Parents' Level of Competence in Blended Distance Learning

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Abstract

This study determined parents' profile and their level of competence in blended distance learning. A total of 379 parents of Grade 5 pupils from the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte participated in the survey conducted during the academic year 2022–2023. A survey-questionnaire was utilized to gather the needed data on the parents' level of competence in blended distance learning. Overall results reveal that the parents of Grade 5 pupils of the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte are highly competent as monitors and motivators while moderately competent as resource providers, facilitators, and technical guides.

Keywords: *blended distance learning, grade 5, level of competence, parents*

Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) encouraged educators and students to conduct alternative learning due to the COVID-19 outbreak by providing remote learning and elevating learning loss while schools are closed. In addition, the mandate lays out the guiding principles and delivery of online classes and approaches to stakeholders like teachers and parents. In the Philippines, schools employ different learning modalities, ensuring that each will be the best fit for students' needs and interests in continuous learning. The

Department of Education (DepEd) also created a learning website called DepEd Commons catering for Alternative Learning School (ALS) students, Out-of-School-Youth (OSYA), and regular learners from kindergarten to Grade 8. Sevilla (2020, as cited in Manila Bulletin, 2020) pointed out the online learning hub seeks to strengthen education anytime and anywhere for learners who have access to the internet using equipment like smartphones, tablets,

laptops, and desktop computers. The online learning hub is made available both for public and private schools nationwide.

Manlangit et al. (2020) explained that the results of DepEd's National Learner Enrolment and Survey Forms (LESFs) show that 8.8 million out of the 22.2 million enrollees (39.6% of total respondents) preferred modular distance learning, 3.9 million enrollees (17.6%) for blended learning, 3.8 million (17.1%) for online learning, and 1.4 million and 900,000 enrollees for TV-based and radio-based learning, respectively.

Considering the data above, DepEd underscores parents and guardians' essential roles in ensuring that their children's education will continue amid the new normal shift in education brought about by the COVID-19 crisis (Pimentel-Tibon, 2020). Sevilla (2020, as cited in Manila Bulletin, 2020) noted that the agency has come up with a Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) to respond to changes in the basic education sector amid the public health emergency. While the LCP has provided a framework for students' learning continuity, Sevilla (2020, as cited in Cunanan, 2020) said that parents' cooperation and support are vital as the entire basic education system braces for the new normal. Sevilla (2020, as cited in Manila Bulletin, 2020) also stressed that the parents' role, especially on blended distance learning, is very relevant and huge. She noted several considerations requiring parents' participation and involvement. These include the facility to be used, gadgets, and internet connection, among others.

Blended distance learning situates Filipino students to learn in the comfort of their homes. Servito (2020, as cited in Manlangit, Paglumotan, and Sapera, 2020) stated that limited contact with teachers has placed parents or guardians as the learners' model or the "More Knowledgeable Other" (MKO). Servito (2020, as cited in (2020, as noted by Cunanan, 2020) mentions that as MKOs, parents or guardians are in charge of reaching out to teachers, barangay representatives, and other stakeholders to obtain their children's needed learning resources, monitoring the children's workweek plan and ensuring that the learner sticks to their schedule, preparing a conducive learning study space for the learner, and offering incentives to heighten their children's motivation to learn.

Thornton (2015) claimed that learners' academic achievement and the rapport between the home and school can be attributed to parents' involvement in their child's education. Ibrahim et al. (2019) underscored that parents' role is not only confined at home; it is extended to the school where children learn and experience mingling with other children. In most if not all cultures,

Alampay (2014) emphasized that parenting is an integral social role that greatly influences children's lives and parents themselves. The researcher, together with her colleagues, admitted that some parents are not competent enough to help their children at home. While other parents are busy with their works, some are free yet still cannot give the best help they could give to their children during this time of blended distance learning. This is due to several factors like not having formal education on how to support their children's education. In this context, the researchers were encouraged to determine the level of parents' competence in blended distance learning.

Literature Review
Roles of Parents in Blended Distance Learning
Research consistently highlights the significant influence parents have on their children's academic achievement. Peixoto (2019)

emphasized that parental influence has been a major focus in understanding student success. Building on this, Kim (2019) identified additional factors such as parents' socioeconomic status and educational background as key predictors of students' achievement, school adaptation, and parental involvement. Furthermore, literature underscores the importance of parents' positive responses to teachers' expectations and invitations for involvement. Such responses help parents recognize their role as essential partners in education, shaping their perception of participation as necessary from the teachers' perspective (Kim, 2019).

In contemporary contexts, parents who perceive their role as vital to their child's academic success are more likely to actively nurture their child's interests compared to those who do not view their involvement as necessary. Wigfield (2012) linked these parental role beliefs to the concept of task value in modern expectancy-value theory, which relates to the importance individuals place on a given task.

In the Philippine setting, Servito (2020, as cited in Manlangit et al., 2020) described parents as vital partners in education, particularly in the context of blended distance learning. Parents serve as home facilitators and channels of knowledge, though they do not teach subject matter directly. Their primary responsibilities include establishing connections with teachers and community stakeholders, securing learning resources, monitoring their children's weekly learning plans, ensuring adherence to schedules, creating conducive learning environments, and providing motivation through incentives.

Similarly, Huang et al. (2020) detailed specific parental roles in blended distance learning. First, parents help create a flexible learning space that adapts to the child's needs, fostering greater engagement and productivity. Second, daily check-ins, akin to an "at-home greeting at the door," support emotional connection and accountability. Third, parents are encouraged to customize schedules for their children, implementing differentiation strategies commonly used by teachers to address diverse learning needs. Encouraging children to engage in challenging tasks—what research calls "productive struggle"—helps deepen understanding and resilience, with parents allowing learners to wrestle with problems before stepping in. Lastly, recognizing the role of passions and play is vital in supporting well-rounded learning.

Together, these studies illustrate that parental involvement in education extends beyond supervision to active facilitation and emotional support, which are essential for maximizing student engagement and achievement, especially in blended or distance learning environments.

Parents' Level of Competence in Blended Distance Learning
Collis et al. (2017) define blended distance learning as an educational approach that offers learners choice in their learning environment and customizes courses to meet individual needs. Emerging modes like open learning further expand opportunities for blended distance learning by fostering learner autonomy and independence. In this context, teachers and parents increasingly take on the roles of facilitators rather than direct instructors (Huang et al., 2020).

This flexible, learner-centered philosophy underpins blended distance learning practices (Lewis & Spencer, 2016, as cited in iite.unesco.org, 2020). Scholars such as Gordon (2014) and Ryan and Tilbury (2013) regard flexibility as a strategic feature at the

institutional level, promoting adaptability in educational delivery (cited in Huang et al., 2020). Blended distance learning is characterized by offering learners diverse choices across several dimensions of study (Goode et al., 2017), applying constructivist principles that shift responsibility for learning from teachers to learners (Lewis & Spencer, 2016; Goode, 2017). Consequently, learners are expected to develop strong self-regulation skills—goal-setting, self-monitoring, and adjusting—while instructors focus on fostering active and engaging learning experiences (Collis, 2018).

Regardless of the learning environment, effective parental engagement remains critical to student success. While teachers are central figures in education, the significant influence of parents is often underestimated. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored families' pivotal role as parents and caregivers assumed multiple roles including teacher, IT support, tutor, counselor, and friend.

Turnbull et al. (2017) connect parent participation in education to the broader ideals of a democratic society. According to Turnbull et al. (2015), meaningful parent participation involves collaboration among parents, students, and educators in decision-making processes, benefiting all parties involved. However, despite its importance, authentic parent participation is often difficult to achieve. Many parents lack the readiness or competence to engage fully in educational decision-making, especially within blended distance learning environments (Fish, 2016)

Further challenges arise as some parents remain unaware of their roles in supporting their children's learning during blended distance education. Concerns about educational quality persist among parents (Hess et al., 2016). Although support for students in blended learning has increased, some programs struggle to equip parents with the necessary skills and resources. Education administrators and teachers highlight barriers such as limited resources, insufficient parent-teacher training, and parents' demanding workloads (Young, 2018).

In synthesis, while blended distance learning offers greater flexibility and learner autonomy supported by constructivist principles, its success heavily depends on active and competent parental involvement. The evolving roles of parents and teachers as facilitators highlight the need for comprehensive support structures to empower parents, enabling them to meet the demands of this educational model. Without addressing barriers such as lack of training and resources, and without increasing parents' awareness of their roles, the full potential of blended distance learning may not be realized, ultimately affecting student engagement and achievement.

Materials and Methods

Research Design
This study used the descriptive research design as it described the parents' level of competence in blended distance learning as technical guides, resource providers, motivators, monitors, and facilitators.

Participants
The study was carried out within the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte, specifically involving the parents of Grade 5 students enrolled in public elementary schools during the school year 2022–2023 A total of 379 individuals participated in the research as the actual sample size.

Data Collection
For the data collection procedures, the researchers wrote a formal letter of request addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent of Ilocos Norte, signifying the study's intention. Upon the approval of the SDS, the researchers reached out to the school head of participating schools to assist in gathering data using a Google form link sent to Grade 5 advisers. Then advisers sent the survey link to their Grade 5 parents. For parents who cannot read or write, the researchers facilitated answering the said survey questionnaires through phone calls and selected home visitation following the health protocols. Remote interviews were used to supplement the results that were gathered from the survey-questionnaire. Responses from the remote interviews were summarized and tabulated to identify the respondents' common problems in blended distance learning.

This study used the survey-questionnaire, assessment tool on parents' level of competence in blended distance learning, composed of two parts. For parents to easily understand its content, said survey questionnaire was translated in Iluko. Attached to the survey-questionnaire was a letter indicating the respondents' full consent in their participation in the study. All disclosed information was held with the utmost confidentiality. Part i of the survey-questionnaire, parent's/guardian's profile, which is in a checklist format, obtained information on the parent respondents' profile, particularly their age, sex, educational attainment, occupation, income, teaching modality preference, available reading materials at home, available gadgets at home, community resource centers near the school or home, and type of internet connectivity at home. Meanwhile, the second part of the survey questionnaire, which is on a rating scale, included the survey on parents' level of competence in blended distance learning as technical guides, resource providers, motivators, monitors, and facilitators. This instrument was adopted from the instrument developed by Cwetna (2016). This survey determined the parents' level of competence in blended distance learning. In scoring the responses to the items in this part, the following scale was used:

Rating Scale	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
5	Very Highly Competent (VHC)
4	Highly Competent (HC)
3	Moderately Competent (MC)
2	Slightly Competent (SC)
1	Not Competent (NC)

Ten parents tried out the research instrument from Aggasi Elementary Schools. The tryout determined whether or not the respondents could clearly understand the survey questionnaire items.

Consent To Participate
Ethical considerations were implemented in the data collection. The rights of the respondents were maintained or upheld throughout the conduct of this study. The study was explained to the respondents including the benefits they could get from it. The researchers emphasized that their participation would be based on their willingness or volition to participate in the study. Nonetheless, all participants were provided with online written consent to participate in the research and answer the questions asked in the survey-questionnaire.

The researchers informed them that should they wish to withdraw at any point before the survey, they could do so, and that voluntary participation would be highly respected. The respondents were given two days to answer the survey questionnaire, and considerations were given to respondents who needed extra time or had experienced poor internet connection.

Data Analysis
Frequency count and mean rating were used to describe teachers' level of competence in the oral language teaching strategies.

The following statistical ranges with their corresponding descriptive interpretations were used to describe the parents' level of competence in blended distance learning:

Scale	Range of Means	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
5	4.51 – 5.00	Very Highly Competent (VHC)
4	3.51 – 4.50	Highly Competent (HC)
3	2.51 – 3.50	Moderately Competent (MC)
2	1.51 – 2.50	Slightly Competent (SC)
1	1.00 – 1.50	Not Competent (NC)

Results and Discussion
This portion details the parent respondents' level of competence in blended distance learning as technical guides, resource providers, motivators, monitors, and facilitators**.**

Parents' Level of Competence in Blended Distance Learning as Technical Guides
According to the table, parents are highly competent in using mobile devices connected to the internet (3.76) and opening and reading files on the internet (3.62). The table also shows that parents are moderately competent in using SMART or LED television with capable access at home (3.03); using laptop or desktop with internet connectivity at home (2.97), and gadgets available in the household are enough to all the members (2.97). The composite mean of 3.35 indicates that parents are moderately competent as technical guides in blended distance learning.

The findings are expected because, based on the parents' profile, more than one-half 217 (57.26%) of the parent-respondents use data, which supports that report of Sanchez (2020) that in 2019, 70.7 million Filipinos use mobile phones accessed the internet (statistica.com.) Moreover, the results jibe with the data on the respondents' educational attainment which shows that almost one-third (124 or 32.72%) of the parent respondents are bachelor's degree holders or college graduates, while 120 (31.66%) are high school graduates. Many respondents, who finished college and high school, support the findings of a survey that educational attainment is a factor in using gadgets and the internet (Gonzales, 2020). Also, it is expected that parents demonstrate competence in using SMART or LED television with capable access at home because 227 (59.89%) of them have televisions in their homes. Many parents have tried to befriend technology and grapple with online learning. Those already familiar with technology and online tools were far more effective in creating a routine of learning at home with their children, including activities and home assignments given by the schools, and using more online resources for reading and home-based activities. Many mothers have been using Facebook groups to interact with the community on keeping their children engaged with pot painting, indoor gardening, simple games, worksheets, and activities. Quite a few parents have been able to use free services that have become available for pleasure reading, including audiobooks, e-books, and flipbooks.

DepEd has emphasized the role of parents as technical guides. According to Sevilla (2020, as cited in Cunanan, 2020), the parents' role, especially on an online platform, is very relevant and huge. She likewise mentioned that online learning requires parents' participation and involvement, such as the facility to be used, gadgets, and internet connection. She cited the need for parents to follow up after their children are exposed to online learning or have experienced online platform learning. In doing this, parents would ask how their children have performed after the online interaction.

Although the parent-respondents are moderately competent as technical guides, they encounter issues and challenges related to their role as technical guides. Bhamani et al. (2020) underscored that it is understandable that this wave of innovations in learning is not always convenient for parents, especially given the fact that the transition has been abrupt rather than gradual.

According to Bhamani et al. (2020), parents are concerned about the challenges that remote or blended distance learning has brought for them and their children. Online schooling requires the availability of computers and the internet at the same hours as needed. Bhamani et al. (2020) posited that any technical issues related to the requirements could result in the child missing out on learning.

Table 1. Parents' level of competence in blended distance learning as technical guides as perceived by them. (n=379)

Indicators	Mean	DI
1. I am using a laptop or desktop with internet connectivity at home.	2.97	MC
2. I am using a mobile device connected to the internet.	3.76	HC
3. I am using SMART or LED television with capable access at home.	3.03	MC
4. I am proficient, and I am opening and reading files on the internet.	3.62	HC
5. Gadgets available in the household are enough for all the members.	2.97	MC
Composite Mean	**3.35**	**MC**

Legend:

Range of Mean Scores	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
4.51 – 5.00	Very Highly Competent (VHC)
3.51 – 4.50	Highly Competent (HC)
2.51 – 3.50	Moderately Competent (MC)
1.51 – 2.50	Slightly Competent (SC)
1.00 – 1.50	Not Competent (NC)

When asked about their competence in using gadgets and internet in their homes, some respondents gave the following remarks:

> *"Detuy nga tawen kon ket marigatan nak nga mangisuro iti anakko aglalo nu cellphone kada laptop ti maaramat iti inna pinagadal. (At my age, it is tough for me now to assist my child, especially when it comes to online learning or with the use of gadgets.)."– Parent respondent 64*

"Ammuk nu kasanu kinapateg iti role ti paset mi a nagannak ita new normal ti pinagadal dagiti ubbing. Isu Kayat ko met nga masursuuro Kuma a nalaing ti pinagusar iti internet ken cellphone. (I recognize the importance of our role as parents in the new normal of learning. This is why I am also eager to learn more on the use of internet and cellphone.)." – Parent respondent 195

"Gapu ta haannak met nakaturpos pinagbasak, awan kapasidad ko a mangisuro ta anakko nga agusar ti cellphone wennu ipaawat kanyana ti impormasyon nga ipaay ti internet. Pasaray ngamin ket English dagitoy isu kaadwan ket haanko maawatan. (Because I did not finish my schooling, I could not help my child use the cellphone or help him understand the information provided by the internet. Most of these materials are in English, so I have difficulty comprehending these.)" – Parent respondent 15

"Gusto ko rin namang gabayan ang aking anak sa paggamit niya ng internet at laptop kaya lang madalas hindi rin ako kampante sa mga tinuturo ko lalo na at hindi ko natapos ang high school. (As much as I want to guide my child in using the internet and laptop, most of the time I am not confident with what I teach him because I did not finish high school.)." – Parent respondent 49

These remarks suggest that these parent respondents lack competence and confidence in fulfilling their role as technical guides in blended distance learning because of their low educational level. Lee and Bowen (2016) stressed that parents whose educational levels are low may be less involved because they do not feel self-confident enough to support their children in their schooling. This is also in conformity with the claim of PIDS (2012, as cited in Sheng, 2012) that children do not get enough support because many parents are not equipped with skills to support their children's education.

On the other hand, when the researchers asked the parent-respondents to enumerate other issues or difficulties that they experience as technical guides, they shared the following remarks:

"Haan a makaumanay iti bilang ti gadget para kanyami a sangapamilya. Pagsisinublatan mi laeng detoy maysa nga cellphone ti amami. (Gadget available at home is not enough for each member of the family. We are only using one cellphone.)." – Parent respondent 150

"Kayak met ti aglukat iti internet ken maisurok iti anak ko iti inna pinagresearch para iti leksyon na. Ngem dadduma, iyununa mi pela tay para sida mi ngem tay pagload da. (I can help my child in opening and browsing the internet for his school-related research, but sometimes, we need to prioritize our meal expenses before our prepaid load expenses.)." – Parent respondent 11

"Narigat ti online class ta nu ado ti annak nga agrarana nga agusar, masapol met ti ad-ado nga load. (Classes are conducted on specific timings, so we have to be available with the internet at any cost, it's difficult when we have more than two kids at home going in the same

school having classes at the same time.)." – Parent respondent 15

"Gapu ta agub-ubra kami ken lakayko, awan unay orasmi a tulungan agbasa ta annakmi, Ma'am. (Since my husband and I are both working, we do not have enough time to help our children learn at home.)." – Parent-respondent 33

"Uray kasanu ti ayatko a matulungak Kuma met ta barok ti pinagbasana ditoy Balay, aglalo ita nga adda na lang Balay gapu iti pandemya, kasapulak met ti mapan aggubra (As much as I want to help my child in his education, especially that he is always in the house due to the pandemic, I have to work.)." – Parent-respondent 186

"I feel guilty because I do not have time to assist my child in her modules." – Parent-respondent 324

As revealed on the respondents' profile, most of the parent-respondents work either full-time or part-time. Smith (2016) attributed the low parental involvement in children's learning at home to lack of time. This is supported by Sheng (2012) that employed parents have less time to participate in their children's schooling directly. As a result, children practice on their own, thereby improving their skills significantly. Modeling is particularly influential when the children perceive the models as being competent and possessing skills and abilities. Bandura (2016) pointed out that modeling often makes the parent a significant and powerful model for the child.

The parents' responses also imply that low income is a factor why they cannot provide gadgets to their children. Parents' profile reveals that many parent-respondents earn a family income of less than ₱ 9,520.00, which is less than the official poverty threshold. Hence, parents prioritize providing the family with basic needs such as food and water with this income.

With these findings and responses, there is a need to help parents increase their level of competence as technical guides in blended distance learning. When parents have the knowledge and skills needed to perform their duties as technical guides, they can contribute to their children's success in blended distance learning. Sevilla (2020, as cited in Manila Bulletin, 2020) said that the scope of DepEd's responsibilities extends to parents and other family members to ensure success in implementing blended distance learning. Indeed, parents need to adapt quickly to the use of technology to address the learning gap that has emerged in their children's academic lives in these challenging times of blended distance learning.

Parent Respondents' Level of Competence in Blended Distance Learning as Resource Providers

Table 2 shows that the parents are highly competent in buying school-related books for their children (4.08). Further, the parents are moderately competent in providing space for their children (3.48), buying a variety of games and puzzles that encourage the development of their children (3.40), and providing adequate parental guidance on the use of cyberspace ($\bar{x}$ =2.98). The composite mean of 3.49 implies that parents are moderately competent in their role as resource providers in blended distance learning.

Stevens and Borup (2015) contended that parents of children engaged in blended distance learning should provide them with an

organized learning space free from interruptions. In addition, Hasler-Waters (2012) asserted that parents can aid students by organizing students' learning schedules. He mentioned that teachers commonly help students organize their learning schedule by setting regular assignment due dates. On the other hand, Stevens and Borup (2015) emphasized that parents can guide their children in organizing their time into smaller learning chunks based on individual needs and preferences.

DepEd has emphasized the role of parents as resource providers. According to Servito (2020, as cited in Manlangit et al., 2020), limited contact with teachers has placed parents or guardians as the learners' model or the "More Knowledgeable Other" (MKO). Servito likewise highlighted that as MKO, parents prepare a conducive learning study space for the learner and give appropriate praises, encouragement, and rewards to heighten their child's motivation to learn.

I buy school-related books for my child, got the highest mean, 4.08, which means that the parent-respondents support their children's education by purchasing books needed in their studies. The findings agree with Maduekwe and Adeosun (2010) that a home environment with plenty of reading materials strongly correlates with children's reading achievement in school. They stipulated that an effective learning home environment includes high parent aspiration and expectation, a rich learning environment, academic support, guidance, and stimulation, leading to higher achievement in reading tests.

According to Ramsburg (2018), children brought up in an environment with very few resources at home or no reading materials often develop a negative attitude towards learning. They encounter more difficulties in learning than their counterparts. Indeed, a literacy-rich home environment positively influences children's achievement.

Table 2. Parents' level of competence in blended distance learning as resource providers as perceived by them. (n=379)

Indicators	Mean	DI
1. I am providing learning space for my child.	3.48	MC
2. I am providing adequate parental guidance on the use of cyberspace.	2.98	MC
3. I buy school-related books for my child.	4.08	HC
4. I buy a variety of games and puzzles that encourage the development of the child.	3.40	MC
Composite Mean	**3.49**	**MC**

Legend:

Range of Mean Scores	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
4.51 – 5.00	Very Highly Competent (VHC)
3.51 – 4.50	Highly Competent (HC)
2.51 – 3.50	Moderately Competent (MC)
1.51 – 2.50	Slightly Competent (SC)
1.00 – 1.50	Not Competent (NC)

However, parents may also experience problems when organizing student workspace and time at home. Sorensen's (2012) study revealed that parents sometimes struggled to keep their students on pace to complete work by the teacher-set deadlines. He postulated that the challenges that led to these struggles included parents not knowing what assignments were expected, students failing to follow a work schedule, and students failing to complete assignments.

When the researchers asked the parent-respondents to mention the issues or difficulties that they experience as resource providers, they remarked:

"Pasaray awan magatgatang nga ay-ayam kada libro a pagbasaan para kadagiti ubbing ta ado met masapul iti uneg iti balay a nangnangruna. (We don't usually buy games, puzzles, or books for the kids since we have tight budget.)." – Parent respondent 20

"Nailed laeng toy balay. Nu sinna ti adda lamisaan ken tugaw nan isu nukwa met pagubraan na modules na toy ubingmin. Nu dadduma ta salas, nu dadduma ta lamisaan ta kusina. (Our house is small. Whenever my child answers his module, he would go to the living room or in the table for dining.)." – Parent respondent 66

The parent respondents' remarks prove that financial constraints are the primary reason these parent respondents cited why they could not provide books and educational games for their development.

Balarin and Santiago (2017) underscored that family income is an important predictor of parental involvement, with children from high-income families receiving greater parental support. Also, Lee and Bowen (2016) purported that parents from the lower socioeconomic stratum may not possess the appropriate social and cultural capital to feel comfortable connecting with the school. The low income and working-class context also imply that parents cannot provide resources that could enhance their children's learning. Balarin and Santiago (2017) claimed that wealthy families have more time and more access to information that helps parents assist their children in school.

Therefore, it is suggested that parents find other ways to provide the needed learning resources to their children amid their financial difficulties. It is also proposed that schools and other stakeholders continue to support and assist students in all the learning modalities by providing adequate and appropriate resources such as activity sheets, self-learning modules, ICT-based learning materials, and radio and television-based learning materials. Finally, it is recommended that the government establish more programs and projects to support learners' learning needs in this time of crisis.

Parent Respondents' Level of Competence in Blended Distance Learning as Motivators

The parent-respondents' level of competence in blended distance learning as motivators are presented in Table 3.

It is evident in Table 3 that the parents are highly competent as motivators in blended distance learning, with a composite mean of 4.16. The table shows that I try to match my expectations with my child's potential, and I consider passions and play, recorded the highest mean, which is 4.39.

Table 3. Parents' level of competence in blended distance learning as motivators as perceived by them (n=379)

Indicators	Mean	DI
1. When my child says he/she is having trouble with blended distance learning, I tell him/her not to worry about it	3.61	HC

	because everybody has problems with blended distance learning.		
2.	I am usually able to motivate my child to learn in blended distance learning well.	4.20	HC
3.	I encourage productive struggle.	4.12	HC
4.	I consider passions and play.	4.39	HC
5.	I understand my child's strengths and weaknesses in blended distance learning.	4.26	HC
6.	I try to match my expectations with my child's potential.	4.39	HC
Composite Mean		**4.16**	**HC**

Legend:

Range of Mean Scores	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
4.51 – 5.00	Very Highly Competent (VHC)
3.51 – 4.50	Highly Competent (HC)
2.51 – 3.50	Moderately Competent (MC)
1.51 – 2.50	Slightly Competent (SC)
1.00 – 1.50	Not Competent (NC)

According to the table, parents are highly competent in understanding their children's strengths and weaknesses in blended distance learning (4.26), motivating their children to learn in blended distance learning well (4.20), and encouraging productive struggle (4.12). Moreover, the item, when my child says he/she is having trouble in blended distance learning, I tell him/her not to worry about it because everybody has problems with blended distance learning, also recorded a mean of 3.31, this having a descriptive interpretation of highly competent.

The role of parents as monitors has been accentuated by DepEd. Servito (2020, as cited in Manlangit et al., 2020) recommended that parents offer incentives to heighten their children's motivation to learn.

As parents monitor their children's behavior and performance, Stevens and Borup (2015) stated that they also reinforce student successes and motivate reluctant students to engage more in learning activities. According to them, it is difficult to overstate the importance of online learning motivation.

Weiner (2013, as cited in Stevens & Borup, 2015) found that motivational issues were the key ingredient to online learners' success because these play such an integral part in every aspect of online learning. As a result, Murphy and Rodrıguez-Manzanares (2019) mentioned that online students could be successful if someone at home is actively encouraging or pushing them (Stevens & Borup, 2020).

More specifically, Grolnick and Slowiaczek (2014) purported that parents can motivate students by making them understand that their performance and behavior are related (as cited in Stevens & Borup, 2015) and instill the belief that they can succeed. Lowes and Lin (2015) mentioned that these actions position students to have confidence they can exercise a level of control over their learning and attain success. Parents can be especially effective at motivating students because they can use more extensive rewards and punishments than teachers can offer alone.

Bailey, Schneider et al. (2013) added that parents' knowledge of their students' interests allows them to motivate students

effectively. Similarly, Curtis (2013) suggested that parents use intimate knowledge of student needs to motivate them to improve achievement and move toward increased levels of self-sufficiency.

Bempechat and Shernoff (2012) determined that students were more likely to develop persistent and diligent work habits when they perceived parents were interested in their learning. Borup et al. (2014) argued that one way for parents to show their online students that they are interested in their learning and value education is volunteering at school activities. Gonzalez-DeHass et al. (2015) found that student observation of parents' cognitive development, combined with an active parental interest in school, can also increase student motivation, especially when children love and respect their parents.

While it is true that some students prove unresponsive to their parents' motivational efforts, Curtis (2013) argued that parents are the best equipped to motivate students. He said that if students are unwilling to be involved in their education, and parents cannot encourage them, an outside force such as the school would rarely be able to either.

Borup et al. (2013) posited that, unfortunately, parents tend to underestimate the motivational effect they can have on students to engage in learning activities. For instance, when they asked parents and students to rate the motivational effect parents have on student learning, they found that parents rated their ability to motivate their students significantly lower than did their students. Borup et al. (2014) also argued that both teachers and parents could be more effective if they coordinated their efforts. Hasler-Waters (2012) proposed that teachers and parents could improve their efforts when they share effective motivational strategies.

The abovementioned studies suggest the need for parents to encourage their children to learn through frequent motivation. This is reflected in the following parent respondents' responses:

> *"Ma'am, naayam toy ubingmi. Isu nga nu kasta nga adda laketdi nalpas na nga module nan, ipabus-oy mi met nukwan nga agayayam. (Our child is very much playful, that's why we are letting him play as much as he wants as long as he is done with some of his modules.)." – Parent respondent 32*

> *"I am usually giving my daughter a 30-minute to one-hour break after finishing one or more of her lessons." – Parent-respondent 18*

> *"Tapnu la maayayok nga agmodule toy anakko, igatgatangak nukwa isuna iti meryenda na wennu premyo na nga ay-ayam. (Just to motivate my child, I would willingly buy snacks and toys for him.)." – Parent respondent 48*

> *"Masapul da met ti linglingay da dagiti rubbing, ma'am. Isu nga ipabus-oy ko met nu tay agpakada tay anakko nga mapan agbasketball. (The kids also need time to rest and relax, that is why I would always let him go and play basketball whenever he asks to.)." – Parent respondent 180*

Thus, it is recommended that parents be informed about the different ways they can employ to encourage and motivate their children to learn despite the new challenges brought by blended distance learning. It is also recommended that teachers and parents

work together to make learning more exciting and less stressful in the new normal.

Parent Respondents' Level of Competence in Blended Distance Learning as Monitors

Table 4 indicates that with a composite mean of 4.36, parents are highly competent as monitors in blended distance learning. Specifically, parents are highly competent in all areas, namely: encourage physical activity and exercise (4.46); are always aware of the child's learning requirements by checking notebooks, using learning line, or through phone calls to school (4.42); check-in with the child's every morning and throughout the day (4.41), make sure that the child keeps a balance between his/her subjects (4.40), monitor time on-screen and online (4.40), spend time talking to the child about his/her progress in the different learning areas ($\bar{x}$ =4.37); allow frequent brain breaks (4.34), and check the child's work regularly (4.21).

The role of parents as monitors has been emphasized by the Department of Education. According to Servito (2020, as cited in Manlangit et al., 2020), limited contact with teachers has placed parents or guardians as the learners' model or the "More Knowledgeable Other" (MKO). She underscored that as MKO, parents habitually check the child's workweek plan and ensure that the student sticks to the schedule.

According to Clark (2017), blended distance learning increases the need for parents to monitor their work. For instance, parents can monitor student performance and online behavior using analytic data provided by the LMS. Parents' physical proximity to students also allows them to observe and monitor students' offline behavior.

Table 4. Parents' level of

Indicators	Mean	DI
1. I check my child's work regularly.	4.21	HC
2. I check in with my child every morning- and throughout the day.	4.41	HC
3. I spend time talking with my child about his/her progress in different learning areas.	4.37	HC
4. At home, I make sure my child keeps a balance between his/her progress.	4.40	HC
5. I am always aware of my child's learning requirements by checking notebooks, using a learning line, or through phone calls to the school.	4.42	HC
6. I allow frequent brain breaks.	4.34	HC
7. I encourage physical activity and exercise.	4.46	HC
8. I monitor on-screen and online.	4.40	HC
Composite Mean	**4.36**	**HC**

Legend:

Range of Mean Scores	Descriptive Interpretation (DI
4.51 – 5.00	Very Highly Competent (VHC)
3.51 – 4.50	Highly Competent (HC)
2.51 – 3.50	Moderately Competent (MC)
1.51 – 2.50	Slightly Competent (SC)
1.00 – 1.50	Not Competent (NC)

Harms et al. (2016) advanced that parental monitoring is vital in blended distance learning environments, especially in the online learning environment, because the same internet that is used to provide students with the course content also provides students with countless distractions. As a result, Borup et al. (2014) stressed that students stay on task if someone is physically present to monitor their learning.

Barbour and Reeves (2019) also regarded parental monitoring as an important factor because many students lack the self-regulatory skills required to be successful in blended distance learning. Russell (2014) proposed that parent monitoring activities also focus on student academic honesty issues because teachers and students' physical separation creates an academic trustworthiness monitoring void that parents must fill. Sorensen (2012) recognized that parents of online learners can monitor for technical problems and work schedule issues.

Although parental monitoring serves as an essential aspect of online education, Boulton (2018) found that parental monitoring activities can be short-lived, indicating some parents do not fully understand the impact their support can provide in this area. As a result, Boulton (2018) explained that teachers should help parents better understand their monitoring responsibilities. Parents may also have misconceptions regarding students' online behavior. Therefore, Bailey et al. (2013) suggested that schools provide parents with student assessment scores and other analytic data to increase parents' awareness of how students spend time online. Bailey, Schneider, and Ark (2013) also advocated for learning systems that would automatically notify parents when students exhibited a decline in effort and/or performance.

Challenges to effective monitoring by parents can also grow out of interpersonal relationships. Curtis (2013) determined parents of less successful students could experience conflict with them when engaged in supportive monitoring. Although the exact cause of the conflict is unknown, participants in Curtis' research explained that the benefits of monitoring outweighed the costs. According to McNeal (2012), too much monitoring can also make it difficult for students to develop independent learning skills that would benefit them later in life.

When asked about their roles as monitors, the parent-respondents mentioned the following:

> *"Kas mesa a nagannak, mamatinak a dakami ti asawak ti umuna a makinresponsibilidad a tulungan ti leksyon na ti anakmi. (As a parent, I believe that my husband and I are primary responsible in monitoring and helping them of their lessons)." – Parent-respondent 25*

> *"Sagsagaysaek a ma'am a kitkitaen nu awan metla labes tay module tay anakko. Baka ngamin adda malabsan na nga performance task. (I check her modules one by one just to make sure that all the performance tasks were accomplished.)." – Parent-respondent 35*

> *"Madalas kong kinakausap ang aking anak, lalo at alam kong nahihirapan siya sa ilang mga subjects niya, lalo na sa Math. Ginagawa ko naman ang lahat ng aking makakaya maturuan ko lamang siya. (I often talk to my child, especially in his Math lessons. I also try my best to help him cope with it)." – Parent-respondent 115*

> *"I can only monitor and help my child after my work. Despite of my tiredness and little time, I would still make*

sure to check his works and tasks." – Parent-respondent 5

Analysis of these interview responses regarding parental roles and responsibilities as monitors revealed several common trends: monitoring, access to reports, time management, identifying student needs, instructional support, communication, and access to resources.

Without a doubt, parent-child communication and home activities play a crucial role in children's academic achievement. Even though a parent's role in their child's learning develops as the child grows, one thing remains constant: parents are their child's learning models. Parents' perceptions about education, in general, can inspire the child and show them how to take charge of their educational journey. It is a fact that parents are their children's first teachers; however, parents must show the child how the school can extend the learning they started together at home.

Although the parent-respondents demonstrate a high level of competence as monitors in blended distance learning, there is still a need to provide them with more assistance to better fulfill their duties as monitors of their children's learning progress. When parents are knowledgeable and skilled as monitors, they contribute to their children's success in Blended Distance Learning. Sevilla (2020, as cited in Manila Bulletin, 2020) accentuates that DepEd provides support.

Parent Respondents' Level of Competence in Blended Distance Learning as Facilitators

It can be gleaned from Table 5 that parents are moderately competent in answering questions from the child regarding school-related activities (3.48), trying to know strategies for helping the child overcome weaknesses in blended distance learning (3.45), trying to check if activities are done well and correctly (3.36), and keeping aware of the approaches used to teach in blended distance learning (3.28). It can be inferred from the composite mean of 3.39 that parents are moderately competent as facilitators in blended distance learning.

According to Servito (2020, as cited in (2020, as noted by Cunanan, 2020), the MKO's task should not teach the content; rather, the MKO must guide the child-learner on time management, study habits, or what to do if the child does not know what to do. She asserted that the MKO does not need to be very learned or with a string of diplomas, but he/she must be very willing to set a direction in the learner's journey towards blended distance learning.

Stevens and Borup (2015) explained that parents are typically not content experts but can provide important auxiliary instructional support. Lee and Figueroa (2012) elucidated that parents could help their students learn the content by instructing them on specific online learning skills. Black (2019) mentioned that parents can provide instructional support to their children in the following ways: (1) basic support that teaches students to follow directions, to pursue information especially fascinating to them, and to work hard when frustrated; (2) homework support that leads students to approach the work with a positive attitude, and view it as fun; (3) differentiation support that enables students to work at their own pace, take breaks when frustration sets in, and focus on strategies that help them learn best; and (4) critical thinking support that teaches students to ask questions clarifying that which was not understood.

Table 5. Parents' level of competence in blended distance learning as facilitators as perceived by them (n=379)

Indicators	Mean	DI
1. I try to know strategies for helping my child overcome weaknesses in blended distance learning.	3.45	MC
2. I keep myself aware of the approaches used to teach in blended distance learning.	3.28	MC
3. I always try to check if activities are done well and correctly.	3.36	MC
4. I always try to answer questions from my child regarding school-related activities.	3.48	MC
Composite Mean	**3.39**	**MC**

Legend:

Range of Mean Scores	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
4.51 – 5.00	Very Highly Competent (VHC)
3.51 – 4.50	Highly Competent (HC)
2.51 – 3.50	Moderately Competent (MC)
1.51 – 2.50	Slightly Competent (SC)
1.00 – 1.50	Not Competent (NC)

Hasler-Waters (2012) also described parents who read assignment instructions with their students and helped them search for needed information. In addition, Lee and Figueroa (2012) point out that parents can assist students with technological issues when able.

Stevens and Borup (2015) underscored that although parents can provide important auxiliary instructional support, they typically lack the content expertise to directly instruct students on the specific course material, especially in older grades with more difficult and complex learning activities and content. Online programs should be especially aware of the benefits and drawbacks of parental instructional support and work with parents to understand and fulfill their roles in facilitating student learning.

When asked about their roles as facilitators, the parent-respondents mentioned the following:

"Kayat ko met ti makasursuro pay nga nalaing tapnu mas maisurok pay toy anakko a nalaing. (I want to learn more so that I could teach my child more.)." – Parentrespondent 5

"Agbuybuya nak iti YouTube nu kasanuk nga maisuro tay leksyon nga di masurutan tay anakko, gapu ta haan ko met unay malagip daydiay a leksyonen, padpadasek nga adalen man nukwa dagitoyen. (I watch video lessons via YouTube, so I can teach my child well on his lessons.)." – Parent respondent 55

"As long as I'm done with my work, I would sit and teach my child his lessons, especially on Math subject which needs examples and explanations." – Parent respondent 153

"Kapag may mga gawain na hindi kayang sagutin ng anakko, tinutulungan ko siya sa pamamagitan ng pag-browse o search sa internet. (I try to help my child in

answering difficult questions by helping her how to browse the internet.") – Parent-respondent 18

Since the parent-respondents are moderately competent as facilitators in blended distance learning, it is vital to provide them with more assistance to better their children's learning progress. Equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to perform their duties as facilitators can contribute to their children's success in blended distance learning. Sevilla (2020, as cited in Cunanan, 2020) said that the scope of DepEd's responsibilities may be extended to parents and other family members to ensure success in implementing blended distance learning. In addition, the results of this study denote the need for schools to communicate their expectations clearly and consistently for parental involvement; otherwise, parents might fail to understand the level of commitment expected.

Summary of the Results on Parents' Level of Competence in Blended Distance Learning
As shown in Table 6, the parents are highly competent as monitors (4.36) and motivators (4.16). On the other hand, the parents are moderately competent as resource providers (3.49), facilitators (3.39), and technical guides (3.35). The overall mean of 3.75 implies that the parents of Grade 5 pupils of the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte are highly competent in blended distance learning.

Table 6. Summary of the results on parents' level of competence in blended distance learning.

Indicators	Composite Mean	DI
1. Technical Guides	3.35	MC
2. Resource Providers	3.49	MC
3. Motivators	4.16	HC
4. Monitors	4.36	HC
5. Facilitators	3.39	MC
Overall Mean	**3.75**	**HC**

Legend:

Range of Mean Scores	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
4.51 – 5.00	Very Highly Competent (VHC)
3.51 – 4.50	Highly Competent (HC)
2.51 – 3.50	Moderately Competent (MC)
1.51 – 2.50	Slightly Competent (SC)
1.00 – 1.50	Not Competent (NC)

Although, in general, the parent respondents are highly competent in performing their roles in blended distance learning, there is still a need to provide them with support and assistance to better fulfil their duties as technical guides, resource providers, and facilitators. Equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to perform these responsibilities can help and contribute to their children's success in blended distance learning. Thus, it is recommended that parents receive sufficient guidance and adequate support from DepEd to become more aware of their roles under the new system. Doing this can increase parents' level of competence in supporting their children who are adjusting to the new set-up for this school year.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn.

The parents recorded moderately competent in their level of competence as technical guides, resource providers, and facilitators. On a positive note, the parents recorded highly competent as motivators and monitors.

The overall mean of 3.75 also implies that the parents of Grade 5 pupils of the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte are highly competent in blended distance learning.

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