Buhay Estudyante: The Lives of Students from Broken Families Amidst the Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Family is the most basic unit of society, and the foundation of it is the parents, marriage, and offspring. Everyone longs for a place to call home and a healthy family both in mind and body relationship. Generally, people's view of complete families has married parents with children. Even so, the case is not always like that. Broken families are not uncommon; rather, it is familiar and often encountered around us. This study's primary goal is to assess the lived experiences of students from broken families amidst the pandemic, specifically, it sought the following objectives: (1) to describe the positive experiences of students from broken families, (2) to describe the challenges of the students from broken families experience and why do they consider those as challenges, (3) to describe the effects on academic performance of the students coming from broken families. The study utilized Interpretative Phenomenology Analysis (IPA) with the 10 participants ages of 15 to 24 years old from a broken family. Based on the study, the findings are the following: (1) Most of the students from broken families are greatly challenged by financial, emotional, mental, social, and behavioral problems that contribute to their poor academic performance. (2) Most of the students that have divorced (separated) parents are inattentive and limited. They rarely provide time, care, and financial support for student's daily needs and academic fees. (3) Students from broken families cope with being independent and optimistic in their situation. (4) Students from broken families gain positive experiences despite the traumatic family background, especially personal growth and building stronger relationships.

Keywords: Sikolohiyang Pilipino, Broken family, Family, Pandemic

1. INTRODUCTION

Family is the most basic unit of society, and the foundation of it is the parents, marriage, and offsprings. Everyone longs for a place to call home and a healthy family both in mind and body relationship. Generally, people's view of complete families has married parents with children. Even so, the case is not always like that. Thus, broken families are not uncommon; rather, it is familiar and often encountered around us (Saikia, 2017). Although, with just issues from job loss, unemployment stress, or financial problems, even if the family members are distant from each other, it is not enough to be called a broken family. There should be problems out of misinterpretation, maltreatment, denial, etc. Furthermore, that is how broken families come into existence.

According to Wang and Schofer (2018), on the report of divorce percentage from eighty – four countries worldwide, ranging from 1970 – 2008, broken families are sometimes the results of the dissolution of marriage. Thus, psychologists usually utilize factors from the individual's background, such as their educational attainment, job descriptions, earnings, and at the age, they got married. However, they looked at social factors that might result in marriage into a divorce, for instance, a country's economic growth. They also researched the values and culture of a country, such as the opinion in human rights and discrimination on gender equity – whether they affect the rates of divorce. They gathered on the analyzed data from the 2.6 average growth rate of divorced on every 1000 married people; it swelled to 5.5 averages just in the span of more or less four decades (Wang & Schofer, 2018).

The situation where a broken family happens because of nullity of marriage is also increasing in the Philippines due to the lack of divorce law since other than the Vatican; the Philippines is the sole nation where divorce is illegal. As reported by Abalos (2017), in the year 1960's, the number of divorced or separated in the Philippines is already 28,988 Filipino men and 52,187 Filipino women. The amount was intensely raised by the year 2010 with 330,253 men and 565,802 women. Factors included in the report were growing up with urban poverty or those generally referred to as low urban living together without marriage, religion, and ethnicity. Moreover, educational attainment also contributed to the factors in the Philippines.

Furthermore, due to the COVID – 19 pandemic, the living conditions of families have drastically changed. Previous studies state that students are inactive in studying when in-home isolation as compared to

their performance within their educational institutions. They are likely to have more time entertaining themselves, developing unusual sleeping habits, and having unhealthy diets. These negative effects on the students are likely to happen with extended quarantine periods and will certainly affect their academic performance (Wang et al., 2020). Research by Sprang and Silman (2013) has shown that psychological disorders that are neglected during quarantine produce more stress than those who were not. The data collected from the five hundred and eighty-six parents who completed the survey in 2009, which the parents were surveyed through large scale prints, website advertisements, and flyers being distributed in health departments, private and public medical offices, reported that the pandemic had a significant impact to their children's psychological condition. Nearly two-thirds of the parents and their children met the threshold and identified that they have Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Even though research studies on broken families are considerably numerous and their aims are more likely to focus on influences and the impact on various types of their individual purposes, there is still an insufficiency in the documents about the impacts of broken families in a teenager's academic performance. Although some studies can be linked with the Philippines' circumstances, the number of researches that explicitly associate with the occurrence of an epidemic is still inadequate. That being the case, the researchers took the opportunity to traverse the subject, respectively, in the Philippines environment undergoing a pandemic.

1.1 Research Questions

This study's primary goal is to assess the lived experiences of students from broken families amidst the pandemic. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:
1. What are the positive experiences of students from broken families?
2. What are the challenges of the students from broken families experience and why do they consider those as challenges?
3. What are the effects on academic performance of the students coming from broken families?

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
2.1 *Definition of Family and Broken Family*

Family is the basic unit of society. The nature of the family has been altered continuously over time. Family is considered as the foundation of social life and exceedingly cherished by most Filipinos. Sociologists characterize the family as comprising two guardians in a committed relationship, living alongside their children (Thompson, 2016).

A group comprises people made-up of a father, mother, and children who remain together beneath the same roof. Family is an endless social institution, a specific portion of human society, and exceptionally vital and profitable to everybody. Besides, the family proceeds to become a basic unit in statistics and social investigation, recognizing what constitutes the "family" shift over bunches and social orders. The family's standard definitions in the U.S. by people related by blood, marriage, and living within the same home may limit delineation and family structure examination (Tillman & Nam, 2008). As a family, considering blood as the fundamental and standard frame of connection. A relationship between or among people who share a formal beginning in terms of culture, chronicled family line, or organic relationship is called kinship. It is one of the prominent social institutions found in every society. This institution establishes relationships between individuals and groups (Mondal). Family of procreation describes it as a family formed through marriage wherein two individuals announce their union as a lifetime couple and through descents.

However, a family breakup is a common feature in contemporary society (Aktar, 2013). Part of the couple's life is the misunderstanding and conflicts that often leads to intense arguing that will, later on, cause the breakup of the family. For example, one of the most common couples' problems is their money every day; there is a misunderstanding between them. Nowadays, it is difficult to budget money, and others make money for a bad habit like gambling. The lack of funds may be the start for the couple to argue; instead of understanding each other and discussing the problem between themselves, they decided to separate. According to one article, another reason for having a broken family is due to differing beliefs, domestic violence, stubborn grudges, disrespect, divorce, financial struggles, or illness (Zitzman, 2019). A simple argument leads to a fierce fight between the couple, and here, they think of getting a divorce or just separating. Also, poverty as a condition or circumstance in which a person or a community lacks financial resources and a minimum standard of living. (Tus, 2020).

The Philippines is the only country globally (except for Vatican City) where divorce is illegal (Emery, 2013); Filipinos can still file for annulment or separation. Despite the Philippines acknowledging relative divorce and legal separation, a complete divorce is still not permitted except for foreigners and other religions (Jacob, 2013). Also, statistics show an increase in age when it comes to marriage, and the number of Filipino males and females who are legally married is declining over the years (Kabamalan, 2004). Usually, arguing is one of the most common complaints of the couple; they lose respect for each other and get to the point where one hurts their partner. Unemployment is also one of the many complaints between couples because there is no source for their family needs, misunderstandings between husband and wife add to the list. An annulment is costly compared to divorce, costing up to two hundred thousand pesos, which is why proposing the divorce bill to make the separation possible for poverty-stricken married couples (Cupin, 2018). The origin of the family's disintegration is that the family members' satisfaction in such vicious habits as drunkenness, dependency on drugs, adultery, and curiosity (Yahaya, 2012). A bad habit can lead to a broken home due to dissatisfaction with the things they have, the lack of communication with family

members, and peers' influence. One of the most common reasons people begin experimenting with these vicious habits due to boredom is having no more profound interest and curiosity. They see these habits as a pastime and as an escape from their problem.

2.2 *Positive Experiences of Students from Broken Families*

A family has been a huge factor in influencing students' educational performance. Reputedly, broken families can be seen as a danger to the adolescents' well-being, such as in their emotional, mental, and personality conditions. Students must develop a notion within themselves to achieve something related to their academic performance (Igbinosa, 2014). As noted, families have a significant impact on the students, whether they perform well or not in their studies. In broken families, the general view has negative results. Even though students from broken families have complicated problems, some view things positively and develop exemplary accomplishments and boost strength even if encountering such issues in their lives. (Widyastuti, 2017).

According to Wood (2019), parent's separation has a positive effect on the students. For instance, students eventually grow empathetic to others and understand that people are not all the same. In education respectively, morals and values are present as well. Moreover, Lopez et al. (2018) stated that the problems' response varies with such difficulty students face. Some students struggle with their issues; voicing and sharing thoughts with their peers is their coping way. Some are strengthening their faith in God, accepting, and moving forward. Reevaluating oneself even if one grew up in a broken family can also overcome through therapies that include going on from the shocking experiences from childhood and interacting with their current family properly (McCormack et al., 2017). Also, Tus (2020) elaborated that the school with its teachers keep them motivated and challenge them to do their best despite of the circumstances.

A recent study from Korea also proved that students from broken families could be promising in other things like sports. The study showed that student-athletes from broken families were assertive and hard-working with their daily practice. They also excelled at finding solutions to overcome their difficulties with their chosen sports (Shin & Kim, 2019). Thus, esteem needs and personal worth would help them do their best to surpass this new curriculum's challenges (Tus, 2020).

Another study showed that broken families could be favorable because they were released from the problems developed from a dysfunctional family relationship. From three hundred and thirty – six respondents, all of whom are undergraduates, received positive changes to their lifestyles (Halligan et al., 2014). Adults, when young and grew up with a complete family but have extreme dissension with their relationship, manifest issues with their psychological health, bad habits such as alcohol use, excessive smoking, and lower educational attainments. That is why some children gain more positive effects when parents close a detrimental family (Mooney et al., 2009).

2.3 *Challenges Faced by Students from Broken Families*

Students from broken families have problems affecting their academic performance, self-confidence, and behaviors. One main factor that affects how well or how badly students react to the trauma of separation: self-confidence, according to a report (Child & Family Blog Editor, 2019). The traumatic family background product is often an inner critic who conveys one is not good enough, or an inner voice, which continually puts one down and belittles one's needs (Johnson, 2020).

Mackay (2005) stated that separation has common effects in a person's childhood until adulthood, both momentary and lasting periods. Statistics showed that 30 percent more of the students from broken families have many absences, being late, and skip classes than those with stable families. These are the results most studies have acquired from the students that came from a broken family. Furthermore, being in a rebellious and curious stage, exposing students to drugs, alcohol drinking, and smoking. They tend to be more engaged in sexual activities where teenage pregnancy commonly occurs (Fallet, 2017). In the Very Well Family article, distress from broken homes also developed behavioral issues that affect social skills and the emergence of a problem with peers.

According to Sheehan (2010), children from broken families are being looked down upon in society because of religion and traditional beliefs. Students feel having less of a family since their family has been broken or not the "complete" one that many of their classmates have (Aunindita, 2016). Additionally, when children at school learn about the separation of a student's family, bullies can criticize them. Bullies thrive on publicity and the response they get from other students (Aunindita, 2016). Bullying is a troublesome issue, for Thompson, Arora, and Sharp (2002) indicate that low self-esteem, anxiety, poor focus, truancy, depression, and suicidal thoughts are also associated with this (Gourneau, 2012). Hawker and Boulton (2000) have discovered that bullying victims had more negative emotions and opinions about themselves than their peers who are not bullied. Many bullied students suffer low self-esteem and depression and live stress-filled days in their school (Gourneau, 2012).

Researches have shown that depression and anxiety are present in students from broken families (Morin, 2019). O'Neill (2002) also found out that more than twenty – percent of children are the ones that are most likely to be affected with enduring effects on their psychological health. Witnessing such issues between parents raises students' stress levels and prevents them from concentrating on schoolwork (Bubelwa, 2014). According to Oxford Learning (2017), one example of these academic challenges is procrastination. Procrastination can have a detrimental impact on the literary work, grades, and even learners' overall well-being. Due to higher levels of anger, remorse, tension, and anxiety encountering by students, students often contribute to severe problems such as low self-esteem and depression. These can

produce a cycle of poor grades and low self-confidence that can be hard to conquer for students (Oxford Learning, 2017). Thus, financial problems (struggles in meeting the basic needs of the children/family) and loneliness as the predominant feeling among parents are the common problems and experiences (Ramos & Tus, 2020).

For the past 20 years, various researches showed that the broken family is also one factor for juvenile delinquency (Wilkinson, 2014). Students sometimes rebel against their parents because of authoritative parenting enforcing their own beliefs and decision to them. When parents are often in conflict with each other, forcing children to stay outside to avoid being caught within their parents' quarreling. Furthermore, by doing so, they learn of habits that they should not be doing at a young age, such as drinking and smoking. There are cases in which a broken family is why students commit violence to others (Farrington, 1998). According to Çetinkaya and Erçin (2015), to prevent any worrying circumstance, some children withdraw and refrain from entering any of their peers' groups, while others establish defensive strategies, such as retreat, exclusion, repression, and projection. Many victims may find themselves dealing with feelings of emptiness (Johnson, 2020). Gradually, these emotions can compound and contribute to toxic isolation that prevents from developing relationships or tapping into the possibilities that could otherwise provide fulfillment and happiness (Johnson, 2020). Social development is affected as well because children are not able to express themselves at home freely. As social development is a process that starts from birth all through our existence, what we learn from home, we get to exhibit outdoors and vice – versa (Devi, 2014).

The widespread pandemic affects the learning of students. Education is still ongoing and manifested to continue online learning or various methods to resume schooling. Specifically, not all pupils have the assets to obtain online learning materials, and they lack the motivation to study in the absence of teachers (Schleicher, 2020). In addition, in the report of Manilla Bulletin, the Philippines, as one of the countries that do not have full resources online, Filipino students have difficulties using technology to engage in the new learning strategy. Other than the digital devices, the presence of poor internet connection takes place. Without the personal interaction that is generally used in attending schools, virtual learning is the only way to recommend education. Students are not the only ones causing anxiety but the parents too (De Lina, 2020). There is an increase of financial problems in having a broken family, despondently affecting the supplication of educational fees and everyday expenses in students' lives. According to Anderson's (2014) study, in 2009, children living with a divorced parent were more likely to live below the poverty level in a household (28%) compared to other children (19 %).

Academically, slowed educational performance is another common way for children to be influenced by parental separation (Magazine Desk, 2018). The emotional burden of separation alone may be enough to stunt students' academic success, but a broken family's lifestyle changes and dysfunction can lead to poor educational performance. This insufficient academic progress may stem from challenges including home environment volatility, inadequate financial resources, and erratic practices.

As Faustino (2019) explained, poor communication within the family has the highest percentage when it comes to why the family starts a conflict with each other. Broken homes can make students doubt their self-worth, feel unwanted sadness, remorse, or uncertainty (Bubelwa, 2014). In particular, young students have trouble grasping the rationality of the decision of their parents to separate. Students hardly find a sense of stability in a broken marriage because the experience tells them that what appeared safe and healthy fell to bits and left them nothing.

2.4 *Academic Performance of Students from Broken Families*

A family serves as the primary school to the child, where one learns about different things. The essential information almost one's culture and character come from their family as they were. However, divorce, separation, and illegitimacy lead to a broken family. The broken family system has a dark impact on social development, academic performance, and children's mental well-being (Qureshi, 2016). A broken family is one of the Philippines' significant problems because annulment is legal in the Philippines, bringing enough attention. This issue exposes students to physiological, social challenges and contributes to poor educational outcomes.

A broken family is the one factor that makes one person change their point of view or lifestyle (Robert et al., 2016). Having a broken home can change a person's mindset, life, and insight towards the family. Filipino students involved in this situation feel difficult to accept their concerns and think it is their fault, which will soon lead to them being distracted in their studies. Behavioral bumps were found on the students after their parents' separation; these were bad temper, moody, and rebellious (Ariston, 2019). Students experience negative feelings and emotions; they feel isolated and embarrassed due to their current situation. Thus, Filipino students can have trouble concentrating and understanding their academics because they know that their guardians are not acceptable. In addition, broken residential families nearly brought in students an unfortunate behavior or inappropriate conduct at school (Shalahuddin et al., 2019). Due to the parents' inability to pay attention to their children, there is a possibility that students lose focus on learning due to the environment they see in their homes. It can lead to bullying of their fellow students and ambiguous action. Their academic performance can suffer, and they might begin engaging in some forms of deviant behavior like associating with the wrong friends and acting up during class.

Moreover, going home late at night, absenteeism, and getting in fights are the most common behavioral issues of students from broken homes (Magpantay et al., 2014). Students whose parents are separated are more likely to leave home, not wanting to be involved in the problem facing their parents, and

deciding to live independently. Due to their current situation, they turn their attention to others. They entertain themselves by hanging out with friends or fighting with classmates at school to forget the problem their family has. Many studies also showed that divorce only affects a slight but notable downside to American students, but recent studies show uncertainty about those. Like in Australia, seven-tenths each year of their education is affected by divorce alone, specifically to their secondary school accomplishments (Evans et al., 2001). Students also have problems with interacting in schools because of their insecurities with the situation of their families. They avoid their classmates because they feel like they do not have sufficient needs to interact with them. They also get affected when a meeting needs a father or a mother because either one of their parents is unavailable (Batool, 2017).

According to Olokuntoye, students performed below expectations due to a lack of security, care, and discipline. Their performances change result from instability in the home environment. Having a broken family has harmful effects on children because of the lack of attention, and they are not well cared for. The students are distracted from learning because of their situation, and they are unlearned to study at home. The children who have enough attention, communication, and interaction with biological parents were more stable and showed consistency in their academic scores (Saxena, 2017). As shown, having a broken family negatively influences students' accomplishments and academic performance. However, when parents are paying more attention to students in a broken family reduces having a negative result in their academic performance; they can be more able to cope with what they are studying in school. Parents' responsibility is to be involved in their children's education, assist them in their homework, and provide what they need in school. However, the study conducted by (Bernardo & Ismail, 2010) examines Malaysia and the Philippines' diversity in terms of students' attitudes toward reaching a goal. It shows that Filipino students are more eminent in mastering a plan than Malaysian students who are high in approaching the performed goal. Different attitudes toward reaching a goal vary in several countries that can be related to social dimensions in choosing how to attain goals.

3. METHODOLOGY

This investigation aimed to explore the lived experiences of the students from broken families amidst pandemic. The researchers used interpretative phenomenology analysis, IPA, a qualitative research method approach. It was used as a form of qualitative research that focused on studying individuals' lived experiences within the phenomenon. The respondents explored and narrated through their 'lived experiences.' According to Tuffour (2017), IPA was a forward-looking research approach that adopts a flexible and versatile design to understand people's experiences. This approach aimed to understand the innermost deliberation of the 'lived experiences' of research participants.

The method used was phenomenological, the study of investigating the phenomena as consciously experienced from personal knowledge, subjectivity, and perspective of an individual. Participants have shared their insights regarding the events that would bring new information and understanding of the phenomenon.

3.1 Participants

In a qualitative study, phenomenology in this instance, the number of participants was generally small—the participants of the study participants comprised students from broken families. Ten students were purposively selected concerning the potential sample size, nine females and one male from a broken family. Respondents participated, and they were willing to do the interview.

The study participants are students who were categorically based on the following: ages of 15 to 24 years old, scholar and from the broken family who are residents of Bulacan, Malabon, Occidental Mindoro, Laguna, Bukidnon, and Valenzuela City. As the sample, the Purposive Sampling Technique was used and referred to various selection techniques. A researcher relies on his or her judgment when choosing the population to participate in the study.

3.2 Instrument

The research instrument helped the researchers to find answers to the specific problem discussed. The study used an interview guide to understand better and explore the participants' experiences. Also, on account of ethical considerations, this study used a consent letter that was sent to the participants and viewed beforehand. The questions from the interview guide were checked through content validation to verify their reliability. Before interviewing ten (10) participants, the verification, revision, and adjustment of the tool take place.

3.3 Procedures

The first step was to ask for the approval of the interview guide questionnaire researchers would use to gather relevant data. Researchers reassured each participant that their participation would be confidential and except their age, location, and education level would be used in the study. The official interview was conducted through voice message via messenger, and favorable for everyday conversation amidst pandemic and mutually agreed upon by both the interviewer and each participant. All questions were asked in an open-ended manner and adapted to queries to get more exclusively significant and vital issues. Upon the interview, the interviewer started by introducing the participants about their topic and then guided them and started the discussion. There are thirteen (13) interview questions asked to create answers for the

research questions. The proponents encouraged them to feel free in telling their stories and their perspective and speaking in their dialect.

4. RESULTS

The summary of the participants' demographic characteristics included in the study are shown in Table 1. Ten (10) students residing in Bulacan, Laguna, Occidental Mindoro, Malabon, Bukidnon, and Valenzuela City completed the study. The location differs because of the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic leading to collect data online. The participants' ages ranged from fifteen (15) to twenty-four (24) years old. The sample's educational background is currently studying either in high school or in college, amidst pandemic.

Table 1. *Demographic Characteristics of Participants*

Variable	Frequency
Age	
15 – 18	7
19 – 24	3
Educational Level	
Senior Highschool	5
College	5
Gender	
Female	9
Male	1

4.1 Positive Experiences of Students from Broken Families

Most participants shared that even though the family's orientation is broken family, being a student during a pandemic still has things they can look forward to. It gives them different positive experiences. As shown in Table 02, various themes were identified from the data that includes personal growth, stronger relationship, a sense of purpose, fulfillment, faithfulness, self-control, and resilience.

This subordinate theme was presented as the positive experiences of students from broken families amidst pandemic. A variety of themes identified from the data includes personal growth, stronger relationship, a sense of purpose, fulfillment, resilience, faithfulness, and self-control. Eight of the participants experienced personal growth. Also, seven of the participants developed a stronger relationship and a sense of purpose. Four of the participants achieved a sense of fulfillment. In the resilience theme, four participants responded. Three participants have faith that manifests in faithfulness. Lastly, in the temperance theme, two participants responded.

Table 2. *Positive Experiences Themes*

Positive Experiences	Frequency
Personal Growth	8
Stronger Relationship	7
Sense of Purpose	7
Fulfillment	4
Resilience	4
Faithfulness	3
Temperance	2

4.1.1 *Personal Growth*

The participants have proved that students from the broken family had personal growth in life. The majority of the participants saw that they had self-improvement and meaningful life that makes them more independent in their life and education. This can be reflected in the response of Student 07 and said:

> *"Since bata palang ng maging broken family kami mas naging independent ako sa pagaaral, hindi ko naranasan yung magpagawa ng assignment sa magulang ganon."*

With the same sentiment, Student 05 stated:

> *"Isa pa is naging independent ako and na realize ko na at the end of the day ako lang yung andito para sa sarili ko, so kapag may times na nagkakaroon ako ng breakdown because of school ahm, I realized na 'di ko kailangan ng iba kasi ako lang naman yung nandito para sa'kin… and also hindi naman yung mga kaibigan mo laging available na laging andiyan para sa'yo na kapag nagbre breakdown ka sa madaling araw, hindi naman sila available diyan so, with that - na realize ko na kaya ko naman tumayo sa sarili kong paa without their help and ayun nasanay ako na ako lang mag isa kapag nagkakaroon ako ng breakdown tungkol sa school."*

In addition, participants shared that they had learned to show respect towards others, particularly the people around them, whether young or old. This can be reflected in the response of Student 02:

> *"Madami syempre, pero yung pinaka gusto ko diyan yung... natuto akong rumespeto ng mga tao talaga, lalo na yung taong mga nasa paligid ko, palagi, hindi nawawala yung respeto ko sa kanila kasi deserve naman talaga nila yun. Yun lang, yun lang yung pinaka gusto ko sa mga natutunan ko talaga."*

With the same sentiment, Student 10 stated:

"Ang mabuting naidulot po sakin ng ako'y simulang nag-aral , ay natutunan ko po na irespeto ang bawat isa sa atin kahit na mas bata sa akin , natuto akong irespeto lahat ng tao. Natutuo ako na dapat ikililos ng isang tao, ng mabuting tao hmm ganon po."

In regards to Widyastuti (2017) from chapter two, families have a huge effect on students whether they do well or not in their studies. The general view has a negative impact on fractured families. While there are complicated problems for learners from broken families, some view things positively, grow outstanding achievements and increase strength even if they experience such problems in their lives. The participants of the study, despite their experience, perceived a positive side, developed themselves, and valued people.

4.1.2 *Stronger Relationship*

Creating memories and have a strong relationship with classmates and friends is always fun and interesting. Participants shared that having a friend is one of the happiest experiences they've had since they've faced life's difficulties together. This can be reflected in the response of Student 02:

"Syempre yung masasayang memories with classmates nung nakilala ko sila ganun... hanggang sa... umangat kami ng   umangat yun nga, fourth year na kami ngayon, dahil sa pagtutulungan - andito na kami, malapit na kami sa... dulo yun."

Likewise, Student 08 shared the same sentiments. He narrated:

"Magagandang karanasan? Siguro yung mga friendship na nabuo, yung bonding, yung challenges na nalampasan naming magkakaibigan."

Lopez et al. (2018) claimed that some students struggle with their issues; voicing and sharing thoughts with their peers is their coping way and when students have a stronger relationship with their peers. Students from a broken family had the greatest experience with friends at school who could help conquer life's challenges.

4.1.3 *Sense of Purpose*

The participants' responses reflected that having inspiration gets to move forward in the future. Respondents also stated that they would be able to finish their studies even having a difficult life. Based on the data, being part of a broken family will not be an obstacle for them to graduate and reach their dreams, and have a good life in the future. This can be reflected in the response of Student 09:

"Makakapagtapos ako kahit ganon nga, kahit puro problema na. kahit minsan hindi na magkaintindihan yung pamilya."

Student 04 shared the same sentiment, she said:

"Una, nag - aaral ako... para sa mga magulang ko, para maisukli ko naman yung paghihirap nila sa'kin. Pangalawa... para din sa sarili ko... para makapag tapos ako at para magkaroon din ako ng magandang buhay dahil alam ko para lang din sa'kin 'tong ginagawa ko."

While there are complicated problems for learners from broken families, some view things positively, grow outstanding achievements and increase strength even if they experience such problems in their lives (Widyastuti, 2017). Students from broken families still choose to finish school because it's the way to help them excel in their lives since they're at a challenging life stage.

4.1.4 *Fulfillment*

Several participants expressed deep feelings of fulfillment and satisfaction to the effort exerted on studies, resulting in a variety of achievements. Moreover, participants also stated that doing well in academics is one way to please their parents. Based on the responses, despite the family's orientation, students' parents still showed positive support for them. In the response of Student 09:

"Kahit ganon po yung pamilya naming nakakapag-focus po ako sa pagaaral ko. Nakakakuha ako ng mataas ng marka."

Having the same sentiment, Student 07 stated:

"Kuhaan kase nung card naming tapos hindi ako sumama kay papa para kumuha tas ina- announce na rin daw noon yung Top 10 ayun, kasama daw ako sa top 10 pinalakpakan daw ng mga kaklase ko tas yun mga magulang dun tas tuwang-tuwa naman si papa nung pag-uwe kaya ayun masara-masarap sa pakiramdam."

As exclaimed, the achievements coming from the academic performance and support from family motivates the learners to study harder. According to Victor (2014), a family has been a huge factor in influencing students' educational performance. Moreover, students must develop a notion within themselves to achieve something related to their academic performance. As proof of the collected data, the respondents and the concept of having educational attainment is present.

4.1.5 *Resilience*

Some of the participants stated their life experiences about having difficulties that concerning academic performance. Respondents also exclaimed the feelings of relief and nostalgia on how are they able to overcome those struggles. Student 02 stated:

"Ahmm, siguro yung ano, yung mga times na nahihirapan kaming magkakalase pero nagtutulungan kami... lagi, para malusutan namin yung mga problema namin, lalo sa schoolworks ganun."

Student 10 shared her experience saying that she felt better after rethinking things than before when she was consumed by her emotions.

"After ko po gawin yon, is mas na nag- I feel better na po unlike nung hindi pa po ako nakakapag isip kasi syempre po na papangunahan ng emosyon so yung pagbibigay ko po sa sarili ng time and space mas na realize ko po yung mga bagay-bagay na nagpagaan po ng loob ko that time."

Based on participants' data, even having the same family orientation, differences in facing struggles and problems are considered. Moreover, to overcome academic performance problems, working together with their classmates is one of their ways. Lopez et al. (2018) stated that response to the problems varies with such difficulty's student's face. Some students struggle with their issues; voicing and sharing thoughts with their peers is their coping way.

4.1.6 *Faithfulness*

Most participants answered that whenever facing such difficulties and challenges in life, one of the ways to counter those problems is by praying to God to have strength. Participants also expressed that having faith in God gives them peace as well as relief. Student 01 responded, she stated:

"Una bago ko... bago ko harapin yung mga darating na pagsubok, ang una ko munang ginagawa na p-pray ako kay God na sana kayanin ko 'to, sana hindi ako sumuko - sana di dumating sa point na sumuko ako na sabihin kong ayoko na, suko na ko ayon... tinatatagan ko yung loob ko saka - saka ko haharapin yung mga problema ko, yung mga pagsubok... saka... saka... kailangan ko siya... kailangan ko siya gawing inspirasyon para lalo akong tumatag at hindi sumuko sa mga dapat kong... dapat kong gawin."

Student 02 shared his answer that praying to God helped him to be at ease, it also prevents him to overthink and made him peaceful. He also said that he surrenders his problems to God.

"Sobrang nakakatulong siya syempre, nagiging peaceful yung isip ko - 'di ako nakakaisip ng kung ano mang masama ganun kasi nga kalmado lang, tas hinahayaan ko nalang na Diyos ang bahala sa mangyayari ganun."

Based on the data, having faith is present in the participants considering that the Philippines is one of the Christian countries. As Lopez et al. (2018) stated, response to such challenges and problems varies on how they face them. Some are strengthening their faith in God, accepting, and moving forward.

4.1.7 *Temperance*

Few of the participants answered that when facing problems and difficulties, one way is to manage emotions. Participants also conveyed that learning to control their feelings is an enormous help to be not consumed by it. As reflected, Student 05 exclaimed:

"So kapag ganun, ang una kong ginagawa is pinapa kalma ko yung sarilii ko so, adj- as much as possible kailangan ko talagang pakalmahin yung sarili ko agad-agad. So, after nun, kapag napa kalma ko na yung sarili ko, ahm ayun I will try to think some positive thoughts, positive thoughts lang ganun then, kapag nawala na yung mga negative thoughts sa utak ko, ayon - ahh magtutuloy- tuloy na yun and kapag may friend na available, humihingi ako ng advice o tulong ganun, then, pray. Ayun."

Student 02 exclaimed that whenever he's facing challenges, he's always thinking that he has to be calm in every situation and then pray to God.

"Every time na hinaharap ko yung ganyang pangyayari o problema, tinatanim ko lang sa sarili ko na kumalma lang lagi ako at pinagdarasal ko rin syempre ng - sa sarili ko lang din, sa isip ko lang din - yun lang din naman yung ginagawa ko talaga."

Students from broken families have difficulty in managing emotions and getting out of control. According to Wood (2019), parent's separation has a positive effect on the students. For instance, students eventually grow empathetic to others and understand that people are not all the same. In education respectively, morals and values are present as well.

4.2 Challenges that Students from Broken Families Faced

This superordinate theme elucidates the issues and challenges students encounter from having broken families in an academic sense. Listed in Table 03 are the subordinate themes identified: avoidance, financial problem, lack of self-confidence, lack of belongingness, negligence, mental breakdown, sense of uncertainty, judgment or bullying, and procrastination. Five of the respondents have resorted to avoidance in times of difficulty. Four of the respondents have faced financial problems. Three respondents lacked self-confidence, and the same number of three respondents lacked in belongingness. Two of the respondents have struggled with negligence that encompasses laziness, absence, and late.

Furthermore, there were two among the respondents that have concerned with the mental breakdown they have experienced. It includes depression, anxiety, and being stressed out. Also, two of the respondents have felt a sense of uncertainty due to having a broken family. There was one respondent who testified being bullied at school and one respondent who struggled with procrastination.

Table 3. *Challenges themes*

Challenges	Frequency
Avoidance	5
Financial Problem	4
Lack of Self-Confidence	3
Lack of Belonginess	3
Negligence (Laziness, Absence, Late)	2
Mental Breakdown (Anxiety, Depression, Stressed)	2
Sense of Uncertainty	2
Judgment/Bullying	1
Procrastination	1

4.2.1 *Avoidance*

Avoidance was very apparent among the students. They have struggled to face such reality of having a broken family. They resorted to eluding conversations related to it and staying away from those they knew who could not understand them. This is reflected in Student 07's statement below:

> *"Minsan sinusubukan ko silang kausapin para ipa-ipaintindi yung point ko, pero kapag hindi talaga nila naiintindihan hinahayaan ko nalang din."*

Another respondent, Student 10, had the same struggle, and she said:

> *"Uhm, kadalasan ko pong ginagawa kapag may problema po akong ganto na kinakaharap is lumalayo muna po ako sa mga tao so- yun- malawak naman na lugar malayo sa mga taong magco-comfort sakin or kakausap sakin."*

Some also indicated that by entertaining themselves, they could avoid such conflict. It was their way to forget for a while, as Student 04 stated:

> *"Ginagawa ko tuwing nangyayari yung mga problema na yun.... then kung di ko talaga kaya makipag-usap pa muna, nagbabasa na lang ako ng libro o gumagawa ng bagay na... para mabaling ang atensyon ko sa problema na yun."*

With the same sentiment, Student 03 stated:

> *"Ano, usually I would wear my headset and I would just listen to music.... and do nothing. Like yah, minsan matutulog, tas minsan magsusulat, tas manonood ng anime…"*

According to Çetinkaya and Erçin (2015), abstaining from entering a group or entertaining one's comfort, either from a friend or someone close to him or her, is one defense strategy to avoid worrying about the circumstance. The respondents' statements have supported this claim, and such avoidance behavior was demonstrated to prevent damaging oneself from having hurtful situations, having a broken family. Through doing their hobbies, such as writing, reading books, watching movies, listening to music, and anything, which diverts their attention to. Moreover, the respondents' answers have also supported the feeling of emptiness for experiencing such a challenge. According to Johnson (2020), if the feelings of emptiness have intensified, it can lead to toxic isolation that averts from having great relationships with other people. The respondents may experience missing the possibilities of fulfillment and joy for isolating themselves.

4.2.2 *Financial Problem*

Like being in a complete family, students from broken families can also experience challenges linked to finances. Along with the current economic crisis, many families struggle to provide for their basic needs, especially their children's education. Students were asked about the challenge they faced from having a broken family. Student 01 answered the following:

> *"Bilang isang mag-aaral nahihirapan ako sa hmm… mga projects sa school na 'di ko kayang mabili pero ginagawan ko ng paraan, pero minsan hindi ko- 'di ko kinakaya kaya… ayon minsan mababa grade ko…."*

The student even added about the issue upon raising her, after their family has separated. She said:

> *"Nandito ako ngayon sa mama ko kasi kinuha ako ng mama ko doon kasi sinabi niya wala daw ipangbubuhay yung papa ko sakin, saka di daw ako mabibigyan magandang kinabukasan kaya 'yon… ang naging problema ko simula nung nagkahiwalay-hiwalay na ang pamilya."*

Another student has responded relevantly to what the other students have responded. This pertained to the issue of sustaining their everyday living due to broken families. This was reflected in Student 05's response, and she stated:

> *"So yung mga naging problem namin... dahil kami ay broken family is... sa financial, nagkaroon kami ng sobrang laking problema sa financial, sa pagsustain ng pangangailangan namin araw-araw…."*

Because of some family dysfunction that often leads to separation of the family, these have greatly influenced students in financial support and sustenance in everyday living. Also, this challenge has caused a great pitfall to the academic performance of the students. According to Anderson's (2014) study, there was a higher percentage of children living in a separated family or with a divorced parent who has the likelihood to live at a lower poverty level. This claim was reinforced by the students' answers regarding the difficulties in supplying daily needs and expenses. The respondents have experienced dealing with the thought that there were various necessities they wished to have but struggled to afford them. The inadequacy of financial

resources and materials has led to the poor performance of the students. It was the sudden financial insufficiency that the broken family brought to the lives of students who had made them suffer from keeping up with their classmates fully equipped at school and performing at their best. According to the Magazine Desk's (2018) statement, the issues of separation among families have left the students the emotional burden and, at the same time, the lack of opportunity to study well at school.

4.2.3 *Lack of Self-Confidence*

The feeling of incompleteness can often lead to the belittlement of oneself. Among the students who have been interviewed, three of them had trouble dealing with this circumstance. One respondent, Student 02, has indicated the following:

> *"....tungkol sa major subjects ko, gaya na lang ng programming syempre, sobrang nahihirapan ako doon hindi ko talaga kaya yun, hindi ko kaya sumabay doon sa iba kong kaklase na matataba talaga ang utak ganun, kaya doon ako doon nahihirapan talaga at ayaw na ayaw ko nun.*

Moreover, he even described the feeling of being in front of many people inside the classroom. To boldly stand in front of everybody was a great challenge for most students who have gained such low self-confidence. As Student 02 narrated:

> *"....yung pinaka nahihirapan din ako dun, yung... humarap sa mga tao talaga, lalo kapag reporting ganun, may fear of crowds kasi ako, 'di ako masyadong sanay na nagsasalita sa harap ng maraming tao ganun, naiilang ako, sobrang pinagpapawisan ako, 'di ako komportable ganun...."*

With the same fear and scenario, another respondent has been challenged upon facing the crowd during reporting situations at school. Student 04 stated:

> *"Siguro mga karanasan na nahihirapan ako harapin, ay ang... pag report sa harap ng klase... tuwing nangyayari yun tinatakasan ko lang hangga't kaya ko...."*

According to the Child & Family Blog Editor (2019), lack of self-confidence is the basis of how good or bad one reacts to the trauma caused by having a broken family. It was manifested from the respondents' answers, and it had burdened them a lot for losing one's self-confidence due to their traumatic family background. Turning away from opportunities to be exposed, the fear of speaking in front, and being uncomfortable in such a situation facing many people are the outcomes of lacking self-confidence. Those are implications that the students had that inner critic or voice that put them down, belittled them, and told them they couldn't, and they are not good enough, supported by Johnson (2020).

4.2.4 *Lack of Belongingness*

The brokenness of the family can also lead to solitude. Despite having one parent, either the father or mother, one could still feel that emptiness and longing inside. Among the students, three have struggled to deal with the feelings of being different from others, outcast, and unaccepted. This is reflected as Student 04 has narrated:

> *"Nagkaroon din naman ako ng problema dahil nung naghiwalay na ang aking parents so kailangan lumipat ng mama ko and then nagtrabaho na yung step father ko, palipat-lipat ng work kaya ang nangyari doon, palipat-lipat rin ako ng school which is naka affect sa pakikisalamuha ko sa ibang tao na, naisip ko nalang na huwag na ko makipag kaibigan kasi aalis din naman ako sa lugar na yun."*

Also, Student 08 has narrated her own experience. Related to the issue, she stated:

> *"Nung ikakasal yung ate ko sa side ng nanay ko, ginawa kaming abay ng ate ko pero dahil hindi kami pinapayagan na sumama sa kanila hindi kami nakapunta...."*

According to Sheehan (2010), looking at the broken-home theory, the society is affected by the teachings of their religion and the traditional beliefs, and that is why single-parent families are being looked down on. Another respondent has expressed a sense of alienation. According to Aunindita (2016), the students feel having less of a family or at least not the complete one because of the brokenness. It is the family estrangement that took place, and it became one of the most formidable challenges of students due to family separation.

4.2.5 *Negligence*

Irresponsibility sometimes includes being lazy, late in class, and even several absences. This was very common among students. Two of the respondents talked about the challenges of being a student, lacking the motivation to do things, and remaining present despite the burden of having a broken family. Even the pressure was conveyed, that one must be perseverant and hard-working in order to be considered "good" at school. Student 06 is one of those who have encountered such negligence. She experienced frequent laziness, and she shared:

> *"....sa parteng kapag tinatamad. Yon dun ako nahihirapan bilang isang mag-aaral kase as a student kailangan masipag ka eh yun lang."*

Oftentimes, there are also consequences associated with neglect. These negative returns can worsen the habits and passion of the students to study hard. From being tired or lazy, a student may experience trying to be late for some time. Because of possible negative feedback from the professor upon doing such negligence, as a student, one may face the dilemma of whether to go to school or skip classes. Student 01 narrated:

> *"Bilang isang mag- aaral nahihirapan ako sa parteng hmm… kapag halimbawang nasa punto akong na late magising at pumasok sa school at nagle- lesson na, natatakot ako na pumasok sa loob kasi baka mamaya pagalitan ako pero tinatagan ko ung loob ko. Sinabi ko yung totoo na – kung bakit ako na late kasi kung magsisinungaling ako mas lalo pang magagalit yung teacher sa'kin. Kaya kahit nagalit siya tinanggap ko yun kasi kasalanan ko din naman kung bakit ako na late at doon ako nahirapan harapin…."*

According to Mackay (2005), a broken family has various effects on children that may last longer and habitually. It was proven in the statistics that there are 30% more students from broken families who have encountered frequent negligence to studies. There have been many absences, records of late, and even records of those who skipped classes. Likewise, the respondents have experienced the same issue. It was a fact that students from broken families are likely to experience this neglect than those who have complete, stable families.

4.2.6 *Mental Breakdown*

Mental breakdown, including anxieties, depression, and being stressed out, was very evident to students. With lots of homework, activities, quizzes, etc., which were passed down to students, it contributes to students' burnouts, emotional and even psychological problems that need to pay attention to. Student 05 shared her experience:

> *"So, pinaka nahihirapan ako harapin is kapag nagkakaroon ako ng emotional or mental breakdown ahh, dahil sa pag-aaral…. Nahihirapan akong harapin yun kasi yon, nilalabanan mo yung sarili mo, sarili mo yung kalaban mo. So, nahihirapan akong i overcome yun dahil nga lalo na kapag nagkakaroon ako ng panic atacks, lalo na kapag, kasi nga sobra-sobra na yung pag o overthink ko and grabe grabe na yung stress and I tend to breakdown kapag, mga madaling araw talaga, tulog na yung mga kaibigan ko, no one's there for me. Nahihirapan talaga akong harapin yun kasi mag isa lang ako and also dahil nga wala akong kausap nun, parang nilalabanan ko yung sarili ko nun, kung paano ko ba patatahanin yung sarili ko and at the same time paano ko lalabanan yung thoughts, kung paano ko ahh - paano ako mag s stop na mag overthink so, ganun mahirap... talaga siyang harapin kasi you - 'di mo alam kung kailan siya biglang aatake, kung kailan siya biglang nararamdaman saka yung kung kailan matatapos yung breakdown."*

Furthermore, there are also circumstances wherein students are experiencing mental breakdowns, not just regarding schoolwork but also concomitant with family problems. Student 10 shared:

> *"….everytime na magkakasama kami, matitipon, lagi nalang po may panibagong problema na nahuhukay or nabubukas and yung problemang iyon po is naga-ano sakin na na magoverthink na bakit ganito yung about sa family namin, at my age bakit ganon na parang hindi po ba nila naiisip na yung mga bata maaapektuhan kase hindi naman po porket high school student na yung pinaka bata samin is parang iisipin nila na nakakintindi naman na nag-aano po siya sakin na mag o-overthink, nai-istress, nade-depress as anxiety po ganon."*

According to studies, mental breakdowns such as depression and anxieties are present among students who belong to a broken family (Morin, 2009). More than 20% of students have been affected with lasting effects on their mental health, according to O'Neill (2002). Bubelwa's (2014) study supported the statement that students hardly focused at school due to these mental breakdowns, finished their schoolwork, and therefore have experienced higher stress levels, anxiety, and depression that challenged them a lot.

4.2.7 *Sense of Uncertainty*

Complete families are not exempted from uncertainties. What's more and worse is having a broken one. Two participants were concerned about what's and how's after being left with nothing but a broken family. Student 09 has been curious all along, and she struggled because of those questions that remained unanswered. She said:

> *"Yung mga tanong kung asaan ba yung mga pamilya ko, yung mga kapatid ko, kung ilan ba kame. Kase hindi siya totally sa iisang side lang naming magkakapatid."*

Aside from the uncertainties about separated family's sides, the issue has also left the students with uncertainties regarding their feelings and emotions. What the problem has caused them was nothing but pain. Student 03 stated:

> *"I don't know how I describe these feelings... let's say that, nagka problema ako oo - like na depress ako pero di ko 'lam. I don't know or, I don't know what to name this feeling has been bothering me, but maybe I can say that, it affects me so badly that I don't know how to recognize my own problem, my feelings."*

As Faustino (2019) stated, the poor communication among the family members makes the issue worse, and why there are conflicts that continuously exist. A broken family may mean no longer "whole" anymore, but communication is still significant. Like how the respondents expressed their experiences, those uncertainties only leave them questions that repeatedly run through their minds. As Bubelwa (2014) supported, students have issues grasping the reason for their family's separation decision. As a result, students only benefited from doubts that question their worth and place, fill them with unexplained sadness or grief, and uncertainties.

4.2.8. *Judgment/Bullying*

Another challenge faced by a respondent is the fear of being judged or being bullied in school. Bullying is a common school occurrence, but because of the student's family background, she was bullied. According to Student 05:

> *"So, para sa'kin kinaka - nahihirapan ako kapag recitations kasi I don't have that confidence and courage to raise my hand kasi nahihiya ako na baka mali yung sagot ko, na baka pagtawanan ko, something like that. So, dahil nga recitation yun sobrang laking bagay na yun sa grades ko. So, nahihirapan talaga ako doon."*

Specifically, she even identified the kind of bullying she had experienced. There was also an existing pressure, especially when it comes to presenting who your families are. She experienced the feeling of being different from others. She added:

> *"....bullying, naranasan sa cyber tas sa schol din ganun. Sa cyber. parang yung unce- insensitive post about sa broken family - they're making fun sa mga... part ng broken family and ayon, dahil nga part ako ng broken family... nakaka trigger siya, so... naging problem din sa emotional health ko... hindi ko lang alam sa mga kapatid ko kasi hindi kami close, "di kami ganun na nag o- open sa isa't-isa. Then, yun sa school naging problem yun kasi meron ding mga insensitive na mag-aaral na ginagawa nilang biro yung pagkakaroon ng broken family then minsan din kapag may mga projects, kailangan ng family photo, ganun ganun, or mga programs na kailangang dalhin yung magulang, na kailangan dalhin yung buong family, ayun - nagkaka problem doon."*

It has been common among the bullies at school to insult, harass, and judge the ones they knew: soft, weak, and those who have nothing against them. According to Aunindita (2016), bullies can perform their insults and bullying schemes as they discover about the traumatic family background, which is having a separated family. Just like how the student uttered this challenge in her life, there was a negative emotion, an increase to having low self-esteem, anxieties, depression, and stress, just as Gourneau (2012) supported this claim. This has caused the student to struggle facing people and to perform confidently and well at school.

4.2.9 *Procrastination*

It is common to say that students mostly procrastinate because they don't know how an activity is significant to them, what materials are needed, or merely they don't know how to start. One should include lots of motivation, confidence, and strength to avoid this kind of challenge. However, based on the interview, procrastination is something more. One participant, Student 07, stated:

> *"Kapag masyadong maraming ginagawa minsan nagkukulang na kami sa tulog kaya ayun, ang hirap kaseng kalabanin ang tulog at tsaka procrastination."*

It was the loads of schoolwork that made the student procrastinate. However, it is still evident how having a broken family has affected her behavior towards academic performance or work. As she added:

> *".... yung antok and procrastination minsan mas ginagamit ko yung oras ko dun sa leisure keysa sa pagre-review...."*

The respondent's statement has shown a lack of motivation, unfocused, and poor organization skills. The student resorted to procrastination and rest, escaping all the responsibilities at school. She has preferred to enjoy things than to study hard. Procrastination was very evident as being one of the academic challenges faced by students. According to Oxford Learning (2017), students have higher anger, remorse, pressure, and anxiety. A cycle of poor grades, low self-esteem, and low self-confidence is also the product of procrastination. Likewise, to having a broken family, these things have been manifested to the interviewed student as she shared her experience.

4.3 Effects on Academic Performance

This superordinate theme shows the effect of a broken family on the academic performance of students. The table contains subordinate themes observed in the interview. Consequently, the study saw optimism in eight of the ten participants. There is competitiveness shown through the four participants different from the five participants unfocused on their studies. Furthermore, three participants detach themselves from their classmates and neighbors.

Table 4. *Effects on Academic Performance*

Effects on Academic Performance	Frequency
Optimism	8
Unfocused	5
Competitiveness	4
Detachment	3

4.3.1 *Optimism*

Ariston (2019) discussed that behavioral bumps manifest in students after their parents' separation; these include bad temper, moody, and rebellion. However, the participants' responses are optimistic, making their perception of lives more competitive. This reflected in Student 01's statement below:

> *"Sa totoo lang po, hindi naman ako nagkaroon ng problema sa pakikitungo sa guro ko o 'di kaya sa kaklase ko... parang ginagawa ko nga silang inspirasyon para tatagan ko pa yung sarili ko. Kasi dati nung - nagkaroon ako - nagkaroon ako ng isang guro nun, adviser ko siya tapos sinabi ko yung mga problema ko sa kanya na gan'to broken family po ako, kinwento ko sa kanya lahat tapo sinabi niya sa'kin na tatagan ko raw yung sarili ko - huwag daw ako sumuko kasi kung*

susuko daw ako, para ding daw ako, parang din daw ako bumitaw sa mga... sa mga pagsubok na dapat nilalabanan ko kaya yon, naging inspirasyon ko yung pamilya ko."

In contrast, Ariston (2019) added the students experience negative feelings and emotions; they feel isolated and embarrassed due to their current situation. Thus, the participants of this study perceived a brighter side of life despite their experiences.

4.3.2 *Unfocused*

Filipino students involved in this situation feel difficult to accept their concerns and think it is their fault, which will soon lead to them being distracted in their studies. This reflected in Student 10 statement below:

"Actually, po bilang magaaral mahirap po kung titignan natin pero kung iintindihin po yung mga lesson kung nakikinig madali lang po siya pero hindi naman po maiiwasan na may situation ka na nakakapag pagkabag basta nakakagulo sayo, sa isip mo, sa sistema mo tapos sa school ka pa so hindi po ako nakakapag focus sa sa topics namin sa lessons ng teacher ayun po sa tingin ko po iyon. Para sakin po iyon since galing nga po sa broken family, sobra po yung problems na nagaganap. Pag ano lang po may mga times na, yung probelma ko sumakto po sa mga na may lesson po kami nahihirapan po ako sumunod sa topic, nahihirapan po akong makaintindi ng topic."

Thus, Filipino students can have trouble concentrating and understanding their academics because they know that their guardians are not acceptable. Also, broken residential families nearly brought students unfortunate behavior or inappropriate conduct at school (Shalahuddin et al., 2019). Due to the parents' inability to pay attention to their children, there is a possibility that students lose focus on learning due to the environment they see in their homes. It can lead to bullying of their fellow students and ambiguous action. Their academic performance can suffer, and they might begin engaging in some forms of deviant behavior like associating with the wrong friends and acting up during class. Moreover, the pandemic adds difficulty to the student's focus; as Student 8 stated,

Nahihirapan for now magfocus sa study. Ang hirap magfocus ngayun sa pag aaral kasi parang hindi ko pa rin ma absorb yung nangyayare ngayun.

4.3.3 *Competitiveness*

A broken family is one of the Philippines' significant problems because annulment is legal in the Philippines, bringing enough attention. This issue exposes a student to physiological, social challenges and contributes to poor educational outcomes. Different from the result of competitiveness seen on the participant's answers. Almost half of the participants come out to persevere and strive in their studies. This reflected in Student 05 statement below:

"Tutok talaga ako sa pag-aaral kasi ah gusto ko na ma maintain ko yung ranking ko, yung grades ko, gusto kong ma maintain yun at ayokong ma disappoint si mama. So... ahm nasabi ko yun dahil nga, doon pa lang sa part na na f- frustrate ako kasi madaming gawain... parang ganun, na f-frustrate ako na, nag b- breakdown ako sa acads, doon pa lang masasabi ko ng ahm, gusto ko maayos yung kalalabasan ng grades ko, so another factor pa is, ahh, nagpa payat talaga ako and kadalasan kulang yung tulog ko sa paggawa ng school activities, so I'm kind of person din na perfectionist and... so gusto ko yung mga gawa ko ganyan ganyan, is... mataas yung kalalabasan na grades, gusto ko perfect yung gawa ko, para ganun. So, I must say na masyado talaga akong tutok sa pag-aaral ko."

In contrast, (Saxena, 2017) shows that children who have enough attention, communication, and interaction with biological parents were more stable and showed consistency in their academic scores. As shown, having a broken family negatively influences students' accomplishments and academic performance. However, the study conducted (Bernardo & Ismail, 2010) examines Malaysia and the Philippines' diversity in terms of students' attitudes toward reaching a goal. It shows that Filipino students are more eminent in mastering a goal than Malaysian students who are high in approaching the performed goal. Different attitudes toward reaching a goal vary in several countries that can be related to social dimensions in terms of choosing how to attain goals.

4.3.4 *Detachment*

The broken family system has a dark impact on social development, academic performance, and children's mental well-being (Qureshi, 2016). Students also have problems with interacting in schools because of their insecurities with the situation of their families. They avoid their classmates because they feel like they do not have sufficient needs to interact with them. They also get affected when a meeting needs a father or a mother because either one of their parents is unavailable (Batool, 2017). This reflected in Student 04 statement below:

"Nagkaroon rin po ng problema sa aking mga kaibigan dahil... medyo nahirapan na rin po akong makipag communicate sa kanila dahil malayo na ko. And then sa mga taong gustong makipag kaibigan sa'kin - kusa akong lumalayo sa kanila, 'di ko sila kinakausap. And then sa family naman, nagkaroon lang ako ng problem nung ako yung naging in charge sa mga kapatid ko dahil hindi ko kasama ang mga magulang ko."

In that, they tend to distance and be impassive from other people, even their relatives. Corresponding to Student 05 statement:

"Ahm, yes… nagka problema din ako sa pakikitungo sa iba at lalong-lalo na sa kamag-anak ko. Ahm, kami kasi ng mga kamag-anak ko, hindi kami close like, wala akong kamag-anak naka clos... sa mother side kasi 'di ko pa kilala yung mga kamag-anak ko sa father side, so ayon, 'di kami close and doon naman sa pakikitungo ko sa ibang kapwa - I tend to distance myself, like ayoko masyadong ma attached sa iba and nagkaroon rin ako ng trust issues ayun., naging problema yung sa'kin like, ayoko nang ma attached doon sa tao, sa iba kasi ayoko ng maulit yung pain... yung sobra-sobrang pain kapag umalis sila."

5. DISCUSSION

Regardless of the struggles that participants came up against, positive views and actions were seen. Besides, it was also revealed that even students from broken families have their personal growth as a person and the parents' limited time for their children. Participants are independent in doing things such as schoolwork, work hold chores, and taking care of their siblings. The insufficiency of attentiveness and care from parents led to the students having a strong relationship with their peers and classmates. A sense of purpose also developed for the students. It motivated them to have a college degree and acquire an appropriate job for their family's better lifestyle. Also, gaining academic activities achievements gave them a sense of fulfillment and inspiration in pursuing their goals. Most participants hold on to their faith and used prayers as a savior from all the trials they have been through. In addition, despite being in a broken family, participants learned to manage their out-of-control emotions when it comes to argument or misunderstanding, which showed good character and morals. Above all, participants were proud that despite reality, they overcome their challenges.

All of the participants faced challenges and stressors in their life as part of broken families. Each of the participants has various ways of facing struggles based on living reality; some of them were continuously avoiding the circumstances. Some of them developed a lack of self-confidence related to their classes. However, despite the issues that they faced as a student and being in a broken family, participants took it as a motivation to create goals for their family by doing well in their studies. Furthermore, the sense of trust and belief in them to continue life was present. Among the students, other common problems in performing academics in school are procrastination, which causes; loads of school works, lack of motivation.

Moreover, negligence of being late in school, laziness, students from broken families experienced as well. There were other concerns that students from broken families have encountered having financial problems due to their parents' separation. One of the parents should work harder than usual to provide for their children's necessities. Consequently, participants experienced a hard time on the projects, which required money. Mental breakdown, lack of self-confidence, lack of belongingness, sense of uncertainty, avoidance, judgment, and bullying, due to the lack of attention and care that parents responsible for, are the major results found on the data regarding the challenges that occur on students' lived experiences from broken families.

Being part of the broken family and a student has an impact on the participants' academic performance. Based on the results, even though amidst pandemic, competitiveness to have high grades and optimism as the motivation to study hard were present. On the other hand, they are being unfocused on the studies because participants often think that it is their fault why they have this kind of family orientation and a detachment to classmates and friends, rejecting the possibility of getting hurt.

6. CONCLUSION

The study highlighted the positive sides of being a student from a broken family, which is seldomly studied especially in the Philippines. This study observed the coping mechanisms and strategies of a student. The researchers have interviewed ten students, and the following conclusions are gathered based on the study findings: (1) Most of the students from broken families are greatly challenged by financial, emotional, mental, social, and behavioral problems that contribute to their poor academic performance. (2) Most of the students that have divorced (separated) parents are inattentive and limited. They rarely provide time, care, and financial support for student's daily needs and academic fees. (3) Students from broken families cope with being independent and optimistic in their situation. (4) Students from broken families gain positive experiences despite the traumatic family background, especially personal growth and building stronger relationships. (5) Many positive experiences were found in the study compared to previous studies because of the confirmation in the variety of cultures.

Furthermore, the researchers recommend that the government and private organizations must provide better educational assistance. It's not only for unfortunate children that are limited to homeless children, battered children, those who are experiencing exploitative labor, etc. but also for those who cannot provide for themselves, such as the students with divorced parents or broken families. This assistance will give better prospects specifically to the high school and independent college students for their preferred jobs. Teachers must provide a more supportive environment that will be beneficial to them and their students. It will help build and sustain positive relationships that foster a sense of belonging and significance, emotional, physical, and identity safety. Schools should recommend school counselors to handle susceptible and stubborn students better to avoid school occurrences, such as bullying. Students must have active interaction with their fellow students and teachers. This may help to build strong communication to establish a sense of relationship. Parents must provide time, care, and financial support to their children to sustain their educational needs to improve their academic performances. Thus, future researchers can use these findings

to support their prospective investigation, particularly in students' live experiences from broken families amidst a pandemic.

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