



FEELING ALONE: THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF ANNULLED SINGLE PARENTS SUPPORTING THEIR CHILDREN IN ONLINE LEARNING DURING THE PANDEMIC

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Abstract: *Background:* Single parents strive to fulfill the fundamental needs of their children despite obstacles and limitations caused by marital and external issues. The pandemic increased the difficulty to meet these responsibilities, especially the parents' ability to assist in online learning. *Method:* This is a qualitative study that uses the phenomenological research design to gain an understanding of each participant's experiences. A semi-structured interview was held with the ten participants to gather the data. After transcribing, the data is analyzed and coded to be able to pull out specific themes for the simulacrum. The study aims to answer the central question: "How do annulled single parents describe their lived experiences in online learning?" *Findings:* The results entail that the given circumstances affect single parents in several aspects which are classified into three themes: Insufficiencies of Annulled Single Parenting, Compromised Aspects of Annulled Single Parenting, and Coping Mechanisms of Annulled Single Parenting. *Conclusion:* The study concludes that single parents are still independent despite the challenges they faced in online learning. *Recommendations:* The researchers recommend that future studies around the same topic gather responses from a more diverse sample size for improved data dependability and a more detailed comparison between participants' lived experiences.

Keywords: annulment, challenges, coping mechanism, divorce, e-learning, pandemic, phenomenology, single-father, single-mother, single-parenting

I. INTRODUCTION

The covid-19 pandemic has affected not only the economy but also society. One of the most affected aspects of the pandemic is education. Many of these learning opportunities, particularly those involving large groups or in-person interactions with peers, have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic (Kumar et al., 2021). According to Pokhrel and Chhetri (2021), during the pandemic, e-learning tools were crucial in assisting schools and universities in facilitating student learning during the lockdown of colleges and schools. The covid-19 pandemic has dramatically affected direct interactions, which is why students relied on online communication (Real et al., 2021). Staff and student preparedness must be assessed and supported while adapting to the new adjustments. Learners with a fixed mentality have difficulty adapting and adjusting, but learners with a growth mindset adapt quickly to new situations. Anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and stress are emotional health disorders that affect people globally and are linked to the social changes it has produced (Bonsaksen et al., 2022). For online learning, there is no one-size-fits-all methodology. There are various disciplines to choose from, each with its requirements. Various disciplines and age groups necessitate various ways of online learning. Physically challenged students can also benefit from online learning since it allows them to participate in learning in a virtual environment with limited movement.

Single-parent families are part of those who were affected during the pandemic, and most of them struggled to juggle their work with assisting their children at home. Marriage is a legal union between two people as lifetime partners. According to Cherlin (2020), marriage is essential in intimate relationships. An *annulment* is a legal decision that declares a marriage null and void, indicating that the union was never legally valid. The relationship is usually strained when both partners face a crisis that cannot be resolved. A marriage's dissolution has positive and negative consequences for immediate family members. While ending a marriage may signal freedom from an oppressive, even violent conjugal relationship for many women, it is undeniable that this separation also results in social pressure and discrimination in some situations, limiting the person's freedom of action both inside and outside the home.

An annulment can occur because of a variety of reasons. According to Cynkier (2020), the following are the main grounds for annulment: fraud or deceit, absence of consummation, incest, bigamy, lack of consent, or unsound mind. Researcher Chimienti (2021) pointed out that both the children and the single parent had experienced the effects of annulment, with the parent having more psychological discomfort, substance misuse, and depression, as well as poorer overall health. The factor most affected in an annulment is the children's rights, and the effects will differ under these circumstances. Failure to comply with parental responsibilities could damage the overall development of their children, mainly physically, emotionally, and mentally (Real et al., 2020).

After an annulment, a person experiences emotional instability due to the lack of spousal support, problems between the couple, and providing the best quality of childcare. Compared to married people, divorced people have higher psychological distress, emotional conflict, and poorer overall health (Griffin, 2021). For instance, if spousal support is required in a couple's situation during annulment, the lack of income will make it difficult for a single parent to support their children, especially if they are having difficulty finding work due to their mental state. Due to emotional instability, sleep deprivation, poor self-care, financial insecurity, and limited support networks, stigma and criticism might be felt by both the single parent and the children.

Furthermore, it is nearly impossible for spousal support to be granted after an annulment, resulting in financial hardship for the children's guardian. Stack and Meredith (2017) indicated that single-parent families are at a significant risk of financial difficulties, which can negatively influence their mental health. Furthermore, Pollmann-Schult (2022) emphasized that arguments that single mothers are less satisfied with their lives than other women are usually based on the notion that single mothers are exposed to higher psychosocial and financial stress and strain. Since single mothers typically earn lower wages and are solely responsible for providing for their families, they are particularly vulnerable to financial stress. Income support policies such as child allowances and child tax credits can alleviate low-income families' financial troubles and improve their general well-being. As a result, single moms in countries that give extensive financial help to families may anticipate having higher life satisfaction than single mothers in countries that provide little or no financial support. Single mothers also experience exceptionally high levels of role overload, time pressure, and work-family conflict because of the absence of support from a spouse.

An annulment can cause single parents different emotional problems. Jhoselle and Ramos (2020) stated that some single mothers felt helpless and hopeless and lacked the self-identity and self-confidence to endure and overcome the problem independently.

Single mothers are not the only ones who experience these problems, but also single fathers. A common problem they experience is emotional stress. They would develop this because they long to belong somewhere, may it be to their self or community (Dor, 2021; Bourassa et al., 2019; Nieuwenhuis & Maldonado, 2018).

Single-parent families emerge when an annulled couple faces an issue that neither can solve. There are a variety of reasons that contribute to families transitioning to becoming single-parent families. They may have left a relationship, divorced, or annulled their partner, which is one of the most prevalent reasons. Many people know how conventional stereotypes are in society, so it is not surprising that there are existing stereotypes about single-parent families. Stack and Meredith (2017) found in their study that single parents are a stigmatized group because they have a collection of qualities that communicate a social identity that is frequently undervalued in society. Despite high employment rates, single parents are more likely than other family arrangements to be in fuel poverty. As a result, single parents must deal with various pressures, including stigma, work, and poverty.

II. METHOD

This study is generally classified as qualitative research in phenomenological design, aiming to understand the lived experiences of single parents in Qatar. Qualitative research is a methodology for collecting and understanding data and its outcomes using words. It involves finding and choosing people or groups of people who have particular expertise in or experience with a relevant phenomenon, according to Palinkas et al. (2015). As Neubauer et al. (2019) said, Phenomenology is a practical study method that works well for examining complex issues. Sundler et al. (2019) stated that various phenomenological approaches are accessible today. The researcher must know basic assumptions when employing phenomenology to make critical methodological judgments. As a result, it is critical to comprehend the approach's foundations. However, phenomenological foundations can be challenging to grasp and use in research. This study will be created with a phenomenological research design as it will focus on the lived experiences of the annulled single parents. The phenomenological research design is used in this study to discover the participants' insights. According to Van Manen (2017), phenomenological research studies the participants' lived experiences. However, its deeper function is to search for ways to improve psychological health, self-development steps, personal growth programs, experimental clinical designs, and therapeutic healing procedures.

Nonetheless, one must use caution in this area as well. Therapy or self-improvement psychology is not the same as phenomenology. Others use phenomenology to investigate how a specific group of people in a specific location or institutional context have certain experiences. An example is how particular residents in certain nursing homes in a specific location experience chronic pain or are treated for another illness or condition.

To seize participants' different interpretations will be the research's goal. Asking questions and then listening to the insights is what the researchers will do. By doing this, the information that will be acquired can be used to support the research.

Research Locus and Sample

This research study was conducted at Philippine School Doha (PSD), Mesaimmer, Doha, Qatar, a leading basic education institution.



Figure 1: Location of Philippine School Doha at Al-Messiah, Doha, Qatar

A total of ten single parents who are legally annulled were selected as the participants for the study. The researchers used a purposeful sampling strategy to choose the ten participants. In qualitative research, purposeful sampling is commonly employed to identify and choose information-rich examples linked to the topic of interest (Suri, 2011). Although there are a variety of deliberate sampling procedures, criteria sampling is the most popular in implementation research. The participants were chosen considering the following criteria: their status of being legally annulled single parents, the number of years that they were annulled, whether or not the participant is currently working, whether the participant is currently living in Qatar, whether they have financial support, whether they have relatives at home helping them; the number of child[ren] under the care of the participant depending if the participant has at least one or more child[ren] from preschool to grade school. There is an equal number of male and female participants that have taken part in this research study.

Data Collection and Ethical Consideration

The structure of the interview questions will be the beginning of the data collection procedure, which will be based on the central and specific questions from the study. Educators who are chosen with professional credentials will validate the research study. The participants will then receive an email that contains the consent forms from the researchers to acknowledge them to be a part of the study once the validation is finished. Soon as the participants have accepted, the time and place will be discussed with the researchers to be aware of the participants' attainability. The interviews with the participants will be enacted through the convenience of the face-to-face interview and Zoom Conferences.

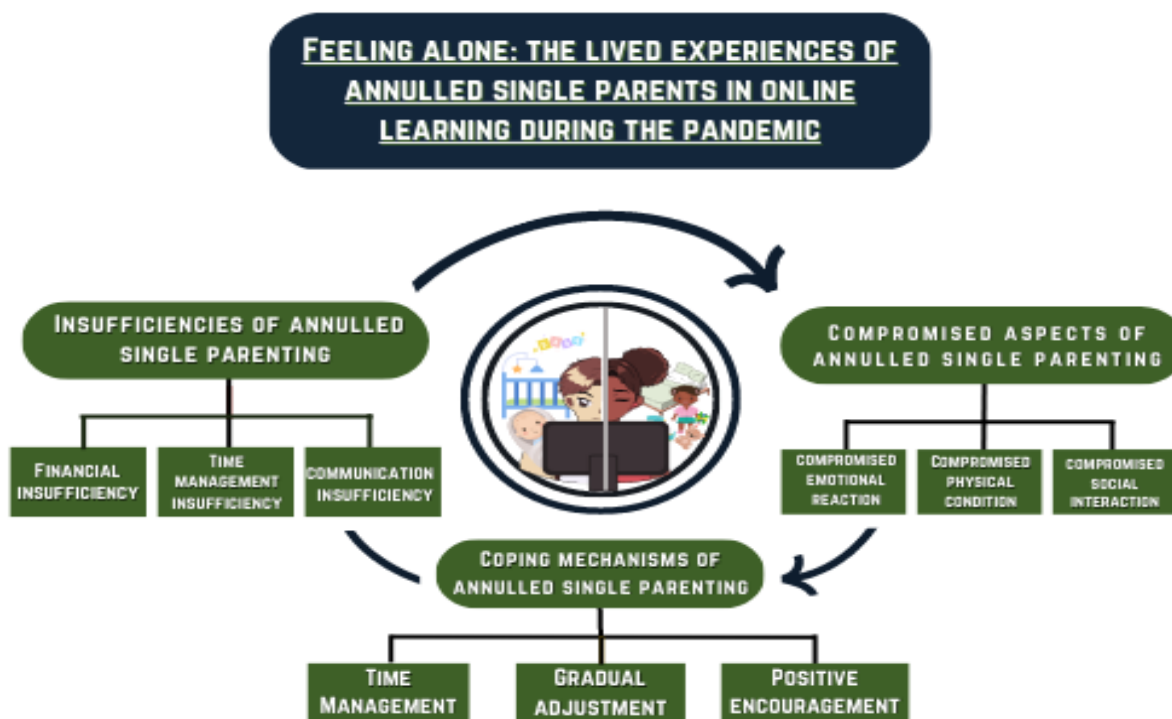
To interview the participants, the researchers will use the robotfoto and interview guide for a smooth flow to occur through the interview process. A run-through of the entire interview will be conducted before the actual interview to familiarize the participants with the course. The interviews to which the participants already have consented will be recorded using the Zoom recording attribute. On the other hand, for the face-to-face interview, a Voice Memo app from the researcher's phone will be used to record the interview. The researcher will propose consent to record the entire meeting for interpreting purposes. Recordings will help transcribe the experiences voiced out by the participants. As part of the qualitative research method, dictation of the oral feedback, analysis, and understanding of data will be applied comprehensively. The confidentiality of the participants will be respected by replacing their names with P1, P2, and P3 until P10.

Data Analysis

Data gathered directly from the participants' perspectives, and feelings are used in the study. The following steps were used in data analysis to learn more about the phenomenon under investigation: (1) Emic data transcription; (2) Emic to Etic transcription; (3) Cool to Warm Analysis; (4) using the dendrogram tool to detect and analyze themes; (5) and finally, the inserting of these topics into the simulacrum. This study used thematizing to gain a deep understanding of the topic of the experiences of single parents. A systematic procedure was followed while doing this. The first level of data analysis was utilized to make sense of the data gathered. It was accomplished through direct transcriptions followed by data cleaning. Data is then processed, followed by the cool-warm analysis wherein responses are grouped and reflected in a dendrogram where sub-themes and themes emerge. The conceptual framework of the study is placed in the research simulacrum. The research simulacrum will show how the parts are connected. Then, using lenses of related literature and research, the second level of data analysis will strengthen the themes and subthemes.

III. RESULTS

For the readers to better understand, the researchers created a simulacrum to visualize the outcome achieved. The picture in the middle represents single parents during the pandemic regarding the new online working environment. Three themes were observed in chronological order. It begins with the first theme, Insufficiencies of Annulled Single Parenting which has three sub-themes, (1) Financial Insufficiency, (2) Time Insufficiency, and (3) Communication Insufficiency. The single parents then experienced Compromised Aspects of Annulled Single Parenting as a result; it has three sub-themes, (1) Compromised Emotional Reaction, (2) Compromised Physical Condition, and (3) Compromised Social Interaction. Lastly, after those challenges were experienced, Coping Mechanisms of Annulled Single Parenting defined the next theme these single parents underwent. It has three sub-themes, (1) Time Management, (2) Gradual Adjustment and (2) Positive Encouragement.



To further expound the phenomenology of single parents during the pandemic, the viewpoint and experience are considered. Its main goal is to understand the lived experiences and how this occurrence was considered to be improved rather than ignored. The mentioned themes correlate to the questions: “How do annulled single parents describe their lived experiences?” and “As a single parent taking care of your children alone at home during the pandemic, what are the methods you did to adjust and balance your e-learning for work and responsibilities at home?” Due to the pandemic, significant adjustments were needed to be comfortable again with the online working setting of the parents.

As reiterated, three themes emerged as a result of the phenomenological study. The key to showcasing the complete experience of the single parents depends significantly on the four concepts that appeared, namely: (1) Insufficiencies of Annulled Single Parenting - the problems that developed and affected the living condition of both the parent and the child when the pandemic began; (2) Compromised Aspects of Annulled Single Parenting - the corporeal and mental problems that were encountered after the person’s way of living was significantly impaired; and (3) Coping Mechanisms of Annulled Single Parenting - the measures carried out to further improve on the problems met previously by the parent;

Insufficiencies of Annulled Single Parenting

In relationships, it is common to encounter challenges that create tension between the people in the correlation, and problems result from this. The term Insufficiencies of Annulled Single Parenting proposes the troubles faced concerning the circumstances. Three sub-themes were observed and considered in this category: Communication and Closure, Time Management, and Financial Situation.

Financial Insufficiency

There are instances where the monetary status of the person is extensively considered. For it affects the single parent and the people surrounding them. Including the children they have. Moreover, as the parents worked online, they started considering the financial condition they would experience, which made them warrier about the allowance the single parent receives. The participants responded: “Of course I have to tell him so that he can understand *why I give him less money and I cannot buy him something he wants.*” (P8).

“Yes, we have an open conversation. I see to it *they are aware of our everyday expenses.*” (P3)

Most participants relate with the monetary struggle, for the following single parent expresses how they do not have any money problem and are financially stable.

“Yes, of course. We are not born rich, we are in the middle class, one as what you have called. For me, he should know the reason why I’m here to fulfill all his needs at school.” (P7)

The results showcased that most single parents experience the same phenomena, varying from person to person.

Time Insufficiency

One thing about relationships is that for it to work, both parties should exert the effort to show the other that they care about them, which applies to familial relationships. One of the more common ways to show that effort is to offer time to be with the people in the relationship. In addition, as a parent, it is essential to give time to one's children so that they feel that their parents are prioritizing them. It was heavily implied in the responses of the participants, in which they said: *“Yes, I do feel like time was scarce with my child as I am doing all the work needed for us to meet ends.” (P2)*, Participant 4 agreed by saying, *“Since I am pretty busy, it’s very hard for me to manage my time on how I can take care of my children at the same time I have to manage my time also in my work.” (P4)* and Participant 10 concluded that *“Yes, especially since we are apart. Being away from him brings a heavy feeling. Despite the distance, I make him feel that he is not alone by making myself present and available to talk to him...” (P5)*

As shown from the responses above, it is made clear that time insufficiency was evident in the experiences of single parents. Time was indeed scarce especially when it comes to balancing their work, children, and personal time. As discussed from their responses, some found it hard to manage their time given that they are still adjusting to the new learning and work environment.

Communication Insufficiency

As a single parent, one of the best ways to ease the struggles of caring for a child alone is to communicate. Furthermore, strong communication will go a long way, establishing a better relationship between the parent and the child. It is an evident finding in the responses of the participants, in which they stated: *“...it is hard for me to approach and interact with them since interacting is really not my thing and it takes a lot of courage to do in my part.” (P4)*; Participant 5 continued the thought by stating that *“No, I have no communication with my ex-husband and it's hard to play both roles.”* Therefore, the difficult circumstances affect the annulled single parents' communication with one's children as well as their communication with their ex-spouses which can hinder their chances of seeking help and support.

Compromised Aspects of Annulled Single Parenting

It is commonly perceived that single parenting requires a lot of effort and fortitude to overcome the circumstances' difficulties. Single parents face physical, emotional, and social effects due to this collection of complications, which can lead to them compromising on certain aspects to adapt to the demanding needs of their duties. Furthermore, three sub-themes—namely, compromised emotional reaction, compromised physical condition, and compromised social interaction—will be covered under this theme.

Compromised Emotional Reaction

Single parents are under pressure because there are expectations placed on them. Despite giving their children the best care possible, the potential of endangering one's health is still present, whether it be from the people around them or their workplace. During the epidemic, emotional repercussions are seen as children are cared for. Moreover, participants responded that: *“I experienced only emotional stress... So I always cried every day because I don’t know what to do and then at the same time, I can not give up because I know that one little child is looking at me so I have to set a good example for her.” (P1)*, on the other hand, another participant said that, *“Sometimes, because I get pressure from work and as well as from teaching him in school.” (P8)*

Lastly, a participant also had the same views wherein they stated *“Yeah, there was a change in my mental and emotional stability...at the beginning, I was really stressed and tired but now I know how to manage my mood better because I have a time management plan on how I could manage my work from home with my children.” (P4)*

As seen from the statements above, it is evident that the pressure from simultaneously having to take care of their children and working took a toll on their emotional well-being, and it led to breakdowns but even so, they could push through.

Compromised Physical Condition

The single parent is already responsible for providing for the children, but with time, this responsibility may become burdensome for the guardian. They were given more tasks, particularly during the pandemic. Consequently, physical exhaustion is the result. Another participant talked about how their relationship with their children deepened while another described how the new normal influenced their mental and emotional stability:

“She is understanding so when she sees me tired, she says, “mom, you can sleep. I will just watch tv here.” (P1)

“I have to clean, I have to do stuff at home. To do chores, generally and then I have to work. Then I have to cook. It is just like a cycle. So it actually drains me physically, emotionally, and mentally but of course, I have to keep going because I don't have a choice to stop just because I am tired.” (P4)

The responses reflect how the numerous duties caused the parents to overwork their bodies to a point of fatigue. However, since they have no choice but to fulfill their household responsibilities, they push through despite the evident struggle.

Compromised Social Interaction

Demanding daily responsibilities take a major toll on the wellbeing of single parents. Moreover, the stresses of being a single parent not only brought about negative effects on one's well-being but also proved to have detrimental setbacks with their social relationships with others including their children. Overcoming the pressures of a single parent can lead one to build communication barriers with others due to factors such as time insufficiency. Especially at a young age wherein children are observant of family dynamics, it is crucial to set an example for healthy social relationships at home. A lack of time dedicated for intimate bonding within the family can reduce the chances of forming a deeper connection and instead creates distance between the parent and child.

"This creates a barrier between me and my children. It causes a lack of interaction between me and my children." (P4)

"The struggles I have experienced are just my time management or allocation of more time to help them while I'm working. I simultaneously have to finish my job and attend to my children's needs." (P9)

The responses depicted that they have created decreased interactions with their children because of the problems faced by single parents, such as stress, stigma, and pressure. This affects not only the development of the children but also impacts the relationship building between the parent and the children.

Coping Mechanisms

People frequently employ different methods to help manage painful or difficult emotions, and coping techniques can assist people in adjusting to difficult experiences while maintaining their emotional well-being. In addition, being a single parent during the pandemic is no easy task. As a single parent, one must constantly work to provide and good coping mechanisms can greatly improve one's health. Three sub-themes are integrated in this category: (1) Time Management, (2) Gradual Adjustment, (3) Positive Encouragement.

Time Management

Having a dilemma of time management during online learning for annulled single parents is considered to be one of the common issues that is known. However, with the progress of time, one will learn to adapt, adjust and conceptualize their own ways of conquering the entanglement with the fast pace.

"I work on my own schedule. I work late at night while my child sleeps. I sleep 4 to 5 hours at night and in the morning, I tend to my son's needs." (P10)

"...it is just a matter of giving time to do the things you usually do and to adjust in a timely manner." (P3)

"...I make sure to accomplish greater things even if I occasionally have work on my day off. I make up for my time with her by staying overnight in a hotel, visiting an amusement park, or getting on as many rides as we could." (P1)

The responses above demonstrate the way of coping for the loss of time the annulled single parents had towards their children. With the ways of using their own strategies they do just to balance the lacking time with them. They learned to adjust with the pace in a timely manner without rushing things, for them to figure out how to handle the deficient moments.

Gradual Adjustment

Adjusting to the new norms of the pandemic can take a considerable toll on a person, especially a single parent because one must also consider the health of oneself and one's children due to the virus. Difficulties may arise at first, but adapting to the changes will allow one to find compromise and ways to adjust to the new circumstances.

"... even if there is zero possibility to do things possible, we always find ways. So, I think yes, we can adjust." (P1)

"...During the pandemic, it is just a matter of giving time to do the things you usually do and to adjust in a timely manner." (P3)

These responses indicate how the participants have used coping methods to balance their personal, professional, and parental lives. Making adjustments was challenging at first, but with time they succeeded.

Positive Encouragement

Raising a family single handedly has never been an easy task for single parents, with the hardships that they have faced and have gone through, having a positive and determined mindset is the key to help them solve all their problems. Furthermore, a parent needs to take care of themselves so that they can be there for their children. The parents replied:

"I did this by being strong minded and mentally prepared. So I know what to do when I am faced with these challenges.." (P2)

"Be happy, if you are bored, find something that will make you happy. Never lose your faith in God, pray for your future, and love yourself, focus on the people who gives attention, especially in times you need them." (P7)

"I can say life is too short for us to pity ourselves. Life is too short to be angry and bitter." (P5)

The responses demonstrate that the participants committed to concentrating on their objectives despite experiencing struggles for improving their futures and, most significantly, for the welfare of their children.

IV. DISCUSSION

Finding out the lived experiences of single parents in online learning while the pandemic is ongoing in Qatar who experienced stress as they adapt to the new learning environment. This phenomenological study integrates a patchwork of statements that highlight how the circumstances of their everyday lives contribute to their frustrations, which results in them experiencing multiple emotions and adjustments as the new normal emerges. Their compelling stories and responses reveal three key elements that lead to their experiences.

Insufficiencies of Annulled Single Parenting

Financial Insufficiency

Working for at least two years before getting married is vital because employment helps many mature and become financially independent. If one lacks money to support themselves and their family, this will certainly become a problem. For the family is the foundation of all children, but single-parent families are complicated because of the economic, physical, psychological, and social issues they confront. These issues must be addressed and resolved by providing the proper resources and preferences for them. The problems of single mothers are primarily linked with the financial upbringing of children, their future, and settling down in life until the time children get married or get jobs, they depend on single parents. Poor women struggle to survive, while the middle class can be impoverished. They are forced to return to their natal homes, where they are frequently less than welcome and live as unwanted guests forever obliged to their parents, male siblings, and families (Palani, 2020).

Time Insufficiency

Time management is a tremendously critical ability for being a parent, especially for single parents. Abing (2017) stated that, Regarding child-rearing techniques, time management, money management, and self-image perception, single parents also have fair, even, and balanced experiences. They have a stable foundation of experiences that are neither good nor bad. Raising children as single parents was also challenging, particularly regarding time management. The hardest thing they have to go through is learning to adapt and assuming the roles of both parents. Most single parents still feel intense anguish, remorse, and longing but strive to make the most of things by seeing the bright side.

Communication Insufficiency

Communication and closure are important aspects of relationships, especially in families. If communication begins to lack between the family, dilemmas will be encountered. Although there is undoubtedly a link between effective communication and relationship satisfaction, efficient communication does not guarantee that one will be happy in a relationship (Layner et al., 2016). Family dynamics are crucial in determining a person's well-being throughout their life. Thus the parent struggles to balance their lifestyle to ensure that their children will progress to a quality of life.

Compromised Aspects of Annulled Single Parenting

Compromised Emotional Reaction

Emotional stress is usually anchored with physiological and psychological stress. As a result, single parents usually experience emotional stress due to the responsibilities of caring for the family while working at home during the pandemic. Social isolation was more common among single parents than married parents, and they put in more hours at work and received less parental and emotional support. They tended to go through more potentially stressful life changes and had fewer solid social networks (Weinraub & Wolf, 2022).

Furthermore, single parents are more prone to emotional instability because they provide for the family alone and lack a support system. Parenting and being the only source of income for their family are two essential duties that single parents must simultaneously play. Due to this dual role, a single working mother has social and psychological issues. Previous research revealed significant rates of school drop-outs, substance misuse, premarital sex, teenage pregnancies, and neglected children, as well as despair and emotional distress among children of single parents. Due to single parents' physical, mental, and emotional unpreparedness, the family system eventually broke down (Hamid & Salleh, 2013)

Compromised Physical Condition

During the global pandemic, some single parents experienced heightened exhaustion physically. This is usually due to the constant juggling of work, social, family, and personal life. According to Marchetti et al., 2020, Overwhelming weariness is characterized as emotions of being overextended and depleted of one's mental and physical resources. It can be caused by ongoing parental stress and parents' lack of resilience. Parental burnout, which arises from repeated exposure to parental stress, has an aspect of

exhaustion (Mikolajczak, et al., 2018). Parental burnout can be linked to regular kid-related responsibilities like scheduling, supervising homework, and managing housework. It can also be linked to serious stresses like child illness or adolescent law breaking, as well as long-term stressors like children's mental or behavioral issues.

Compromised Social Interaction

Building a healthy social foundation at home is essential for the positive growth of a child especially during the early years of development. Considerable evidence proves that parent-child relationships impact children's well-being. A study by Chung et al. (2020) reports that parental warmth, autonomy granting, psychological control and other factors encouraging connection helped children develop resilience. Different parental stressors, which are more prominent for single parents, are key determinants of parental practices including its dysfunction. The COVID-19 pandemic affected numerous aspects of annulled single parent families' lifestyles that led to an increase of pressure and stress when it comes to parenting. These uncertainties and changes posed negative impacts on parenting by causing adverse effects on parent-child relationships and promoted an increased use of harsh parenting practices (Chung et al., 2020)

Coping Mechanisms

Time Management

The difficulties surrounding the management of children at home are exacerbated for annulled single parents especially during the pandemic. Due to prolonged stay-at-home protocols, the single parent juggles the responsibilities of fulfilling work tasks, keeping children entertained, feeding the family, cleaning the household, supervising the children for e-learning, and more on top of tending to personal needs and self-care. According to the findings of Roskam et al. (2017), "the increased pressure on parents, combined with the lack of time due to the drastic decrease in stay-at-home mothers and the lower respect and/or appreciation from children, has made parenting increasingly challenging." Circumstances that result in prolonged and overwhelming stress may result in parental burnout, which leads to a significant physical and mental exhaustion until it becomes manifested into an unhealthy cycle of behaviors that are difficult to unlearn.

Gradual Adjustment

Adjusting to the pandemic while being annulled is challenging when parents fear giving up on their child, fearing that it will imply that their child prefers the other parent or that the other parent is manipulating the situation. Another complicated topic is whether additional child support must be paid if the parenting arrangement changes. Furthermore, many parents are concerned that they would never get the time back if they allowed the parenting schedule to be changed (Hill & Blackstone, 2020). As a single parent, the well-being of the children becomes the top priority; because of this, time for oneself becomes scarce. All attention and care go to the children, so rest and the ability to pamper and care for oneself become almost unattainable. The parent ends up tired, sickly, and stressed. Though this is the case with most respondents, they were able to make arrangements, divide work, and fix schedules and so they managed to push through for their children's well-being.

Positive Encouragement

Their sons suffer because of the absence of a father figure. During their adolescent years, sons frequently adopted unfavorable views in school but maintained positive ties with their mothers and other family members. The single mother voiced her concerns about having issues with a new relationship and expressed her uncertainties about finding someone to support her truly. Although the single mothers stated a desire to locate a partner (i.e., katuwang) who can assist them in carrying out their parental responsibilities and, at the very least, offer them emotional support, romantic connections were not among their top priorities. The absence of the other parent also became problematic as the child began to ask questions about the father as they began to form conceptions of marriage and family. Never-married single mothers reported finding it difficult to respond to such inquiries. They frequently lead to telling the child about various family types or promising to answer the questions once the child reaches a specific age (Del Mundo et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION

This research serves as a basis for future studies that may be written to gain more data and understanding of single parents. The data of experiences gathered showcase how they have to face harsh realities to survive the pandemic and meet the needs of their children especially given the new mode of online learning as a single parent with no spousal support. There are several stigmas created towards these parents. Stereotypes have led some members of society to view them as shameful individuals for being in such an unconventional situation, especially during the pandemic when the majority of the population struggles to cope for survival. However, this study has proven that this is far from the truth. These single parents are the ones who are given the burden of accomplishing responsibilities in the house just for their children (Perera, 2020). Another misconception is that all single parents experience problems like financial income, emotional problems, and lifestyle obstacles. However, this research revealed that not all of them face these hurdles in their life. Inversely, only a certain number of single parents face these problems. Some participants in this study need help with financial income regarding online learning, while others do not. Hence, this study covers the diverse perceptions and views of parents.

This research aims to develop a summary of the lived experiences of single parents with the mode of online learning amidst the pandemic in Qatar. The researchers found three themes that are prominent factors that correlate to the individual's experiences with the circumstances: Insufficiencies of Annulled Single Parenting, Compromised Aspects of Annulled Single Parenting and Coping Mechanisms of Annulled Single Parenting. *Insufficiencies of annulled single parenting* are defined as the common obstacles or the deficiencies they struggled with throughout their experiences that had direct impacts physically and emotionally, which describes the next factor. *compromised aspects of annulled single parenting* refer to the predominantly negative flawed ways the participants were personally affected by the hardships. None of the participants expressed any positive outcome from facing such circumstances. However, from these effects, the single parents learned to improve and create coping mechanisms to foster a better lifestyle environment

for their children and themselves, defining the third factor. All *coping mechanisms of annulled single parenting* described by the participants were in a positive light and served as beneficial to their well-being and relationship with their children. The coping mechanisms encompassed the growth and learnings the single parents developed from every struggle and experience they had to face and overcome was observed. This complex phenomenon was accompanied by the lessons they could learn. Knowing the risks that may develop if they made a particular choice that would not be good for themselves and the people surrounding them was now evident in their minds. They critically think of good choices for their advantage and their children. Becoming emotionally stronger was now the result for these single parents.

In summary, the findings of this study prove that single parents are resilient individuals who never fail to make sacrifices for the needs and well-being of their children, even in unfavorable circumstances. The data highlights how the participants focused on their motives and saw the positive to keep themselves driven even in difficult times. Each parent faced unique challenges, inspirations, and learnings yet a shared experience was how they never surrendered but kept persevering with the hope of nurturing the ones they care about the most.

Despite the extensive data and results from this study, it still poses limitations which opens room for future research with a similar scope of objectives. The limitations of this research paper include that all participants interviewed are Filipino citizens residing in Qatar. Hence, for more precise and unbiased results, the researchers suggest future studies collaborate with a larger and more diverse sample size. Garnering more responses from more participants with different backgrounds ensures higher reliability of data and more accurate observation of comparisons.

The present study is significant to every parent, especially other single parents. The researchers are confident that the study will show other parents that their experiences are valid and worth such recognition. Parents can feel seen and empowered knowing such a paper was conducted that highlights their personal experiences for the world to learn. The present study also benefits future researchers who wish to delve into a similar topic and conduct a research study. Overall, the findings of this study give light on the lived experiences of single parents and could encourage society to be more considerate of their actions and devise solutions to improve the lifestyle of such individuals.

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