

Level of Difficulties of Working Solo Parents in Balancing Work and Child's Education

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Received: 02 December 2024 Accepted: 14 December 2024 Published: 22 December 2024

Abstract: Level of Difficulties of Working Solo Parents in Balancing Work and Child's Education. Objectives: The study determined the level of difficulties of working solo parents in balancing work and child's education. Specifically, this made an inquiry on the demographic profile of solo parents, child's educational activities they participated as well as their level of difficulty in balancing work and child's education. An output was made based on the result of the study. **Methods:** Descriptive quantitative research method using survey through the use of survey-questionnaire with with 5-point Likert Scale, unstructured interview and data analysis were used with 25 working solo parents as respondents. Frequency count, percentage, weighted mean and mean were used as statistical tools. **Findings:** It showed that most of the working solo parents were 31-40 years of age, females, working as housemaids, and attended Homeroom PTA Meetings. Moreover, they participated and attended different child's educational activities. However, they had difficulty in participating the various child's activities evident in the overall mean which was 2.76 interpreted as *Moderate Difficulty*. **Conclusion:** Ages 31- 40 were equipped in supporting their kids. Females had high propensity of being working solo parents as housemaids which offered them steady income and job security. In addition, the working solo parents actively attended mandatory or required educational activities for their children. Due to their moderate difficulty in participating numerous child's school activities, a Solo Parent Self-Management Enhancement Plan was made as output of the study.

Keywords: working solo parents, solo parents, balancing work and child's education, education.

To cite this article:

Maro, C. E., Estaras, C. A. D., Ermino, A. K. G., Lelis, M. J., & Barola, R. C. (2024). Level of Difficulties of Working Solo Parents in Balancing Work and Child's Education. *Jurnal Pendidikan Progresif*, 14(3), 1930-1948. doi: 10.23960/jpp.v14.i3.2024131.

■ INTRODUCTION

Parents play a vital role in their child's education. They are important educational facilitators for their children. They introduce them to the world of knowledge, teaching them how to speak, read, write, and solve basic mathematical problems. Moreover, they help foster love for learning by exposing their children to various educational activities, playing educational games, and encouraging

curiosity. Most importantly, they send their children to schools for formal education.

However, globally, 84% of all households are headed by mothers. They include an increasing number of only one parent living with their children known as solo parent. They live in a variety of different ways, and many do not live alone with their children but rather in extended households, which means that they are not accounted and are hugely unnoticed by policymakers (Bhatt, 2020).

One solution by different governments was the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Global Goals created in 2015 by the United Nations. This takes world actions aiming at eradicating poverty, protecting the environment and ensuring that all enjoy freedom and harmony by 2030 (De Villiers et al., 2021). Additionally, education ambitions are fundamentally reflected in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) for 2030, with the goal of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, while promoting lifelong learning opportunities for everyone by 2030. Parallel to this, SDG 8, which supports women empowerment, pointed out the need for decent work and economic growth which cleared out the importance of having stable employment, fair wages, and a supportive work environment (Demirbag & Sezgin, 2021; Shiohira, 2021). Women, including single parents, experienced significant barriers to finding decent employment. In nations like the Philippines, with prevalent number of households with just one parent, the government codified into a law the Solo Parent Welfare Act to support the rights of single parents and enhance their economic circumstances, in line with SDG 8's goals (The International Labor Organization, 2019).

Solutions and good practices existed, applied and rendered elsewhere. Furthermore, these actions demonstrate that when single mothers receive adequate support, they represent a vital economic force for the development of both their children and their communities (Valerie, 2023). A single-parent household may result to the disruption of child's routines, education, housing arrangement and family income. Incidences of parental conflict and stress are intensified resulting to changes that are more difficult for some children. Compared to kids in married-parent households, children in single-parent families are more likely to experience poor outcomes (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2022).

Evidently, there were 14 to 15 million solo parents in the Philippines, with 95% of them being

women. This alarming statistics highlights the rising number of single parents who are balancing the demands of work and childcare on their own. Due to its effects on both parents and children's well-being, this issue has attracted a lot of attention. Single working parents encounter many difficulties including financial constraint lack of free time for their children, challenges in simultaneously handling work and their child's education (The University of the Philippines-National Institutes of Health, 2020).

Single parents are parts and arms of school organizations. The Presidential Decree No. 603 of 1974 highlighted the importance parents by organizing a parent-teacher association which provides forum for discussion of the problems and their solutions related to school programs, ensuring that all parents are cooperative for effective implementation of school programs (Llego, 2023). They promote collaboration, teamwork and communication in improving the quality of education and helping for the development of the children's school performance and over-all progress and development (Lineberger, 2022).

With these benefits, the Philippine government passed Republic Act 8972, or the Solo Parent's Welfare Act in 2000, which defined solo parent as a woman who gave birth as a result of rape and other crimes against chastity even without a final conviction of the offender in which the mother kept and raised the child; Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to death of spouse, with a spouse detained or is serving sentence for a criminal conviction for at least one (1) year, one serving parenthood due to physical and/or mental incapacity of spouse as certified by a public medical practitioner, legally separated or had *de facto* separation from spouse for at least one (1) year, as long as he/she is entrusted with the custody of the children, a person which had declaration of nullity or annulment of marriage as decreed by a court or by a church as long as he/she is

entrusted with the custody of the children; Individual abandoned of spouse for at least one (1) year; Unmarried mother/father who has preferred to keep and rear her/his child/children instead of having others care for them or give them up to a welfare institution; Any other person who solely provides parental care and support to a child or children; Any family member who assumes the responsibility of head of family as a result of the death, abandonment, disappearance or prolonged absence of the parents or solo parent (The LawPhil Project, 2024). This provides solo parents with the necessary resources and support to raise their children despite their unique circumstances. These benefits come in different forms, such as social and economic development programs, family planning services, and counseling sessions (Law, 2023).

As a continued support, The Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act or RA 11861 amended the RA 8972, or the Solo Welfare Act of 2000, extending the benefits for solo parents, helping them raise their children by themselves, and lessening the conflicted situations that solo parents face. Commitment in safeguarding solo parents through the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Expanded Solo Parent's Welfare Act was made (Department of Social Welfare and Development, 2022).

The result of the effect of parental involvement on children's academic achievement showed that there were differences in academic achievement scores between the parent involvement profiles, where high and medium-involved parents had children with higher academic achievement than low-involved parents. The degree of parental involvement is a critical element in the academic achievements of children, especially during their first school year (Lara & Saracostti, 2019).

As highlighted by Peterson et al. (2019), due to their busy work schedules, single parents frequently have little free time to be involved in their children's education. Due to time constraints,

parents may experience feelings of guilt and anxiety as they try to balance their work obligations with being actively involved in their child's education. Financial constraints are another difficulty faced by working single parents.

Thus, this study determined how working solo parents manage the demand of work and their child's education, and in what ways can working solo parents fulfill their responsibility. Specifically, this studied the demographic profile of the Working Solo Parents in terms of age, gender and work; the child's educational activities participated in by a working solo parent; the level of difficulty in balancing work and child's education of working solo parents in terms of attending meetings, making school outputs, providing school resources, attending school events and monitoring child's learning progress; and, the output made based on the result of the study.

Being a working parent is not that easy hence the struggle of a working solo parent is much harder since they have sole responsibility of raising a child at the same time providing the needs of their family. The researchers provided effective interventions that the school and teacher can utilize to address the complexities encountered. If parents are aware of how their involvement and learning activities with their children affects their child's learning ability and future, they may be more actively participate in their child's education. The outcomes of this study might potentially be helpful for educational institutions.

■ **METHOD**

Research Design

This study used descriptive research design with survey, and unstructured interview. Calderon (2006) defined descriptive research as a purposeful process of gathering, analyzing, classifying, and tabulating data, then making an adequate and accurate interpretation of such data.

As a descriptive research design, this study described the data. This included the demographic profile of working solo parents in terms of age, gender and work, the child's educational activities participated by a working solo parent, the level of difficulty in balancing work and child's education of working solo parent in terms of attending meetings, making school outputs, providing school resources, attending school events and monitoring child's progress and the output that might be made based on the result of the study. Moreover, the study interpreted the data on the level of difficulty in terms of attending meetings, making school outputs, providing school resources, attending school events and monitoring child's learning progress.

Respondents

The respondents of the study were composed of working solo parents whose child or children were studying in public elementary schools at Gubat. The respondents were twenty-five (25) working solo parents from the barrios and central schools of Gubat which were Bonifacio Elementary, Gubat North Central School, Gubat South Central School, Bulacao Elementary School, Bagacay Elementary School, Villareal Elementary School and Paco Elementary School. To facilitate the determination of this purposive selection of respondents, the researchers conducted a pre-survey. Consequently, the different schools had twenty-five (25) working solo parents. Given the fact they were the available solo parents in the different schools made it reasonable to use purposive sampling which was defined by Hassan (2024) as selective sampling which is part of non-probability sampling technique in which one deliberately choose those to be involved in the study in consideration of their profound knowledge, relevance, or expertise concerning the research under study. Hence, they comprised of who were studied by the researchers providing

relevant and meaningful context to the local setting in Gubat, Philippines.

Research Instrument

This study used survey-questionnaire to gather and collect the needed research data. This was a tool used to obtain information about a specific topic by prompting respondents to answer a list of standardized questions (Chan, 2023). The survey-questionnaire was composed of three parts. Part one was about the demographic profile of Solo Parents in terms of age, gender and work. Part two was about the child's educational activities participated in by working solo parents. Part three was about the level of difficulty in balancing work and child's education in terms of attending meetings, making school outputs, providing school resources, attending school events and monitoring child's learning progress.

Likert scale is used in the survey questionnaire. As defined by Bhandari (2023), a Likert scale is a rating scale used to measure respondents' responses. Each item was given a rating from 1 to 5 with interpretation. Likert scale was used in part three to determine the level of difficulty in balancing work and child's education of working solo parents in terms of attending meetings, making school outputs, providing school resources, attending school events and monitoring child's learning progress. The ratings in the Likert scale were five (5) very high difficulty, four (4) high difficulty, three (3) moderate difficulty, two (2) low difficulty and one (1) very low difficulty.

Moreover, unstructured interview was used. Deeper thoughts, feelings and a more valid and reliable experiences were collected and obtained through unstructured interview which was spontaneous in nature (George, 2023). This validated the working solo parents' responses in the survey-questionnaire resulting to a credible research data and results. It was revealed by the

working solo parents in the interview that the factors affecting their difficulties were long working hours and low or lack of family support, multiple responsibilities comprised mainly of their work, non-stop daily household chores, and their utmost concern for their children which is educational needs. This also included single income pressure which made them prioritize their work. With all of these, they informed that these resulted to their difficulties in attending meetings, making school outputs of their child, providing school resources, attending school events and monitoring their child's learning progress.

Sources of Data

The primary sources of data was the twenty-five (25) working solo parents from the barrios and central schools of Gubat which were Bonifacio Elementary School, Gubat North Central School, Gubat South Central School, Bulacao Elementary School, Bagacay Elementary School, Villarreal Elementary School and Paco Elementary School regarding how they balance work and their child's education despite the demands of both responsibilities. Secondary sources of data was electronic references or digital online sources such as online journals, articles, theses, dissertations, and portable digital forms (PDFs) to broaden the scope of the study.

Sampling Method

This study determined the respondents using a non-probability sampling method called purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a process where the researchers select the target respondents from the sample size purposively based on their own judgment (Vijayamohan, 2023). In the study, the researchers targeted working solo parents as the respondents and determined the sample size through the conducted pre-survey. Upon the pre-survey, 75 working solo parents were the determined sample size to increase the validity of data. However, due to

legal concerns, they only gathered data from 25 respondents.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers asked for letter approval from the Director of Bicol University Gubat and the Principals of Elementary Schools in Gubat to conduct the survey. Upon the pre-survey result, they gathered 75 working solo parents from the three central schools mainly Gubat North Central School, Gubat South Central School and Bulacao Elementary School. However, due to legal concerns, they were not able to gather the 75 respondents. Hence, out of 75 respondents, they decided to decrease it to 25. They proceeded in conducting the survey with the 25 purposively selected working solo parents from the different schools in the Municipality of Gubat. Mostly of the respondents were female. During the conduct of the survey, they distributed the survey questionnaire consisting of three (3) parts, while ensuring health and safety protocols and the confidentiality of the data. Unstructured interview was used to validate and extract the qualitative data as well as to provide elaborative data of the research. They asked for the consent of the respondents to answer the survey questionnaires. Afterwards, they explained the importance of answering the questionnaires and clarified some terms to the respondents with full knowledge of their responsibility as the subject of the study. After the respondents answered the survey questionnaires, they collected and interpreted the data.

Statistical Treatment of Data

To interpret the data effectively the researchers used the following statistical treatment. The frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, and mean were the tools that were used to interpret the data.

Frequency Count. Frequency count is a statistical method used to count the number of times a particular value or category occurs in a

data set. It is often used to create frequency tables, which provide a summary of the data by showing the number of times each value or category appears. (Government of Canada, Statistics Canada, 2021). Frequency tables can be used to get a first overview of the data and can be displayed graphically in a bar chart (LibGuides: SPSS Tutorials: Frequency Tables, 2023). Frequency count was used to determine the demographic profile of solo parents in terms of age, gender and work, as well as the child’s educational activities participated in by working solo parents.

Percentage is a tool used to know the proportion of distribution of the respondents of the group (Rizal Technological University, 2023). It is computed by dividing the frequency by the total number of cases and multiplying by 100 (Korb, 2013). Percentage was used to determine the ratio of the demographic profile of solo parents in terms of age, gender and work, as well as the child’s educational activities participated in by working solo parents.

According to Hurley (2023), the mean, which is also known as the average, is the total sum of values in a sample divided by the number of values in a sample. In this study, the mean was used to compute the overall level of difficulty of the working solo parents in balancing work and child’s education. As used, Weighted Mean. According to BYJU (2024), is the average that is computed by assigning different weights to a particular data is called weighted mean. The range used for interpreting weighted mean was adapted from the study “The Healthy Lifestyle Of Adolescents Living With Their Single Parents” conducted by De Guzman et al. (2023). Weighted mean equation refers to the process of calculating average through multiplying the weight with its mean and summing up the results (Diksha, 2023). In this study, this was used to determine the level of difficulty in terms of attending meetings, making school outputs,

providing school resources, attending school events and monitoring children’s learning progress. In the study, weighted mean was interpreted using a Likert Scale which allows respondents to express a range of opinions with five response options (Sol, 2024) as follows:

Scale	Range	Description
5	4.21 - 5.00	Very High Difficulty
4	3.41 - 4.20	High Difficulty
3	2.61 - 3.40	Moderate Difficulty
2	1.81 - 2.60	Low Difficulty
1	1.00 - 1.80	Very Low Difficulty

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of Working Solo Parents

The study was able to determine the demographic profile of solo parents in terms of age, gender and work. These were discussed as follows;

Age. The results showed that majority of respondents were 31-40 years old while minority of them belonged to the age 51-60 years old. This indicated that most of the ages of the solo parents were under middle adulthood.

Age Group: | Count and Percentage

21-30	██████	(4 or 16%)
31-40	██████████	(10 or 40%)
41-50	██████████	(9 or 36%)
51-60	█████	(2 or 8%)

At the age range of 31-40, individuals were characterized as having midlife crisis because they were concerned in providing their family needs, parenthood and careers. This obliged them to undertake various commitments and responsibilities in work and family relationships as part of their development (The Human Development Teaching & Learning Group, 2020).

This implied that they were equipped in supporting their children. Furthermore, this implied that they had already experienced overcoming difficulties in life. Moreover, they had developed ways or strategies on how to handle challenges in life. With these, being a single parent was not difficult to handle. They were also able to build support systems and coping mechanisms. Because they had already passed the early stages of their own personal development, they are now mature to be responsible solo working parents. Thus, they were more concerned about their children's welfare. Solo parents in this age group possessed the needed energy and time to meet the needs of their children (Tull, 2018).

At age 21-30, known as the early adulthood stage of child-bearing, extremely diverse life period and encompasses a wide range of lifestyles and responsibilities. In 31-40, from the human development level, it was the middle adulthood stage wherein they faced a lot of obstacles and responsibilities. They might also affect their work as well as connections with their child activities due to lots of circumstances that are out of their control. Moreover, at the age of 41-50 this was the late middle age. This period tends to have a primary legacy with themselves and tends to struggle with contributions to their society. The age range of 51-60 is also known as late adulthood. This period is characterized for social change, as they are unable to do social activities than before in their early and middle adulthood stages (Pressbook, 2024).

These findings found support from the study conducted by Dagupon and Garin (2022) which showed that three out of the ten respondents belonged to the 31-40 age group made it to the majority. In fact, in the study conducted by the Pew Research Center (2019), it was found out that 42% of solo parents fall within this age range. These data highlighted the prevalence of solo parenting among individuals in their thirties and early forties. At this period, they were more likely to have an occupation and financial expenses,

making them better equipped to handle the responsibilities of solo parenting. This made them more capable in handling the challenges of raising a child on their own.

Gender. Results showed that out of 25 working solo parents, 22 of them were females which comprised 88% of the total respondents. On the other hand, three (3) of them were males which constituted 12% of the total number of respondents. This indicated that there were more female working solo parents than their male counterparts.

Gender Group:|Count and Percentage

Male		■	(3 or 12%)
Female		■	(22 or 88%)

This indicated that the common gender of working solo parents was female. As stated by The University of the Philippines-National Institutes of Health (2020), there are currently 14 to 15 million solo parents in the Philippines, with 95% of them being women.

Work. Gleaned from the result, housemaid had the highest number of working solo parents which was 16%. This indicated that the most common work of the respondents was housemaid. While sanitation inspector, barangay health worker, domestic helper (OFW), dishwasher, reception cashier, tricycle driver, utility worker, babysitter, fish vendor, spa masseuse wax professional, government employee (LGU) and construction worker had the least number among the total respondents.

Work Group:|Count and Percentage

House maid		■	(4 or 16%)
Sari-sari store Owner		■	(3 or 12%)
Job Order at Local Government		■	(3 or 12%)
Laundress		■	(2 or 8%)

Sanitation Inspector	■ (1 or 4%)
Barangay Health Worker	■ (1 or 4%)
Domestic Helper (OFW)	■ (1 or 4%)
Dishwasher	■ (1 or 4%)
Reception Cashier	■ (1 or 4%)
Tricycle Driver	■ (1 or 4%)
Utility Worker	■ (1 or 4%)
Baby Sitter	■ (1 or 4%)
Fish Vendor	■ (1 or 4%)
Spa Masseur	■ (1 or 4%)
Wax Professional	■ (1 or 4%)
Local Government Unit Employee	■ (1 or 4%)
Construction Worker	■ (1 or 4%)

This showed that the working solo parents had different works which were their means of supporting the economic needs of their children particularly their education. It is noteworthy that some of them were average income earners such as the baby sitter, fish vendor and wax professional while there is also a higher income earner like the local government unit employee of a the town government and the domestic helper or overseas contract worker (OFW).

This indicated also that the solo parents were in low-wage jobs or struggle with their employment, leading them to face difficulty in providing for their families economic or educational needs adequately. It may also be a case that the solo parents often work multiple jobs to make ends meet, leading to stress and limited time for parenting. On the other side, the good thing is that they have a job which helps them sustain and provide the needs of their families.

The findings were strengthened by the recent available survey conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) (2019) together with Department of Labor and

Employment (DOLE) about kasambahays or housemaids. It reflected that there were 1.4 million Filipinos working as kasambahay or housemaid, which consisted of about 3.2 % of the labor force in the Philippines. These were also supported by the data of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2011), which revealed that women were more likely to be in low wage jobs and part-time employment than men. Moreover, the findings from the data of the World Bank Organization (2016) reinforced the findings which revealed that one (1) out of three (3) Filipino workers belonged to a job that required no skills, even outside the rural areas. Unskilled workers represented one fourth of the total employment in the Philippines. The increasing numbers of low-skilled employment signified both the shortage of skilled jobs and the relatively low educational attainment of the workers.

Child's Educational Activities Participated in the School

Gleaned from the result, 20 of the working solo parents attended Homeroom Parents and Teachers Association (HPTA) meetings which was 16.81% of the total respondents. On the other hand, only one (1) of the respondents participated in the festival of talents with 0.84%.

In the study of Bannawi et.al. (2023), it was found that solo parents had high involvement in terms of moral support and in giving advice to their children but not in attending other school activities. However, in some cases, parents only attend some events in school which are essential so that they could get informed about the information and activities that directly impact their child's education or well-being.

It could also be explained by the study of Bannawi et.al. (2023) entitled "Examining the Impact of Single Parenting on the Academic Performance of Junior High School," that single parents do not involve themselves in most

activities unless those activities are mandatory, required and are more encouraging. This also suggests that working single parents might not always be able to make it to their children's school festivals of skills because of competing work schedules, a lack of vacation time, or other obligations that keep them from attending the event unless it is absolutely necessary.

Table 1. Child's educational activities participated by the working solo parents

Educationa l Activities	Frequen cy (f)	Percentag e (%)
Homeroom PTA Meeting	20	80
General PTA Meeting	19	76
Brigada Eskuwela	18	72
School Parade	17	68
Homework Assistance	15	60
School Culminatin g Activities	13	52
Sports Events	5	20
Foundation Day	4	16
Scouting	3	12
Festival of Talents	1	4
School Contests	4	16

Level of Difficulties in Balancing Work and Child's Education of Working Solo Parents

The study was able to get the level of difficulties in balancing work and child's education of working solo parents. These were about

attending meetings, making school outputs, attending school events, and providing school resources.

Attending Meetings. As reflected in the tabulated result, it showed that *attends emergency meetings* had the highest computed weighted mean which was 3.12 interpreted as *Moderate Difficulty*. On the other hand, *attends school board meetings* obtained the lowest computed weighted mean which was 1.60 interpreted as *Very Low Difficulty*. The mean was 2.60 with an adjectival rating of *Low Difficulty*.

This meant that the solo working parents had *Low Difficulty* in attending meetings with a weighted mean of 2.60. This denoted that the respondents were able to manage their time in order to go to the activities that parents needed to attend for their children. They could still find time too to talk about projects or activities for the students and the school.

Table 2. Attending meetings

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Attends Emergency Meetings	3.12	Moderate Difficulty
Attends Quarterly School Parents and Teachers Association Meetings	2.84	Moderate Difficulty
Attends Brigada Eskwela Meetings	2.72	Moderate Difficulty
Attends School Board Meetings	1.60	Very Low Difficulty
Mean	2.60	Low Difficulty

This significant finding was strengthened by Bannawi, et al. (2023) who stated that working solo parents were still involved in attending meetings, conferences, and other school related

events that need their presence. Despite working and being full time parents to their children, they were still able to find time to attend their child's school meetings. Hence, they were able to monitor their child's school environment, their grades, and the teacher's feedback.

Making School Outputs. Based on the result, it was found out that *assists the child in doing written outputs* had the highest computed weighted mean which was 3.48 interpreted as *High Difficulty*. While, *assists the child in doing class projects* had the lowest weighted mean which was 2.96, interpreted as *Moderate Difficulty*. The overall mean was 3.19 interpreted as *Moderate Difficulty*. This indicated that working solo parents had Moderate Difficulty in making school outputs. This denoted that they somehow experienced difficulty assisting their children with their school outputs.

These findings were strengthened by the study conducted by Mugove (2017). It was discovered that most of the time, single parents lacked the time to guide their children's homework due to busy schedules and lack of knowledge to assist them with their assignments. Thus, the single parent would be so exhausted from the activities that she would not have time to help their children with their schoolwork. As Lindholm (2021) stipulated, time was precious for working solo parents, knowing that they cannot do it all due to work and family responsibilities. For them, it was important to get the work done as it was the only source of income that could help to provide their children's necessities at home and for their education.

Furthermore, considering the child grew up in a family without the presence of another parent, it built a sense of responsibility in her child to become independent and do things on her own (Sangeet & Singh, 2022). Hence, it became less burdensome on the part of the solo parent since the child could handle things independently with just a little supervision from her.

Table 3. Making school outputs

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Assists the child in doing written outputs	3.48	High Difficulty
Assists the child in doing arts and crafts	3.36	Moderate Difficulty
Assists the child in doing school performances	3.12	Moderate Difficulty
Assists the child in doing homework/ assignment	3.04	Moderate Difficulty
Assists the child in doing class projects	2.96	Moderate Difficulty
Mean	3.19	Moderate Difficulty

In contrast, the parental involvement of parents can help students become more motivated to study and pursue their dreams in the future. As supported by Schmid and Garrels (2021), as parents express the importance of education and with their consistent support and motivation, the students feel more motivated and will likely be enthusiastic about doing their schoolwork. Also, they were considered the main source of encouragement.

Providing School Resources. As reflected in the result of the gathered data, it showed that *complies to DepEd legal contribution* had the highest computed weighted

mean which was 2.72 interpreted as *Moderate Difficulty*. On the other hand, *sharing resources in Brigada Eskwela* had the lowest computed weighted mean which was 2.32 interpreted as *Low Difficulty*. The mean was 2.53, interpreted as *Low Difficulty*.

This indicated that the solo working parents had *Low Difficulty* in providing school resources. As reflected, there was minimal difficulty on the part of working solo parents when it came to providing either monetary or material support along with different contributions towards the education of their child.

This was supported by the study This conducted by Apat (2019) which disclosed that there was a significant relationship between spending analysis and budget stability. Budgeting money was key to addressing the needs of the family, especially those households with single-parent families since they had limited resources. Furthermore, it was not impossible for working solo parents to comply with the contributions and resources that the school may impose, especially if they were really essential, even if there was still difficulty. Hence, it was a must that they knew how to manage and had a sense of responsibility for their finances. Prioritizing needs over other unnecessary things was important. Analyzing and budgeting should be done to track down expenses as well as to ensure that the income was managed wisely.

Table 4. Providing school resources

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Complies to DepEd legal contribution	2.72	Moderate Difficulty
Involves in fundraising activities	2.64	Moderate Difficulty
Provides material	2.60	Low Difficulty

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
support to class events		
Shares in Homeroom PTA Projects	2.40	Low Difficulty
Shares resources in Brigada Eskwela	2.32	Low Difficulty
Mean	2.53	Low Difficulty

Attending School Events. As reflected on Table 8, the indicators *attends monthly celebration* obtained the highest calculated weighted mean which was 3.44 interpreted as *High Difficulty* while the lowest computed weighted mean was on *attends quarterly recognition rites* which had 2.24 interpreted as *Low Difficulty*. The computed mean for attending school events was 2.83 interpreted as *Moderate Difficulty*.

Table 5. Attending school events

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Attends Monthly Celebration	3.44	High Difficulty
Attends Regular Clean-up Drive	3.12	Moderate Difficulty
Attends Special Occasions	3.04	Moderate Difficulty
Attends Recognition Day	2.32	Low Difficulty
Attends Quarterly Recognition Rites	2.24	Low Difficulty
Mean	2.83	Moderate Difficulty

The calculated mean that fell under attending school events was 2.76, interpreted as Moderate Difficulty. This signified that solo parents had more difficulty attending school events which frequently happened since these activities took too much of their time.

This result was affirmed in the study made by Durasic and Bunijevac (2017) about the experiences of solo parents and engagement in their child's education. which showed that extracurricular activities had a positive impact. It was an avenue to show parental involvement in a child's education. However, there were instances where multiple activities can be difficult since they consumed most of their time and were said to be overwhelming for them.

Monitoring Child's Learning Progress.

The *monitors and limits screen time* for the child had the highest computed weighted mean which was 3.04 interpreted as *Moderate Difficulty*, while the *reviews and signs off on tests and quizzes* had the lowest computed weighted mean which was 2.36 interpreted as *Low Difficulty*. The mean was 2.64 interpreted as *Moderate Difficulty*.

This result showed that the level of difficulty of working solo parents in terms of monitoring their child's learning progress fell under Moderate Difficulty. This indicated that the working solo parents experienced difficulty in observing and checking the progress of their child.

These were supported by recent studies and literature. For instance, Wasserman (2020) asserted that children raised by single parents typically develop in a community that offers support to them. More involved friends and family will probably take an active role in the children's upbringing. Consequently, Ntekane (2018) analyzed the findings of the published articles on the role of parental involvement in students' academic performance and determined and proved that parents who were interested in their children's performance and participated in

various school activities. Recognizing that students were more likely to put in more effort and perform better overall if their parents were actively monitoring them.

Table 6. Monitoring child's learning progress

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Monitors and limits screens time for the child	3.04	Moderate Difficulty
Reviews and signs off on homework	2.80	Moderate Difficulty
Narrative and oral feedback from teachers	2.52	Low Difficulty
Distribution of report cards	2.48	Low Difficulty
Reviews and signs off on test and quizzes	2.36	Low Difficulty
Mean	2.64	Moderate Difficulty

Furthermore, Toropova et. al. (2021) claimed that parents' involvement in education through regular parent-teacher communication, including making extra time for consultations based on the child's performance, teachers' job satisfaction and motivation may be enhanced by parents' dedication to education, which included frequent school visits, ongoing communication, and performance feedback for their children. Studies looking into the value of parental involvement in schooling found that students.

Whoever parents watched over their homework and took an active part in school activities did well academically (Lara & Saracosti, 2019).

Over-All of all Level of Difficulties.

Gleaned from the result, *making school outputs* had the highest computed mean which constituted 3.19 interpreted as *Moderate Difficulty*. While *providing school resources* had the lowest computed mean which constituted 2.53 interpreted as *Low Difficulty*. The overall mean of the parameters was 2.76 interpreted as *Moderate Difficulty*.

This indicated that the working solo parents experienced difficulty in participating to various child's educational activities. This implied that balancing work and child's education was difficult among the solo working parents. This was supported by the study of Cochran (2021) which revealed that a balance between work and family life was quite difficult for four single mothers, who are secondary school principals. They acknowledged that they were unsure if they had achieved balance, but they had made every effort to manage and had thought about what it looked like in their personal lives. The participants' realization of the strategies they used to make this feasible was aided by numerous factors.

Table 7. Summary

Parameters	Mean	Interpretation
1. Making School Outputs	3.19	Moderate Difficulty
2. Attending School Events	2.83	Moderate Difficulty
3. Monitoring Child's Learning Progress	2.64	Moderate Difficulty
4. Attending Meetings	2.61	Moderate Difficulty
5. Providing School Resources	2.53	Low Difficulty
Over-all Mean	2.76	Moderate Difficulty

Solo Parent Self-Management Enhancement Plan on Balancing Work and Child's Education as Output of the Study

After the determination of the level of difficulties of working solo parents in balancing work and their involvement in their children's educational activities, the researchers developed a proposed program of activities to eradicate the difficulty experienced by the working solo parents. This would enhance their commitment to actively engaged and made the most of their time to balance their children's educational needs and work responsibilities.

The main objective of this proposal is to provide a program of activities that will enhance solo parent's involvement in balancing their children's educational needs and work responsibilities. Specifically, these proposed activities may help the working solo parents to utilize various simple and easy ways to alleviate the difficulties they had experienced; manage multiple responsibilities for their child's education and work; ensure parental involvement in their child's activities including their outputs, educational activities and providing school resources.

Visualizing, Listing, Organizing, Time-setting, Implementing and Reflecting (VLOTIR) Activity. It is essential for solo parents to have a time management plan in order for them to balance work and child's education. Time management is a process of planning, organizing and dividing the time of the day to accomplish all the activities or tasks (Jackson, 2024). Making a schedule for weekly activities can help to efficiently and effectively utilize time and at the same time, accomplish all responsibilities either at work or at home. The researchers developed their own time management plan called the VLOTIR Activity. This method stands for *Visualizing, Listing, Organizing, Time-setting, Implementing and*

Reflecting. The goal of **VLOTIR** Activity is to provide a significant way that solo parents can integrate to increase productivity, organization, efficient use of time and to maintain focus and attention towards each task. Through prioritizing tasks, planning the activities they need to attend and categorizing each task, solo parents can make the most of their time effectively. In addition, each acronym will be discussed. Visualizing is the first step. During this process, the solo parents will focus on attaining what they picture in their minds and think about what needs to be done to achieve those goals. After visualizing, next to it is Listing. Listing is all about taking down notes on all the tasks needed to be completed. Next is Organizing. This involves allocating the most priority tasks into least priority ones. Another is Time-setting. Based on the organized tasks, attached to it is the schedule of certain activities. In Implementing, the solo parents will put into effect for the first time what they had organized in order to attend activities at certain periods of time. Lastly is Reflecting. This time, solo parents tend to have a self-talk or reflection based on the things that they have been doing and also to think carefully about what to do next for effectiveness in managing time.

Given these facts, they may use a simple template or form which plans or lay-outs their daily or weekly engagements or activities as working solo working solo parents. Depending on the solo working parents preference, they may set a daily, weekly or monthly schedule. The daily or weekly schedule are highly doable since both are simple and less time consuming to prepare. They may prepare a schedule with a detailed data about their daily activities, purpose or objective, time, venue, resources needed, expected output and remarks which may include their personal feedback to what they did for a day or a week.

Weekly SPEND Analysis. Being the sole provider for the needs of the family is one of the

difficulties faced by solo parents. Since they have no partner to lean on, they only have a limited amount of resources; hence, it is a must to manage their expenses. The SPEND Analysis is a tool tailored to guide solo parents in order for them to have a sense of responsibility when it comes to their expenses. This will help them alleviate difficulties, particularly in providing school resources for their child's education. Analyzing and budgeting should be done to track down expenses as well as to ensure that the income will be managed wisely.

Tracking spending habits provides a variety of advantages to ensure financial stability. It is one of the most important aspects of learning to monitor one's spending. This will help to avoid further financial loss by keeping track of spending (My Hubble, 2024).

SPEND stands for Sort, Prioritize, Earmark, Numerate, and Decide. In Sort, they have to categorize all the expenses on a daily basis. Next is to prioritize. There is a need to decide and recognize what things they should put at the top of their list of priorities. After that, they have to Earmark, which means that they will designate or allocate a specific amount based on their budget for each expense, while in Numerate, they have to compute the overall expenses based on the listed expenses. Lastly, they have to decide on which things they should spend their money on a weekly basis. They will have the opportunity to prioritize needs over other unnecessary things that are more important, particularly to eliminate the difficulty that working solo parents experienced in providing school resources for their children.

Solo Parents and Teachers Connect Activity (SOPATECO). Juggling work, household chores, and parenting can result in exhaustion, making it challenging for solo parents to provide the necessary support and guidance for their children's school work. Busy schedules and competing priorities can hinder effective

communication between solo parents and teachers face-to-face, making it difficult to stay informed about school assignments and progress. Hence, creating a supportive and understanding environment for working solo parents to effectively assist their children in making school outputs and to monitor their child's learning progress. According to Nierva (2009), children perform better in school when they have opportunities to learn from their two primary contexts of development, namely, the home and school. When parents, teachers and schools support one another and build a strong partnership, it will result in academic success.

Hence, the Solo Parents and Teachers Connect (SOPATECO), is an activity in which solo parents will share crucial information with fellow parents and ask the teachers for their child's school progress. Through the use of multimedia or information and communication technology and social media, solo parents and teachers can communicate and collaborate with each other to improve their child's performance in school. One scenario is the conduct of an online meeting using video conferencing platform. This scenario is economical, effortless and fast. Proper scheduling is a key to the success of this scenario. In addition, they can meet face-to-face to discuss the school outputs that the child needs to accomplish and help them monitor the child's learning progress. Solo parents can get all the important and new updates about their children's educational activities. This activity will let them collaborate and seek advice from their fellow solo parents and as well teachers on how to assist their children in doing school outputs and to monitor their children's progress. It is where they can exchange valuable information, tips, and resources related to the academics of their child.

Family Assistance and Mutual Inclusion for Life Improvement Activity (FAMILIA). Working solo parents can do everything on their own but there are times that

they also experience conflicts regarding their time and work. The researchers developed an activity called FAMILIA which stands for Family Assistance and Mutual Inclusion for Life Improvement Activity. This activity is aimed to have a support system that helped solo parents to manage everything. Moreover, strong relationships with people around them such as their family, relatives, co-workers, neighbors and friends that they can ask for assistance. Also, they can be present at certain times when working solo parents need them to lighten the burden of all the obligations they need to fulfill. Furthermore, the assistance from family or peers will help working solo parents to handle multiple responsibilities. As working solo parents have hectic schedules, they may seek assistance from their family or peers who are willing and available to attend to their child's needs or take part in completing the unfinished tasks and activities of the child that the working solo parents have started. In addition, these people can also provide resources for the school outputs, performances, activities and events.

As supported by these literature, family assistance focuses on fostering a workplace environment that allows work and life balance. The need for equitable policies for any work to provide family leaves and support systems and to provide resources to take care of themselves and their families (Family Assistance Group - ALPA, 2024). In connection to this, inclusion is another aspects of recognizing and addressing the difficulties solo parents encounter. Solo parents tend to face a complex journey that comes with sole parenting in balancing work and child's education (Johnson, 2024).

■ CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the ages 31-40 are equipped in supporting their kids. They already have experienced overcoming difficulties in life. Moreover, they had developed ways or strategies

on how to handle challenges in life. With these, being a single parent is not difficult to handle. They were also able to build support systems and coping mechanisms.

Females have a high propensity of being working solo parents. Females who are solo parents have strong emotional connection and a sense of responsibility towards their children. They have a high likelihood of accepting the role of working solo parent. Being a housemaid required minimum educational qualifications, made for them to be accessible and could offer steady income and job security. This provides them the opportunity to earn money and have enough income to cover the day-to-day expenses. It was such a big help for them to sustain the needs of their family.

Working solo parents attend mandatory or required educational activities for their children such as the homeroom PTA meeting, the general PTA meeting, and Brigada Eskwela. Working solo parents show parental involvement in participating in their child's school activities by actively attending school events, monitoring children's learning progress, attending meetings, helping their children in doing school outputs, and providing school resources despite having a difficulty in solely taking all the responsibility of child rearing.

Based on the result of the study, the researchers developed a Solo Parent Self-Management Enhancement Plan which has four (4) activities such as VLOTIR Activity, SPEND Analysis, SOPATECO and FAMILIA.

■ RECOMMENDATION

This study recommends that teachers may provide interventions for the parents who cannot attend the activity of the child, by offering flexible meeting time for solo parents who may have work commitments. This is done by scheduling the meetings on weekends ensure attendance from them. Teachers should communicate with

solo parents so that they can understand and consider their specific needs and work together to find solutions to make them participate in their children's school activities.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) may collaborate or create a partnership with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and make specific training and programs aligned to the solo parents skills or aligned to their level of interest and current type of work. Teachers may initiate intervention programs or training on how solo parents can alleviate their difficulty in helping and guiding their children in doing school output. Researchers may widen their scope or increase the number of respondents than the present study to be able to fully understand and explore more about the level of difficulties experienced by working solo parents.

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