments to identify and analyze students' views while considering their total experiences in using the platforms. The authors noted that students prefer a self-paced learning environment. Students also acknowledged that online learning environments which have been well designed establish boundary-free where knowledge and skills can be shared globally. One key thing resonating from this article is that a good online learning environment is very effective in motivating learners and increasing their performance.

The preferred learning environment includes flexibility, ease of use, the ability to access learning resources, and self-manage during the learning or the instructional process (Al-Samarraie et al., 2018). The authors did a lot of work in the research by identifying the best online learning environment features and students' preferences. However, the research was not specifically looking into elementary students and their parents' views on online learning environments, which the current research seeks to investigate.

Learning Outcomes

Researchers from the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation (2022) explained that learning outcomes are statements that describe the knowledge or skills learners should acquire after completing a particular course or educational program. It is sometimes complicated and could be misleading. Online learning outcomes are motivated by different factors. The factors include strategies, instructional designs, students' motivation, advanced technology, and learners' motivation. The factors can impact online courses in many ways. As a result, this perhaps affects the authenticity along with the reliability of relative methods. However, the straightforward approach of comparative studies is compelling. Because online courses initially imitated face-to-face course approaches, the temptation to compare the two environments is hard to resist (Watson & Sottile, 2010).

U.S. Department of Education published a meta-analysis on face-to-face and 11 online courses. The findings from fifty-one rigorously selected studies that compared face-to-face and online courses show that on average, learners in an online learning environment achieved better than those receiving face-to-face education (Means et al., 2009). The high rating provided unique visibility to institutions outside academic domains and even prompted the New York Times to reach a sweeping conclusion in an article entitled “Study Finds That Online Education Beats the Classroom.”

Kini and Podolsky (2016) stated in an online learning approach, prior research has concentrated on students and instructional methods. Issues related to teachers’ experiences are generally under-researched. Although, the shift in roles and responsibilities experienced by online teachers does not decline their significance in elementary school, just as the virtual reality of an instructor does not decrease the foremost responsibility of teaching (Garrison & Anderson, 2001).

Students Readiness

Tomlinson (2022) explained readiness as a student’s knowledge and skill level regarding a given content. According to Tomlinson, a student’s readiness level might vary across subjects or content areas. For instance, a student may have broad knowledge about American history but have little knowledge about the American civilization. A student’s readiness can be inspired by his or her background knowledge, previous learning, and life experiences. Online learning is often seen as new to students and teachers (LibreTexts, 2021), Students need to adjust their studying habits to be successful online learners. Institutions have documented the lack of student discipline as the main barrier to online learning (Wasilik & Bolliger, 2009). Students need to be willing to accept some of the responsibilities in online learning environments. According to

Henke and Russum (2000), many students are not prepared for this challenge, which may partially account for increased decay levels online. As Dawley (2007) noted, Students understand expectations as passive learners and build skills for effectively grasping the content. Cognitive psychologists refer to this process as the automation of procedural knowledge. (The Human Memory, 2022).

Heo and Han (2018) investigated the correlation between motivation and students' readiness. It was found that significant exist. Therefore, when online students are motivated, it reduces academic stress and improves low academic standards. Broadbent and Poon (2015) also reviewed twelve different works on the effects of students' readiness in an online learning environment. The findings indicated that the lack of students finding affects their critical thinking, time management, and meta-cognition. Students who demonstrate readiness have critical thinking capabilities and establish a sound relationship with the learning environment, leading to a successful learning outcome.

The literature is relevant to current study. It will be used to help answer questions on "who should be enrolled online." According to Hung et al.'s (2010) model of students' online readiness, five different dimensions of students' readiness come into play to control the learner. These are computer internet self-efficacy, motivation, learner control, self-directed learning, and online self-efficacy. Therefore, to ensure that learners are actively engaged and motivated to boost their readiness level, it is important to include parents during the planning and implementation of online learning programs to ensure that the necessary support is given to students by parents.

Online Learning Pedagogy

According to researchers at the Online Learning Consortium (2016), more than 5.8 million students are currently enrolled in online courses students taking an online course. With so many students enrolled in online education, institutions must assess factors that lead to their success. Average first-year student attrition is nearly 60% (Parker et al., 2018), and as such, it is essential to identify underlying instructional best practices that lead to student learning, success, and satisfaction in the online classrooms. While research suggests many best practices for online instruction (Cantamessa, 2018). Wilson (2018) noted that many of these best practices offer conflicting or incomplete guidelines.

The use of technology such as the internet and learning management systems should not replace pedagogical strategies. It has to be used to enhance course content and materials (Cohen, 2020). Effective online learning pedagogy is usually planned with an emphasis on the student-learning approach while employing active learning methodologies. Corbin et al. (2019) emphasized that student presence, staff members, and interactivity are some of the important checks in any effective online environment.

Another pedagogical approach to make online learning engaging and effective is the use of discussions and flipped learning. Online environment discussion can be more effective in advanced or higher education platforms when compared to elementary schools (Garrison et al., 2001). The flipped classroom strategies involve teachers providing students content to learn without requiring the teacher to be present. This pedagogical strategy is sometimes used within the online learning space and allows a practical learning movement in the online learning space. During the flipped classroom session, learners learn materials based on their individualistic pace

before utilizing any available pre-recorded content in an asynchronous manner (Rhim & Han, 2020).

Online Learning Best Practices

Luscinski (2018) described a best practice as a procedure that has been considered more effective than other options due to its positive outcome. A best practice is a method that is effective in achieving the expected result. When it comes to online education there is considerable discussion of “best practices of online teaching;” however, what is coined “best practice” in the pedagogical literature differs as a function of disciplinary content, education level, curriculum, and instructional style. It is possible that there simply is no “best practice;” thus, continued research to identify this non-existent instructional entity may distract from our ability to truly advance online pedagogy as noted by Luscinski. Serdyukov (2015) stated a lack of an effective theory or practice of pedagogy exists in the online classroom. Pedagogy includes virtually any strategy that enhances the learning experience. It includes instructional strategies, interaction with technology, and vehicles for content delivery. It focuses on the context and interactions of the teaching and learning dynamic (Steele, 2019).

One of the best ways to ensure a successful program is to ensure that best practices are followed. In the online learning environment, teachers and students must follow guidelines. Roddy et al. (2017) examined the best practices that ensure the online learning experience that increases performance and retention. Providing support services is one of the most important things to help ensure a continuous and smooth online learning experience. Also, online teachers' presences are very crucial in online study. Students need guidance during online learning sessions. Next, to sustain and keep the learners' interests while keeping them engaged, Elliott-Engel (2021) emphasized that teachers and concerned education partners need to ensure students'

motivation and reward students who enroll in online learning. The literature reviewed in this section is appropriate to defining how students need to be supported in the online environment to prevent isolation. The literature will guide the current study providing constructs to help to solidify the main points of the research work.

Perceptions of Online Learnings

Adams and DeFleur (2005) stated that one of the most persistent encounters that schools need to overcome before deciding to offer online learning is perceptions. The perceptions that online learning is a less worthy form of education. These perceptions are both outside and inside academic institutions. According to Adams and DeFleur, the bias favors face-to-face instruction over distance education. This has its background in the early days of online learning correspondence study. It was designed to give academic prospects to those not among the privileged who could not pay for full-time residence at an educational institution and were also considered inferior education (Gunawardena & McIsaac, 2004).

The negative perception about online has persisted in attaching itself to the field. According to Larreamendy and Leinhardt (2006), online learning has been known for its departure from the conditions in which teaching and learning naturally take place. Larreamendy and Leinhardt mentioned that to some extent, online learning is an instructional quirk, often needing additional explanation, such as the extension of educational opportunities or the encouragement of online learning. Recent data confirm the continuance of such perceptions today as smaller than one-third of chief academic officers believe that their faculty accept the value and legitimacy of online education (Allen & Seaman, 2017).

The purpose of the study will explore the lived experiences and perceptions of public elementary school parents concerning the online learning instruction for their children at the

Center for Adoption Support and Education . Considering not only students and teachers influencing success in online learning, but also parents' perceptions and their lived experiences. This systematic approach will offer a more comprehensive picture of the impact online learning has in elementary education. The implementation of online learning also depends on community inclusion especially, parents whose children are in the online school (Johanisa et al., 2021).

In other words, learners' performance in the online learning platform can be enhanced through support from their parents (Kong, 2018). As for students in elementary schools, parents providing support and controlling their children when using technology is critical (Eysenck, 2014). Therefore, the elementary students' parents' perceptions of online learning are crucial (Abdallah, 2018). In addition to that, Abdallah determined six dimensions of online learning. These are teacher computer competence, student computer competence, quality of teaching and learning, school environment, curriculum, and personal development.

Abdel-Maksoud (2019) identified three factors determining online learning perceptions. These perceptions motivate learners to use it, how satisfied they are, and the obstacles occurring during implementation. The motivation is to how learners benefit from using the technology. The satisfaction of online learning is explained as a positive attitude by the users exhibit toward technology. The obstacles in the online learning environment are related to technical problems, poor internet connection, inadequate technological proficiency, and others (Abdel-Maksoud, 2019).

Online Learning Implementation during COVID-19

Online learning platform quality is known to be the most crucial dimension of overall Online learning service quality (Pham et al., 2019). Online learning method heavily depends on technology. User ability to use learning technologies is an important factor for satisfaction

(Dwidienawati et al., 2020). Connectivity is another important factor to determine the quality. Another major downside of online learning is the overdependence on technology.

According to Basilaia et al. (2020), they need a good internet connection and at the same time, the complicated program will also be an obstacle to effective online instruction. Most online learning studies were conducted in developed countries, where connectivity is good, and the price of technology is cheap. Basilaia et al noted that in a developing country, such as Indonesia, unstable connectivity can influence students' satisfaction, and this can be one of the obstacles to eLearning success. Manion (2019) stated available studies prove that e-learning is effective and emphasized that there are no significant differences in course scores, student engagement, and student satisfaction between online and offline learning methods.

In many countries like the United States, health authorities made recommendations that forced the education sector to find a replacement for face-to-face delivery methods. In the issue of interruption, the learning process should be undisrupted (Huang et al., 2020). The best and easy option is to change from regular face-to-face classes online. The online learning method was the best alternative for learners in a forced situation (Basilaia et al., 2020). "School's Out, but Class is on" is the campaign of the Chinese government during the COVID-19 epidemic. This COVID outbreak has increased the attention and adoption of presently available technology in schooling (Goh & Sandars, 2020).

According to Chakravorti (2019), online learning offers advantages that include flexibility, efficiency, and accessibility. It allows students to study anywhere, anytime. Students can easily access instructional content. It does not involve any traveling (Basilaia et al., 2020). However, studies show that interaction and communication between students and teachers are factors for student engagement and performance. Marks et al. (2005) noted that students-

instructor interaction is one of the most important factors of student perceived learning and e-learning satisfaction. Instructors' timely response and feedback increased satisfaction (Holsapple & Post, 2006). Online learning lacks those factors compared to the offline method. Therefore, interaction and responsiveness a crucial role in online learning fulfillment.

Online learning became necessary during the COVID-19. China as a country became the first to implement online learning and teaching to control the spread of the pandemic (Huang et al., 2020). During this period, the term virtual learning and online learning became a popular phrase used by educational institutions. Educational institutions in the United States also implemented emergency online learning and teaching (Azahar, 2020). As online teaching and learning continue to occur in homes, parents' involvement in the teaching and learning process, especially among elementary school learners. There is no way online learning could be effective without parents' guidance, support, and supervision (Huang et al., 2020). Studies have addressed the effectiveness of online learning. Evaluating its effectiveness in teaching language courses (Enkin & Mejías, 2017); teaching language to primary school children with the help of videoconferencing (Stanley, 2017); views of parents on home-schooling (Sackett & Fletcher, 2017); and how online learning can improve the connection between parents and children (Xia, 2020).

Moreover, contemporary research has discussed the practical implementation of online education on society and education (Zhou et al., 2020) focused on higher-level learners, such as university perception about online learning instruction (Pastor, 2020). This study will explore the parents of online students' lived experiences about online learning in elementary education in the United States of America. It holds significance in opening a new perspective for educators,

policymakers, and parents on how to effectively plan for the execution of remote teaching in such situations in the future.

Summary

Technology integration in education has existed for decades and will continue to grow; its integration into education comes with challenges, just like many other new programs different industries face (Panigrahi et al., 2018). Online learning seems to be the most popular form of distance education in education systems that use technology platforms. Although its practices have existed for decades, its use has recently increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Yan et al., 2021). Many schools in higher and elementary school have opted to either have a hybrid or entirely online learning (Moroney, 2020). The move comes with complaints from parents and other educational policymakers.

The study will explore the lived experiences and perceptions of public elementary school parents concerning online learning instruction for their students. According to Moroney (2020), most of the literature reviewed in this chapter identified students' perceptions and preferences about using online learning platforms; but there are few known works covering parents and areas in elementary schools. This chapter has also examined theoretical frameworks that focus on education and online learning. These will be very useful in the current study. Although there are many theories, the attempts to integrate the works of other theorists have a greater chance of building a solid plan for online program implementation (Anderson, 2011).

The online learning environment includes two key concepts: synchronous and asynchronous learning. Researchers have presented content on the effective use of synchronous and asynchronous for an online platform (Salmon, 2013). The literature review contains information indicating that there is much work about elementary schools' online learning

environments. As much literature is reviewed, it was found that there is limited information on parents' lived perceptions of online learning (Moroney, 2020).

Based on this literature review, it is necessary to conduct a study. This will be necessary to examine the situation to ensure that online education gains maximum support from parents and other stakeholders. The study will focus on identifying parents' views about online learning while providing the necessary information to help educate parents about the benefits of online learning and how it boosts retention among elementary school students.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an introduction to the research methodology for this phenomenological study concerning parents' perceptions and lived experiences concerning the online learning instruction for their children at the Center for Adoption Support and Education. This chapter provides information about the approaches used in conducting this study while providing reasons for using the selected methods. Chapter three also describes the elements of the study, which include research questions, settings, participants selection, procedures, data collection steps, and the processes of analyzing the collected data. The chapter also describes the role of the researcher in the qualitative study. The chapter ends with research trustworthiness, ethical considerations, and a summary of the entire chapter.

Research Design

Elementary students' parents may have experiences and perceptions about online learning, which leads to qualitative research. Stake (2010) describes qualitative research as interpretive research. A qualitative study is appropriate when the purpose of the research is geared towards explaining a phenomenon, depending on the views of an individual or a group experience in a particular situation (Stake, 2010). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), a qualitative method is appropriate when a researcher is eager to comprehend a phenomenon. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) also defined qualitative research as a comprehensive research approach relating to a realistic approach to the main subject matter. In this study, the purpose is to identify K-5 students' parents' experiences and perceptions about online learning. Therefore, selecting a qualitative transcendental phenomenology approach will be the best choice.

The identified design transcendental phenomenology is used to identify specific

phenomena, focus on experiences, and know the formation of known lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2015). It was founded in the 20th century by Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger as it originated from theory review (Moustakas, 1994). The phenomenological methodology was first found in European philosophers such as Hegel, Kany, and Mack. However, the approach was first applied to social science by the German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) (Patton, 2015). In transcendental phenomenology, the meaning of science and the main components of a design are intentionality, reduction, and constitution of meaning (Moustakas, 1994). Husserl described intentionality as how all thinking and feelings of individuals are about things in the world.

According to Strauss and Corbin (2007), the grounded approach seeks to uncover or develop a theory that does not come “off the shelf” but is based on data collected from a large sample. Ethnography focuses on an entire culture-sharing group (Lineberger, 2013). Creswell (2012) defined a case study as a study of a case within a real-life current context or setting. Creswell also explained phenomenology as studying an idea or concept that holds a neutral meaning for a small group (3-15) of individuals. Creswell described it as an approach that centers around lived experiences of a particular phenomenon. That makes it appropriate for the current study that will explore parents’ lived experiences with online learning.

After reviewing the various qualitative research designs, I selected transcendental phenomenology. It is used when researching lived experiences of phenomena and based on the perspective of individuals experiencing such phenomena (Moustakas, 1994). This design is appropriate for my research because it provides a clear step of analyzing data collected and for putting away personal biases about the phenomenon of parents’ perceptions about online learning in elementary education. Merriam (2009) recognized that researchers could uncover

significant factors characterized by focusing on an entity or a single phenomenon when this design is employed. It will also enable the study to identify any existing problems about online learning affecting parents for a very long time; therefore, transcendental phenomenology will be used. According to Alase (2017), it provides a logical, systematic, and coherent design component with clear data collection and analysis procedures that lead to an essential description of the identified experiences. For example, Creswell (2013) describes how interviews are used to identify the systematic personal experience of research participants.

Research Questions

The study is guided by one central question and three sub-questions. The study aims to answer the following research question:

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences and perceptions of public elementary school parents concerning online learning instruction for their children?

Sub-Question One

What are academic support challenges faced by parents of public elementary school students receiving online instruction?

Sub-Question Two

How can parents of public elementary school students contribute to the effectiveness of online learning for public elementary school children?

Sub-Question Three

What are the parents' recommendations for education leaders concerning the implementation of online learning for public elementary school children to ensure teaching presence?

Setting and Participants

Setting and participants form an integral part of any phenomenological study. In qualitative research, the focus is not just providing generalization but rather a methodology of broadly exploring the main phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition to that, participant selection is an important step when outlining the aspects of the study (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). It is prudent to identify the setting and participants for this research based on this.

Site

The location will be Center for Adoption Support and Education in Maryland. The center has a population of approximately 500 foster parents and professionals, 51 staff. The demographic also includes children, teens, adults, and their families. This study will target the parents to provide study population sampling. Participants will be selected from this site because of the unique experiences of the phenomenon under study to help provide rich information that is detailed research (Patton, 2015). The center selected is in Maryland and will represent K-5 parents. Over the past three years, parents have been engaged and involved in assisting their children in receiving online course delivery forms. These make the selection of this setting a good fit. The teachers, the principal, and the parents' association of the school will be supportive in making the first contact with K-5 students' parents to select the needed participants for this research. The setting is well organized, and leadership is structured appropriately.

Participants

The participants in this research will consist of 15 parents of K-5 students at Center of Adoption Support and Education in Maryland. The participants will be adults from age groups 20 to 60. These are parents who have been helping their children with online learning. The study will employ a purposive sampling approach. According to Ilker et al. (2016), purposive sampling

is a deliberate way of selecting participants based on their qualities. Parents whose children are in the school will be selected for interviews and complete an electronic screening form. The participants will be eight female adults and seven male adults for the study; multiple ethnicities will be considered and include five Whites, five Blacks, four Latinos, and one other ethnic group.

The sampling approach will be useful due to the small number of participants needed. Patton (2015) stated that purposive sampling helps collect useful information for a study. This sampling approach is mostly characterized by integrating specific pre-selective standards that participants meet (Padilla, 2015). This sampling approach will help create a homogenous group of experienced participants who know the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). I will choose participants who have experience with the phenomenon under study and are willing to speak about their experiences and thoughts. I will send invitation to participate letters out to the prospective participants.

Researcher Positionality

As a person who advocates for technology integration in education and believes that teaching will not be relevant until the learner is prepared as a creator to effect positive change in the immediate environment. Students can learn to create their world through the power of God as well as relevant experience, tools, and support from parents and teachers. Because of that, I believe learners need the necessary technology to learn wherever they are and at any time. This section will present interpretive framework, philosophical, ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions (Crotty, 2003).

Interpretive Framework

The interpretive frameworks are sometimes considered a basic set of values guided by action (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The approach and my chosen paradigm is social constructivism. Social constructivism is a learning and knowledge theory. It stresses that knowledge and reality are actively formed by social interactions and relationships. It requires students to cooperate and critically analyze a given issue. Examples of collaborative learning activities are group inquiry, group problem solving, debates, and simulations (Lynch, 2016). This will help establish the understanding of the world in which the research participants live and work. As for the development of multiple meanings, this study will look for parents' viewpoints.

Philosophical Assumptions

Ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions are integrated within the interpretive frameworks that researchers use (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My philosophical assumption guiding this research is my self-awareness known by my emotions, thoughts, and senses. Also, I believe that self-awareness of other humans exists, and they also have thoughts, emotions, and senses. Having that in mind, my research will be guided by my philosophical assumption that individuals have thoughts about things they experience and that providing them with an opportunity to share will improve similar experiences in the future. That is why this study is planned to provide parents of K-5 students with the opportunity to share their experiences about online learning.

Ontological Assumption

My ontological assumption led to the choice of the research with emphasis on the nature of reality and its characteristics-- the "nature of reality" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 20). Crotty (2003) defined ontology as the study of being and has to do with what kind of world we are

examining, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such. Guba (1981) stated that the ontological assumptions are those that respond to the question such as what is there that can be known? or what is the nature of reality? This assumption will work well for the study as the researcher seeks to discover something that needs to be known. Parents need to provide and reveal the main reason why they like or dislike online learning programs before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Epistemological Assumption

The epistemological view used in this study is constructionism. Crotty (2003) defined constructionism as the view that all knowledge and, therefore, all meaningful reality is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of the interaction between human beings and their world and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context. Hence, this means meaning is not discovered but rather constructed. The research will try to find an answer to the question, “How can parents of K-5 students contribute to the effectiveness of online learning?” For this qualitative transcendental study, the construction of meaning and its transmission within an essentially social context will be shown in interviews, documents, and observations.

Axiological Assumption

In axiological assumption, the researcher makes his values known in the study and actively reports their values and biases and the value and nature of information gathered from the field. Researcher values may affect the conduct of research. This assumption assesses the research process. My social, moral, and personal values have influenced me to identify a research topic to focus on online learning. As a researcher, it is my responsibility to safeguard participants and their data collected for the study. The safeguarding participant’s data will be

communicated to them before collection.

Researcher's Role

As primary researcher in conducting this study, I have responsibilities to ensure that the study is executed properly and ends successfully with avoidance of personal bias as much as possible. One of my roles is to try to access the feelings and thoughts of my research participants who have no close relationship with me. According to Sutton and Austin (2015), this role is not an easy task since it involves talking to people to ask them about things that might be personal to them. Sometimes, participants' experiences might be fresh, whereas relying on past experiences might be difficult. Another responsibility is to design data collection instruments like questions and observation forms to collect data from participants.

In addition to that, I will also employ "bracketing" to reduce the possibility of personal bias. *Bracketing* will involve reflexively identifying and putting aside personal views, experiences, and prejudgments that could influence the research data interpretation (Fischer, 2009). Bracketing is a means of abstaining from judgment or staying away from the everyday, commonplace way of seeing things (Moustakas, 1994). In reducing or avoiding the possibility of cultural bias, I will be mindful to state participants' responses during interviews using their own words, phrases, and framing devices. If they use unfamiliar vocabulary or refer to an unknown topic, clarification will be sought before interpreting the data. It is also important for me to seek elaboration about a topic from a responder where necessary before attempting to add information, as the context of their answers may vary from my initial understanding (Fischer, 2009).

As a researcher at the data collection site, I must safeguard participants and their data during and after data collection. The safeguarding participants' data will be communicated to

them before collection. When multiple data are received, I will analyze and report findings. According to Speziale and Carpenter (2007), collecting data from many sources provides breadth and depth to a study by ensuring complete and thorough findings. This is known as triangulation. I will also check for alternative explanations, review findings with peers, and ask others to help review my conclusions as a major role during this study. Simundić (2013) stated that to avoid bias in sample selection, it is important to employ the use of other methods of data collection.

Procedures

In every research or study, outlining procedures is very critical. After identifying and defining the purpose of the research problem, I will seek permission and start the research recruitment process. I will then implement the research design and begin to collect data from participants who, in this phenomenon, are parents of K-5 students. Interviews will be employed to collect the data from the participants.

Schedules will be made with participants for interviews. After the data collection, there will be analysis followed by reporting findings. The data analysis will follow the modified van Kaam approach, which Moustakas popularized in 1994 (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach in analyzing data was designed to support phenomenological studies.

Permissions

I will seek permission from the site director I will be using for the study. Therefore, an official letter will be written to the site authority. Thus, getting permission from the site to use it for the study. If there is any delay in responding to my request by the site authority, I will do a follow-up. Once the site is approved, the next step will be applying to Institutional Review Board (IRB). The research cannot start until IRB approval (Liberty University, 2021).

Recruitment Plan

Once I get permission for the research site and IRB approval, I will target participants, screen, and sustain the selected participants. The study will include 15 participants, who will be the sample size. Creswell (2013) suggested that a sample range between 15 and 30 interviews is adequate. Also, according to Patton (2015), thematic saturation is reached after interviewing 15 participants. However, more than 15 parents will be contacted and selected during recruitment. Identifying and selecting more parents helps minimize attrition, as some could withdraw from being participants.

The target participants will be adults with the age groups 20 to 60. The participants will be identified based on how they have helped children with online learning, must have at least one student enrolled in a K-5 school, and must be at least 20 years of age. This sampling approach will help create a homogenous group of experienced participants who know the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Interview Questions Experts Panel

The research procedure included experts panel reviewing and giving feedback on the interview questions designed for participants. The expert panel of three reviewed the main interview questions and the focus group interview questions. Having experts reviewing the questions ensure that questions that will be presented to participants to respond are appropriate. Also, the interview questions are alignment with the research's central question and the sub-questions.

Data Collection Plan

According to Bhandari (2022), data collection in research allows the researcher to gain first-hand knowledge and original insights into the research problem. This research will utilize interviews, a focus group, and analysis of documents. A phenomenology study requires careful

methodologies to depict how the participants experience a phenomenon. According to Patton (2015), these include how they feel about it, how they describe it, and how they perceive it. Participants' experience could be described based on how they judge, remember it, and their ability to discuss it with others. Therefore, to collect data, I need to undertake an in-depth interview with participants who have had a direct experience with the phenomenon compared to a secondary person who might give an account (Patton, 2015).

In this phenomenological study, I have selected interviews as a primary technique of collecting data. Moustakas (1994) explained that the phenomenological approach of interview interactive and informal process aiming at arousing a clear account of the study participant's experience of the phenomenon. Other strategies in the study to collect data include a focus group and document analysis. Using multiple collections will help reach every participant during data collection.

Demographic Data

Trevethan and Ma (2020) explained that demographic information is useful because those who read about research would probably like to know such basic things as how many males versus females were in the sample, and what their (rough) ages were. Also, there might be demographic data that are important in relation to research. In this research, participants will be asked to provide answers to their gender, age, how many years their children have experienced online learning. The demographic data will also capture the ethnicity of the participants.

Individual Interviews

The interview sessions will be scheduled at times convenient for the participants. This interview approach will reduce researcher bias. To maintain impartiality and avoid bias in this qualitative research, I will have participants review their interview results and verify with more

information if needed. The interview process will enable me to explore participants' views instead of influencing them (Denscombe, 2014). The study will use an interview guide approach. A list of developed interview questions will be used. Patton (2015) asserted that having a list of questions beforehand ensures systematic proceedings and reduces any issues. To add to that phenomenological interview is described as a conversation with a purpose (Kahn & Cannell, 1957).

To achieve the purpose of the interview, I need to possess listening and personal interaction skills. The interview sessions will be conducted onsite at the school premises, and we will have an alternative online session. Pre-interviews will precede the interview. This session aims to establish a relationship in developing and understanding participants (Rossman, 2014). I will review the informed consent document with individual participants during this stage and read and sign if they agree to be part of the study participants.

Individual Interview Questions

1. Please introduce yourself to me. CRQ
2. Please walk me through your experience with online learning. CRQ
3. As a parent, how does your experience with online educational programs compare with traditional in-class instruction? SQ1
4. In what ways has online education programs served your child's educational needs? SQ1
5. As a parent, how do you feel about the communication between your ward and the instructor? SQ3
6. As a parent, how have your child's learning outcomes be achieved through online education? SQ2

7. As a parent, how do you view the feedback from the instructor? SQ3
8. As a parent, what do you think about the technical support provided by the school?
SQ3
9. How does the amount of coursework in your child's online education program compare with traditional in-class instruction? SQ2
10. As a parent, what could you do to improve the quality of your child's online education? SQ2
11. What do you think are the important factors determining the quality of the online instruction your child receives? SQ2
12. As a parent, how does your child's online learning impact your work? SQ3
13. What are your thoughts concerning making online learning available to all public elementary schools? SQ2
14. What suggestions do you have for other parents of elementary school students?
15. As a parent, what is the overall quality of the online education your child receives?
SQ3

Questions one through three are introductory and priming questions. It is designed to welcome the participants and smoothly lead them to begin providing information about the general overview they have about online learning, which will lead them to develop in subsequent questions. Patton (2015) suggested that conversational interviews focus on participant's experiences. Questions four through seven are intended to elicit participant's ideas regarding the flexibility and feelings about communicating with their children's online instructors. Question seven tries to find out from participants how they see feedback from online instructors about

their wards works. Rossman (2014) suggested allowing participants to provide feedback establishes trust in data collection.

Question eight encourages participants to reflect on technical support provided by the school. There are possibilities that students might run into an issue during an online session that will need technical assistance from the school. The ninth question asks participants to compare online learning to traditional learning. Denscombe (2014) asserted this would help identify participant' views about the two approaches and weigh them accordingly.

Questions ten and eleven are designed to gather information on how participants think online learning can be improved (Denscombe, 2014). Also, these questions will help identify participant' expectations when it comes to online learning programs. Question twelve identifies the impacts online learning has on online elementary student' parent' work. Questions thirteen, and fourteen identify parent' recommendations and suggestions to help improve online learning. The question fifteen enables participants to rate online learning and give reasons for their ratings, providing the study information and exploring in-depth views on the key reason the research is being conducted.

Individual Interview Data Analysis Plan

The interview data analysis plan will utilize the steps of modified van Kaam and recommended by Creswell to analyze the data from a phenomenological perspective. Given this methodology, the modified van Kaam approach, popularized by Moustakas (1994), is the most used form of data analysis, in large part because of the significant amount of data that is needed for this analysis. There are seven steps in the modified van Kaam analysis: (a) listing and grouping, (b) reduction and elimination, (c) clustering and thematizing, (d) validation, (e)

individual textual description, (f) individual structural description, and (g) textural-structural description.

Step 1: Listing and grouping: This step is also known as horizontalization. In the data analysis phase, this step will identify and list expressions significant to the experience from the interviews and conduct preliminary groupings. I will observe all data at this step, considering that every data is important (Creswell, 2012; Moustakas, 1994). Any statement found to be repetitive and overlapping will be ignored. The “clean” data and the remaining data are known as horizons.

Step 2: Reduction and elimination: In this second phase of the data analysis process, I will group the clean data into themes and reduce and eliminate any unconnected statements. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), each statement ascertains through testing to see if it contains an important and adequate moment of experience. Moustakas (1994) outlined that the textual meanings, which are horizons, provide a vivid description of the phenomenon.

Step 3: Clustering and thematizing: In this third phase, I will describe the essence of the experience based on the themes and clusters. This will help to create the “core themes of the experience” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 121). By clustering the clean data, I will be able to identify the common themes or qualities to furnish suitable meaning to the structure of the experiences.

Step 4: Validation: In this step of the data analysis, I will compare the clustered themes against the complete record of the participants. This is to ascertain the accuracy making sure that there is a clear representation across all data sources. This included the continuous revisiting and re-reading of the transcripts to validate the clustered themes.

Step 5: Individual textural descriptions: During this data analysis stage, I will focus on the main textural narrative or description to explain the participants' experiences; this will be

done by employing the original (verbatim) excerpts of the interview sessions. I will then compose a detailed description of the participants' experiences. Moustakas (1994) asserted that In the textural description of an experience, nothing is excluded and phrase is granted equal attention.

Step 6: Individual structural description: I will describe how the participants experienced the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). According to Creswell (2013), the structural descriptions focus on how the various participants' experiences occurred. I will then reflect on the framework and setting, establishing which realistically experienced phenomenon. At this step, I will use imaginative variation to picture how the experiences happened to form structural themes.

Step 7: Textural-structural description: This is forming a textural-structural description of the fullness of meanings and essences of the lived experiences. This is the final step of the modified van Kaam analysis. This step intends to provide the essence of the lived experience. According to Moustakas (1994), this final step is the intuitive integration of the fundamental textural and structural descriptions put together as a unified statement of the essences of the experience of the a whole phenomenon.

Document Analysis

Another method of data collection for this study is document analysis. According to Bowen (2009), institutional and organizational documents have been used in qualitative research years. It is a systematic procedure linked to reviewing and evaluating the documents. These documents include both electronic and printed material. In this study, I will obtain documents from the parents and gain their perceptions and lived experiences related to those documents. The documents will include copies of complaints or praises they submitted about their child's online learning experiences. Documents will also include report cards showing differences or

declines in students' grades since being online. An appropriate amount of time will be dedicated to collecting meaningful data that will provide a clear understanding of the phenomenon of parents' perceptions about online learning education. The participants will bring in documents and answer the following prompts:

1. What complaints have you submitted about your child's online learning experiences?

SQ1

2. What praises do you receive about your child's online learning experiences? SQ3

3. How often do you submit complaints or receive praises about your child's online experiences? SQ1

Questions one and three support research sub-question one. They are to identify academic challenges in the online learning environment. The questions are grounded on the community of inquiry framework (Garrison et al., 2000). Beckman et al. (2019) found that challenges impact parental involvement in online learning. Challenges complaints submitted by parents could help identify a problem to solve. Question two supports research sub-question three. It will elicit participants' satisfaction with online learning programs in elementary schools. This question is grounded on Bandura's social cognitive theory, which has self-efficacy as a central concept (Bandura, 1986).

Document Analysis Data Analysis Plan.

The process to analyze the collected documents from parents will include skimming, reading, and interpretation (Bowen, 2009). It will involve superficially examining the raw data. Van Kaam's step one: listing and grouping will be applied here. The step will identify, list, and group expressions significant to participants lived experiences. I will observe all data, considering that every data or statement is relevant. Any submission found to be repetitive and

overlapping will be ignored. The raw data, and the emerging themes will then become the categories of the analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). This process will focus on careful reading and review of the data while utilizing van Kaam's modified method of analysis to analyze the entire data.

Focus Groups

Focus groups will be used as another data collection method. According to Stewart and Shamdasani (1990), focus groups were originally known as *focused interviews*, a technique developed after World War II to evaluate audience response to radio programs. During a focus group, the interviewer creates a nurturing and permissive environment to encourage diverse perceptions and viewpoints without forcing participants to vote, plan or reach an agreement (Krueger, 1988). This study will use interview to gather firsthand information about participants during the focus group sessions. This will occur during a scheduled online zoom session. The focus group procedure will use the interview protocol below (See Appendix A for additional information).

Focus Group Questions

1. Please introduce yourself. CRQ
2. Can you walk me through a typical week in your child's online schooling? SQ1
3. What kind of internet access does your home have? SQ1
4. How would you describe the limit of your internet data access? SQ1
5. What are the work statuses of all adults in your family? SQ1
6. What different ways can parents educate their child in the online learning program?
SQ2

7. How can your child's school district support you in making online learning successful? SQ3
8. What advice would you give the teachers to improve student engagement within the online learning environment? SQ3

Question one is an introductory and priming question. It is designed to welcome the participants and smoothly lead them to question two to begin providing information about the general overview they have about online learning, which will lead them to prepare for the next question. According to Patton (2015), interviews focus on participants' experiences about the topic in discussion. Questions two through five are intended to elicit participants' views regarding the challenges they face and the support they get with regards to their child's online learning. These questions will help answer research sub-question 1.

Question six is designed to find the possible ways parents can contribute to support their child's online learning program. Questions seven and eight are designed to gather information on how participants think about the best ways to improve online learning in elementary schools. Rossman (2014) suggested allowing participants to provide feedback establishes trust in data collection.

Focus Group Data Analysis Plan (Data Analysis Plan #3)

After the focus group interview and data have been obtained, the next stage is to implement the data analysis steps of Moustakas (1994) modified method of van Kaam to analyze the data from a phenomenological perspective as described under the interview data analysis section include: (a) listing and grouping, (b) reduction and elimination, (c) clustering and thematizing, (d) validation, (e) individual textual description, (f) individual structural description,

and (g) textural-structural description. These are the same processes noted in the data analysis of transcripts related to the previously discussed individual interviews.

Data Synthesis

The purpose of the phenomenological study is to comprehend a particular experience by collecting data from people who lived the experience and expressing the main ideas and the central structure of the experience through what is termed analysis (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2015). After the analysis of the various data, the data will then be synthesized to ensure that research questions and themes from the collected data are in alignment and presents research findings.

During the data synthesis of this study, the synthesis of meanings and essences will be reviewed, look at all the data, and refine them to themes. All themes identified during the interview, document data, and focus group analyses will be reorganized to construct a textural and structural description of the whole meanings and essences of the experiences, and much of the themes align with the research questions. The text will include a detailed description of participants' experiences. "In the textural description of an experience, nothing is omitted; every dimension or phrase is granted equal attention and is included" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 78). The focus here is to provide the essence of the settled experience (Moustakas, 1994). The findings from the data analysis of this phenomenological study will provide an insight into parents' perceptions and experiences about K-5 online schools.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is necessary to cover the principles of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Guba, 1981). This research will follow laid-down procedures to help increase trust. The research procedures will make sure that participants' voices are heard.

This section describes the various steps that will be taken to ensure trustworthiness as recommended by Guba.

Credibility

The credibility criteria ensure that the qualitative study findings are believable from the viewpoint of the research participants (Trochim, 2006). I will employ an appropriate technique to determine the accuracy of the study results. In addition, I will use data triangulation, multiple analyses, and multiple member checks to establish credibility. Triangulation uses multiple data sources in qualitative research to understand phenomena (Patton, 1999).

Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research describes external validity (Creswell, 2012). The study will establish evidence to support the general findings. Also, a data summary and detailed descriptions will be provided to ensure the applicability of the research findings in other contexts. I will employ descriptions in the form of a detailed account of parents' experiences through data collection to enhance transferability.

Dependability

Trochim (2006) stated that the dependability in a qualitative study is concerned with an event where a study produces the same results when the same thing is observed twice. It is also associated with the consistency of the research findings. This criterion ensures that the research results and findings are consistent and repeated when necessary. To ensure the dependability of the research, I will re-question people about key issues.

Confirmability

According to Simkin (2017), conformity in qualitative research is a type of social influence that stimulates a change in principle or conduct to fit in. The study has been designed

so that it conforms to standards and its findings will be free from research personal interest and bias (Guba, 1981). The major strategy for determining this confirmability in the study is by using audits of research procedures and findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are very crucial in conducting every research. This study will not have such issues since the study participants are all parents of K-5 students. Secondly, participants' confidentiality will be ensured. I will not disclose the names of the participants, and when it becomes needed for me to release any name, a pseudonym will be used (Surmiak, 2018). Another ethical consideration is protecting data collected from participants. It will be securely stored and protected from being accessed by external persons. This will be done by encrypting the hardisk containing the digital files and locking hard copies in cabinets.

To summarize ethical considerations, proper tabulation will be designed to ensure that all information received is considered. In addition to that, preserving participants' anonymity will be considered. To further prevent privacy violations, I will use available tools to store data collected from the participants securely. I will also implement five principles of research ethics. These are: (a) minimizing the risk of harm, (b) obtaining informed consent, (c) protecting anonymity and confidentiality, (d) avoiding deceptive practices, and (e) providing the right to withdraw (Lund Research, 2012).

Summary

The purpose of this current qualitative phenomenological study will be to explore the lived experiences and perceptions of public elementary school parents concerning the online learning instruction for their children at the Center for Adoption Support and Education . The phenomenological approach will help identify parents' lived experiences about the phenomenon

(Merriam, 2009). The chapter has introduced the qualitative research design and methodology. It has also outlined the purpose of choosing a phenomenological research approach. In this chapter, the research method plans discussed steps to selecting participants, data collection, and analysis processes for the study. Finally, trustworthiness and ethical considerations were discussed and how they would be implemented in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of Chapter Four is to show the results of the research data analysis as findings. The study was an exploration of the lived experiences and perceptions of fifteen parents of online learning students in the state of Maryland. Approaches to phenomenological research steered data collection and analysis. The results represent the parents' expressions to share a deep perspective into their lived experiences. To answer the central research question on the lived experiences and perceptions of public elementary school parents concerning online learning instruction for their children, I established an inquiry structure based on three sub-questions:

1. What are academic support challenges faced by parents of public elementary school students receiving online instruction?
2. How can parents of public elementary school students contribute to the effectiveness of online learning for public elementary school children?
3. What are the parents' recommendations to education leaders concerning the implementation of online learning for public elementary school children to ensure teaching presence?

The chapter will include participant descriptions; the data, in the form of narrative themes and tables presented by theme; outlier data; and research question responses. The study allowed the participants' opinions to be heard based on their personal experiences and thoughts. Interpretive comments are provided to add further thought to the interview data. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the themes that emerged from the study data.

Participants

Fifteen participants shared their experiences as part of this study to gain a deeper understanding of their perceptions and lived experiences of online learning. Interviews with participants occurred over 3 weeks. The participants included seven men and eight women ranging in age from 20 to 60, race/ethnicity, and their child's grade level. Participants' races included five Blacks, five Whites, four Latinos, and one other. Two are parents of 1st grade online learners. Five participants supported 2nd graders and online learners. Three parents supporting 3rd graders online learners, three parents supporting 4th graders, and two supporting 5th graders. The selected participant demographics overview is depicted in Table 1; Table 2 summarizes the participants' race/ethnicity; and Table 3 summarizes the participants' gender.

Table 1

Participant's Demographics Overview

Pseudonym	Race/ Ethnicity	Gender	Child Grade
			Level
Benedict	Black	Male	3 rd
Peter	White	Male	2 nd
Amy	White	Female	4 th
Jackson	Blac ^k	Female	1 st
Maro	Latino	Male	3 rd
Jasena	Latino	Female	2 nd
Lee	Black	Male	4 th
Tyson	Black	Male	5 th
Laura	Latino	Female	3 rd
Towson	White	Female	1 st
Ben	White	Male	2 nd
Joy	White	Female	5 th
Brandy	Black	Female	4 th
Johnson	Other	Male	2 nd

Laurel

Latino

Female

2nd

Table 2

Participant's Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	N	Percent
Black	5	33.3
White	5	33.3
Latino	4	26.7
Other	1	6.7
Total	15	100%

Table 3

Participant's Gender

Gender	N	Percent
Male	7	46.7
Female	8	53.3
Total	15	100%

Results

The themes that emerged from the data analysis basis expressed during Chapter Three, established a structure for the interview data, document analysis data, and focus group data given by participants. It was then summarized to reduce the data to answer the research questions. Various explanatory tags were designated to quotations of the raw data derived from the participants' responses (Nowak & Lazarz, 2021). Instruments data which were interview answers and documents provided by parents were listed and grouped, identifying and listing expressions significant to the experience from the interviews and analysis. Any statement found to be repetitive and overlapping was ignored. The clean data and the essence of the meanings were finally synthesized to develop the themes and interpretive concepts that describe and explain aspects of the data. The themes are the foundation for the descriptive and interpretive dimension of the parents' perceptions and lived experiences.

Four themes emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data. The themes are as follows: (a) parents' experience with online learning, (b) parents' contributions, (c) factors determining the quality of online instruction, and (d) parents' recommendations. The emerging themes were discovered after analyzing data obtained from participants' interviews, the focus group answers, and documents presented by parents for analysis.

Theme 1: Parents experience with online learning

Regarding parents' experience with online learning, the fifteen parents of online students shared their experiences including challenges when they are supporting their children's online instruction. They also compared online learning to traditional face-to-face instructions. The parents also demonstrated changes they are presented with when supporting their children during online learning instructions. This theme relates to research sub-question 1 and 3. Thus, parents of

public elementary school students' academic support challenges and their recommendations to education leaders concerning online instruction.

Subtheme 1: Parents' experience of online educational programs compared with traditional in-class instruction

Most parents agreed that online learning can be convenient because they do not have to drive their kids to school and students can have access to their learning materials on their digital devices. Parents maintained that online learning provides academic flexibility which allows students to learn anywhere and at any time. They, however, acknowledged when it comes to elementary learners especially children in K-5, the traditional face-to-face is the best as Peter explained "traditional face-to-face is the best though online is convenient."

Subtheme 2: Challenges faced by parents of K-5 students receiving online instruction

When participants were asked to share their challenges faced when children receive online instruction, participants answered and identified the challenge of balancing responsibilities such as parent employment demands and learner needs. They also indicated that they sometimes feel overwhelmed. The struggle to balance learners' needs and their employment demands is reported by parents. Laura stated, "I have to keep changing schedules to be able to support my child's online instruction." Eight out of the fifteen parents reported feeling overwhelmed when balancing responsibilities with their children's online instruction.

Theme 2: Parents' contributions to the effectiveness of online learning

Participants' responses demonstrated they have been helpful to children with their online instruction. Parents know what they need to do during their children's online instruction and sessions. Parents highlighted their responsibility to communicate with their kids' school and teachers whenever required to perform regarding the effectiveness of their children's online

learning. Johnson stated, "it is important to provide good monitoring to my child when it comes to having your child learn online." This theme relates to research sub-question 2 and 3; that is, parents' contribution to the effectiveness of online learning for public elementary school children and their recommendations to education leaders concerning online instruction.

Subtheme 1: Parents' role in improving the quality of their children's online education

All the participants agreed to have played or been playing a role in ensuring effective online learning for their children in K-5 levels of elementary schools. The parents' responses about how they support their children to improve online education and provide for their educational needs were positive. As Joy said, "it is my responsibility to ensure that my child's device is powered and connected to the internet."

Subtheme 2: How online education programs serve child's educational needs

Participants agreed that online learning has been very beneficial, especially during the time most in-person classroom instruction was closed. Online learning provided the best alternative. Participants acknowledged the value of online learning. Brandy asserted that "it helps to ensure the safety of my child as well as establish a good connection with my child." Amy also stated "In days where schools cannot be organized in-person such as COVID era, snow days. My child will still be able to meet teachers and learn online."

Theme 3: Factors determining the quality of the online instruction for K-5 learners

Participants provided responses leading to factors determining quality online instruction for K-5 online learners. Parents agreed that both schools and parents have roles to play in delivering the best quality online instruction for K-5 learners. Towson asserted, "I'm challenged with the learning situation of my child. she is a 1st grader learning, and her weakness is in reading and writing. Sometimes she does not want to join Zoom sessions simply because she will

be asked to read, and because of this, I suggest teachers should know more about these elementary learners.” This theme relates to research subquestions 1, 2, and 3. Thus the interview comments address challenges and how to find and suggest solutions to ensure the best online instruction practices for K-5 learners.

Subtheme 1: Communication between parents, students, and teachers

Parents noted that communication between parents and teachers is key to ensuring quality online instruction for learners in K-5 levels within the education system. Five parents stated that because online instruction modalities meanly occur outside the traditional face-to-face classrooms, interactions between parents, students, and teachers must occur more frequently. Maro said, “online learning programs without effective communication will fail since everyone is hiding behind a device.” Parents also believe there is a need for cooperation between school and parents. Three parents showed communications they had had with their children's school.

Subtheme 2: Provision of technical support by schools

Participants agreed that their children’s school provides support before and during online learning instruction. Peter stated, “my child’s school plays a great role in resolving technical issues.” Four parents disclosed that their school has set up a technical support unit responsible for online classroom technical support. They also call parents at least twice a week to find out if there are any issues preventing learners from actively participating in online sessions and activities. However, some parents reported inadequate support, which makes it sometimes difficult for their children to complete a required task. Tyson said, “my child’s school has to do more to improve technical support such as signing in to learning management system. It sometimes has issues.”

Theme 4: Parents' recommendations to education leaders concerning the implementation of online learning

Parents presented their suggestions to education leaders to help implement online learning programs. The interview transcript identified keynotes parents recommend to education leaders such as policymakers, school administrators, principals, technology integration specialists, and teachers. When speaking about parents' recommendations, Jasena suggested that "education authorities who implement online learning programs should communicate effectively with parents and also assist them with resources that can help parents support their children online." To policymakers, parents recommended policies that support learners' diversity and the readiness of schools and teachers to help deliver more inclusive education to support all types of learners.

Subtheme 1: Parents' thoughts concerning making online learning available to all public K-5 schools

Six participants asserted that online learning is not for everyone, and it could be effective if parents give their children the needed support. Two parents stated that online learning is not meant for every child. However, it could be beneficial to some children, especially children with disabilities. Lee noted that "parents need to make sure to identify the needs of their children before selecting an online program for their children is appropriate."

Subtheme 2: Parents' suggestions to other parents of K-5 school students

They suggested that parents of K-5 students can use technology to support their children who might have writing disabilities. Laurel said, "my daughter's use of technology to equalize her writing abilities. The technology was proposed by her daughter's school.'She doesn't type

anymore. She uses a voice recorder. She takes her laptop, opens it, and speaks into it. The software knows her voice and types when she speaks."

Outlier Data and Findings

One unexpected finding did not align with any specific research questions or themes. After participants' responses and discussions were mapped to the research questions and outlined themes, it emerged that there was one finding which could not be associated with any of the set questions and themes. That has been explained as an outlier finding.

Outlier Finding

One parent said her third grader could manage herself during online instruction without the parent's assistance. Jackson said, "my child can do everything for herself. My child is able to log in to a student account to review content and complete assignments. Since my child is independent, minimal supervision is need." It is not uncommon for many third-graders to set themselves up for online learning. At such grade level and age, a child who can do what the parent described might be exceptional. This finding is essential when developing children to be independent in the online learning environment.

Research Question Responses

This section presents concise answers to the research questions to prepare them for the discussion in Chapter Five. This section will provide short and direct narrative answers to each research question using the themes developed in the earlier stage. Participant quotes that are suitable to support the responses will answer the central research question and the three sub-questions.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences and perceptions of public elementary school parents concerning online learning instruction for their children?

The participants' perceptions and lived experience were that K-5 online learning instruction is both innovative and challenging. Lee said, "it is an innovative way of ensuring instruction takes place irrespective of bad weather and health emergencies. Online learning is also beneficial to children with disabilities. They can use writing and speech tools." As for the frustrating part, Joy said, "continuously adjusting my work schedules to support my child's online instruction together with my lack of technology skills makes it frustrating for me."

Sub Question One

What are the academic support challenges faced by parents of public elementary school students receiving online instruction?

Participants have challenges with their children's online learning program. Participants reported feeling overwhelmed when balancing responsibilities with their children's online education. They cited the amount of content presented to their children as a lot. As Lee said, "I sometimes feel overwhelmed as a parent concerning the many contents offered to my child that I have to help her walk through, and I have insufficient time to meet all these tasks."

Sub Question Two

How can parents of public elementary school students contribute to the effectiveness of online learning for public elementary school children?

Participants stated they contribute to their children's online education. They provide mental, financial, and physiological support to their children to ensure their success when it comes to online learning and development. Benedict said, "I dress up my child, provide food,

and set online learning devices up, making sure he is connected to the internet and ready for connecting to online live sessions."

Sub Question Three

What are the parents' recommendations to education leaders concerning the implementation of online learning for public elementary school children to ensure teaching presence?

Participants acknowledged that education leaders are playing their roles in online learning instruction. However, they believe they can do better to help improve the program. Participants recommended that the workload for K-5 students should be reviewed and technical support provided to parents. Participants also recommended effective communication; as Jasena said, "education authorities who implement online learning programs should communicate effectively with parents and also assist them with resources that can help parents support their children online."

Summary

The study themes are parents' experience with online learning, parents' contributions, factors determining the quality of online instruction, and parents' recommendations. Each theme presented a descriptive narrative representing parents' perceptions and experiences about online learning in K-5 education. As depicted in the descriptions of the themes in earlier sections, participants expressed negative and positive perceptions of online learning. The negatives were due to challenges faced by parents when supporting their children's online education, such as overwhelming content, technical support, and work schedule issues. On the contrary, the positive perception of online learning included the ability of online learning programs to support students with learning disabilities and students having the flexibility to learn at their own pace.

Participants identified how they are helping their children's online education and provided recommendations to education leaders on improving K-5 and elementary online education.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

This study explored parents of k-5 children views on online learning instruction. The study focused on understanding public elementary school parents' perceptions and lived experiences concerning online learning instruction for their children at the Center for Adoption Support and Education in Maryland. This chapter is distinctive because it uses interpretations and ideas to refine the study's findings and interpret them for the reader. The chapter consists of five discussion subsections: (a) interpretation of findings, (b) implications for policy and practice, (c) theoretical and methodological implications, (d) limitations and delimitations, and (e) recommendations for future research.

Discussion

The purpose of this section is to discuss the study's findings in light of the formed themes. The discussion highlights the researcher's voice as an expert on this topic. The findings show vital points for discussion, summarize the main findings, and compare them with existing literature by supporting the interpretations of findings with empirical and theoretical sources and providing evidence from the study. The discussion section has five major subsections, including (a) Interpretation of Findings, (b) Implications for Policy or Practice, (c) Theoretical and Empirical Implications, (d) Limitations and Delimitations, and (e) Recommendations for Future Research.

Interpretation of Findings

The interpretation of the study findings discusses five main themes: first, parents' experience with online learning. Second, parents' responsibilities to the effectiveness of online

learning. Third, learning outcomes, fourth, factors determining the quality of the online instruction for K-5 learners, and fifth, parents' recommendations to education leaders concerning the implementation of online learning as the main themes of the study.

Summary of Thematic Findings

The study has identified parents' experience with online learning, parents' contributions to the effectiveness of online learning, factors determining the quality of the online instruction for K-5 learners, and parents' recommendations to education leaders concerning the implementation of online learning as the main themes of the study. The interrelated themes offer an explanatory description depicting parents' perceptions and experiences about online learning in K-5 education. As described in chapter four, parents expressed both positive and negative perceptions and experiences of online learning for K-5 instruction.

Parents' experience with online learning. Based on my findings, some parents have supported their children's online learning for many years, but some are new to this modality of elementary instruction. Parents perceived online education for K-5 to have both positive and negative outcomes. They identified the challenge of balancing responsibilities with employment demands and learner needs. Parents sometimes felt overwhelmed. Parents reported struggling to balance learners' needs and work demands with emphasis on their work schedules. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020) stated that most families do not have someone to take on the full-time role of supporting online education. Technical issues included connecting kids' devices to the internet and accessing the online learning management system, which poses many problems to parents with low technology skills.

Parents' Responsibilities. According to Bhamani et al. (2020), when children and parents collaborate during instructional activities, there is an excellent bond between them,

potentially increasing learning performance. Parents revealed how they have been helpful with their children's online instruction. Parents know what they need to do during their children's online education and sessions. Parents highlighted their responsibility to communicate with their kids' school and teachers whenever required to perform regarding the effectiveness of their children's online learning. Parents stated they have played and continue to play a unique role in ensuring effective online learning for their children in K-5 levels of elementary schools. The parents' responses about how they support their children to improve online education and provide for their educational needs were positive. As they acknowledged, it is their responsibility to ensure that my child's device is powered and connected to the internet.

Learning Outcomes. Educators and parents aim to ensure learners reach specific academic learning outcomes within a specified academic period. Parents agreed that online learning had benefited their children, especially when most in-person classroom instruction was closed. Online learning provided the best alternative. Online parents wish for high-quality and grade-level content for their children's education. They asserted that students' academic progress would not be as significant if these factors were absent. Some of the parents stated teachers gave their children too much content and task. That may impact academic outcomes.

Factors determining the quality of the online instruction for K-5 learners. A similar study conducted by Basri et al. (2021) found that the limited ability of internet access was one of the most crucial issues that needed to be solved when introducing online learning. This study's findings identified factors determining the quality of online instruction for K-5 learners. Parents acknowledged that both schools and parents need to play their roles in delivering the best quality online instruction for K-5 learners. Parents commented that communication between parents and teachers is key to ensuring quality online instruction for learners in K-5 levels.

In addition, providing parents with technical support by schools is essential in delivering effective online education for K-5. Parents agreed that their children's schools offer technical support before and during online instruction. According to the participants is a crucial quality of providing quality online education. However, some parents reported inadequate support, which makes it sometimes difficult for their children to complete a required instructional task..

Parents' recommendations to education leaders concerning online learning instruction. The study findings identified keynotes to ensuring an effective online program. Parents presented their suggestions to education leaders to help implement online learning programs. Parents recommend education leaders such as policymakers, school administrators, principals, technology integration specialists, and teachers to help improve online learning.

Parents suggested education authorities who implement online learning programs should communicate effectively with parents and provide the needed resources to help parents support their children online. Parents recommended policies to support learners' diversity. Schools and teachers should be rs to help deliver more inclusive education to support all types of learners. Parents also asserted that parents must identify their children's needs before selecting an online program.

Implications for Policy or Practice

The research findings provide implications for policy and practice when implementing online learning as a mode of instruction. Online learning has indeed become the most appropriate modality of education during emergency situations like that of COVID-19. This section will discuss the implications of policy and practices regarding online learning instructional modality for K-15 students at an elementary school level.

Implications for Policy

The study's findings led the researcher to conclude that policies for online learning programs should consider situations where parents work full time for their families. Guidelines should be in place for learners' diversity and the readiness of schools and teachers to help deliver more inclusive education to support all types of online learners. In addition, policymakers should consider providing counseling as a supportive intervention to the parents of elementary online learning programs. Some parents can get frustrated using new devices and or technology.

The four themes, which emerged from the thorough analysis of the qualitative data collected, help inform policies and practices for k-5 online education and provide a foundation for further research. The results of this study provide prospective parents, policymakers, and educators within online elementary education with a better understanding of how parents' involvement may impact k-5 online learning.

Implications for Practice

The online instructional modality offers learners the most flexible education and the opportunity to access content anywhere, which also provides a customized learning experience, changing the teaching and learning practice. According to Leech et al. (2022), despite the numerous benefits of online instruction, the shift in education from in-person to online schooling comes with various challenges for learners and their parents. This study identified technical problems as a challenge to parents. Because of that, learners and their parents must be provided the needed support during online learning to help curb technical issues at home for effective online program implementation.

This study's findings have important implications for future practice and research. This study's findings are significant in understanding the types of challenges parents of K-5 students

have when supporting their children's online instruction. The results and implications from this study move researchers and practitioners toward a deeper understanding of how the perceptions and the lived experiences of parents of online learning learners promote or impede students' self-efficacy and academic success.

Theoretical and Empirical Implications

This research utilized the community of inquiry (CoI) as the theoretical pillar. Using the CoI framework in this study prepared the investigation on understanding parents of K-5 perceptions and lived experiences about online education. The CoI framework supported this study concerning the barriers that may create online learning inequality among families of k-5 students. The theoretical and empirical implications compare findings and patterns to existing literature to examine how parents' perceptions, contributions, and experiences impact their children's online education. The CoI framework also emphasizes the need for a collaborative learning environment where parents, students, and teachers can effectively contribute. The theoretical foundations are based on three different dimensions of CoI; (a) teaching presence, (b) cognitive presence, and (c) social presence (Garrison et al., 2000).

This study contributes to enforcing and reaffirming the need to ensure that the teaching and social presence of the CoI framework are implemented in any online learning programs. Ahmad (2020) explained that teaching presence is essential in balancing cognitive and social issues consistent with intended educational outcomes. Garrison et al. (2000) emphasized that there is a possibility of addressing structural concerns such as setting curriculum, designing methods, assessment, and establishing period parameters for online instruction.

This study is based on the community of inquiry and examined if the processes and structures of the online learning environment adequately consider the perceptions, contributions,

and technical support that parents of k-5 students need to participate in online education fully. Parents' responses indicated that not most of their issues are currently addressed. That is parents' concerns about students assigned more tasks. In addition, online school and parents' job schedules are not in favor of the teaching and social presence of online learning, which are foundations of the community of inquiry framework.

Limitations and Delimitations

Theofanidis and Fountouki (2019) defined research limitations as the aspects of methodology or design that influence the interpretation of the findings from research and are possible weaknesses that are usually out of the researcher's control. This study findings are analyzed and interpreted in the context of some limitations. The qualitative nature of the study provided the participants enough freedom to describe a detailed description of their perceptions and experiences. However, there was a limitation regarding the participants used in the study. Due to the geographic location and the limited number of participants used in the study, the findings should not be generalized to all parents in the United States.

The researcher's exposure as an online elementary teacher may have created biases and preconceived notions about the study and its findings. Although the researcher worked diligently to move beyond the limitations of these biases and preconceived notions, they may have influenced the study. Another related limitation in this study is that the researcher assumes participants shared their honest, lived perceptions and lived experiences, which may not be the case if they were nervous, uninterested, or uncomfortable. That is a limitation because participants are the data in this study. The data are incomplete if they are not honest and share as much detail as possible.

Miles and Scott (2017) stated that delimitations are self-imposed restrictions to a study compared to limitations that have inherent limits to a methodology. Delimitations are things the researcher controls, such as the location of the study. Delimitations are limitations purposefully set by researchers. They are concerned with the researchers' intents as the boundaries of their work so that the study's aims and objectives do not become impossible to achieve (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019).

The Center for Adoption Support and Education in Maryland, which is the site of the study, delimited the data on parents' perceptions as the nature of the study prevents the investigation from being conducted over a larger, more general area. The study delimited a sample study to 15 parents of students attending public schools in the Maryland region who are in kindergarten through fifth grade. Although this limits the applicability of this study to parents of all K-12 school students, the study intends to focus on the phenomenon of parent perceptions of online elementary education focusing on K-5.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research focused on parents' perceptions and experiences about online learning in elementary education. The study focused on parents of k-5 students in public elementary schools. Findings in this research based on interview data, document analysis data, and focus group data have led the researcher to make the following recommendations.

The research explored parents' perceptions about online learning for their children in K-5. The study enabled the researcher to understand parents' challenges when supporting their children's online learning instruction. Future research may identify the significant factors influencing parents to choose and reinforce online learning for their children in elementary school beyond K-5. Future research may conduct the study in the quantitative method to explore

parents' perceptions and lived experiences about online learning using parents of k-5 students receiving online instruction.

The study participants reside in the state of Maryland. Future researchers may consider expanding this study and obtaining a broader approach to include the surrounding states. Future studies should consider more general geographic coverage, particularly those in remote areas while combining other types of methods to accommodate parents who lack access to the internet. The researcher recommends researchers include parents of private elementary schools to provide instruction in online learning. The study limited participants to parents supporting their children's online learning program. For future studies, the researcher recommends researchers expand the participants to include guardians, grandparents of the child, and any family member who supports students' online instruction at home.

Conclusion

This qualitative, phenomenological study aims to understand public elementary school parents' perceptions and lived experiences concerning online learning instruction for their children. This dissertation presents the research in five chapters. The first chapter introduced the study with a broad overview of the fields of online learning education. The second chapter gave a theoretical framework which was the community of inquiry, a descriptive review of literature related to the intersection of online learning and parents supporting their children's online education, as well as a deeper look at theoretical concepts used to frame this study. The third chapter presented the phenomenological methodology and a transcendental phenomenological research design used for this study by describing the research sites, the selection of participants, and the data collection and analysis methods in the form of interviews, focus group and document analysis. The fourth chapter introduced the study participants with a general overview

of demographics and findings and organized the study findings by themes from the data analysis. Finally, the fifth chapter discusses the study's findings, implications, limitations and delimitations, and recommendations for research.

The study's findings led the researcher to conclude that policies for online learning guidelines should be in place for learners' diversity. Schools and teachers must help deliver more inclusive education to support all types of online learners. The study identified technical problems as a challenge for parents of online students in the K-5 level of education.

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Appendix A

Focus Group Protocol

This focus group protocol will be used during online sessions to collect data from participants for the study.

Focus Group Session Protocol

Participants' Names:

Date: _____ Time Interview Began: _____ Time Ended:

A. Introduction

As parents enter the session, greet them, and ask them whether their children are full-time virtual or just supplement their in-school learning with virtual courses.

Hello everyone and welcome. My name is Benjamin Owusu, and I am conducting research about parents' perceptions about online learning in elementary education. I will be moderating our discussion today about your experience with your children's online schooling. You were invited here today to share more about your experience with your child's education, particularly with respect to online classes your child takes.

This is a focus group, which is a research method useful for gaining information about a topic in a comfortable environment. As participants, I ask you to maintain the confidentiality of today's discussion and not share the content with anyone outside the focus group. With your permission, we will record the session. Your identity will not be included in the summary report. The information you share today will be used to improve parents, educators, and policymakers in the understanding of the online schooling experiences of children and families like yourselves.

B. Focus Group Questions

1. Please introduce yourself. CRQ
2. Can you walk me through a typical week in your child's online schooling? SQ1
3. What kind of internet access does your home have? SQ1
4. Do data limit your internet access? SQ1

5. Do all adults in your family work? SQ1
6. What different ways can parents educate their child in the online learning program? SQ2
7. How can your child's school district support you in making online learning successful?
SQ3
8. What advice would you give the teachers to improve student engagement within the
online learning environment? SQ3