

Connecting the Disconnected

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ABSTRACT- The shift from the usual into the ‘now normal’ imposed a great challenge on the education of the young. Amidst the CoViD-19 pandemic, the delivery of instruction to the learners transitions from face-to-face to flexible learning opportunities where virtual learning platform is encouraged. This study seeks to provide hands-on experiences to the technology immigrant participants to cater the learning needs and demands of the tech-immersed learners through scaffolding. Due to the strict observance of safety protocols, the project purposively identifies only seven (7) participants for the Salindunong Program and were subjected into the two sessions: indulgence to learning community, and using the messenger, zoom, or google meet for virtual conferencing. Employing the Narrative Analysis of the Qualitative Research design as point of inquiry, narratives were gathered, validated, and analyzed thematically. Moreover, the study reveals the lived experiences and observations of digital immigrants prior to the conduct of training/intervention which centers on two (2) themes: Digital knowledge experience of the participants prior to the conduct of the training/intervention, and their impression on the significance of the scaffold on a child’s learning success in a technology-immersed learning environment. The series of sessions on the offerings of the Salindunong Program validated that the learning success of tech-immersed learners during home learning is influenced by the quality of scaffold provided by the immediate family/environment of the child.

Key words: Digital immigrant, Digital native, Digital technology

1. INTRODUCTION

The use and integration of ICT in the course of teaching and learning is a challenge imposed by the continuing development in the academic context. The current generation has known

digital technology since birth and seems to feel the most comfortable with it—also known as digital natives (*aka* Millennials or Net Generation), these are individuals born at the turn of the 21st century. The term digital natives is contrasted with the digital immigrants—accounted to generations that encountered digital means and technological advances at later point in their life. With students being digital natives while parents and teachers are often digital immigrants, we usually wonder how the relationship among parents, students, and teachers is filtered and regulated through technology and media use.

One of the most important contexts of socialization, the family has not been immune from the use of technology and media, with both positive and negative effects (Patrikakou, 2015). With the challenges imposed by the COVID19 Pandemic, learners were stuck at home as they face the challenges of learning from varied forms (modules, online classes, radio-based and the likes) thus, giving more time with the family as they catch up with school requirements, classes, examinations, and other related activities. Parents, along with the siblings/elders, become the immediate source of scaffold as the learners unravel the challenges on their learning. While most of the family members are digital immigrants the challenge of providing appropriate and timely response on the demands and needs on a learner’s education goes with it.

The study will focus on the experiences and observations of digital immigrants as they provide scaffold on the learner’s educational needs and demands. Understanding the claims on their prior knowledge on the digital world is vital on providing appropriate and timely response to cater their child’s or siblings’ needs. Moreover, barangay Sto. Tomas, a far-flung barrio at the municipality of Saguday, is purposively chosen to dig into the exposure and adaptation of technology for learning on the said area. Further, the respondents are the parents or elders of the Salindunong affiliates who had been subjected to technology-related interventions to better their learning

outcomes. Moreover, result of the study will be utilized to craft programs on parenting, technology-related activities on updating and retooling family members, and management strategies which will lead to better rapport and educational support in the family.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The Salindunong program's core purpose in Technology in Teaching and Learning is to provide hands-on experiences to the technology immigrant participants to cater the learning needs and demands of the tech-immersed learners through scaffolding. Reflections made by the participants before and after the extension activities/interventions will be highlighted to serve as the extension worker's springboard for further development of extension activities and interventions.

EXTENSION PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

The process of adopting new innovations has been studied for over 30 years, and one of the most popular adoption models is described by Rogers in his book, *diffusion of innovations* (Sherry & Gibson, 2002).

Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory is the most appropriate for investigating the adoption of technology in higher education and educational environments (Medlin, 2001; Parisot, 1995). In fact, much diffusion research involves technological innovation so Rogers (2003) usually utilized the term "technology" and "innovation" as synonyms. For Rogers, "a technology is a design for instrumental action that reduces the uncertainty in the cause-effect relationships involved in achieving a desired outcome" (p. 13). It is composed of two parts: hardware and software. While hardware is "the tool that embodies the technology in the form of a material or physical object," software is "the information base for the tool" (Rogers, 2003, p. 259).

For Rogers (2003), adoption is a decision of "full use of an innovation as the best course of action available" and rejection is a decision "not to adopt an innovation" (p. 177). Rogers defines diffusion as "the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system" (p. 5). As expressed in this definition, innovation, communication channels, time, and social system are the four key components of the diffusion of innovations.

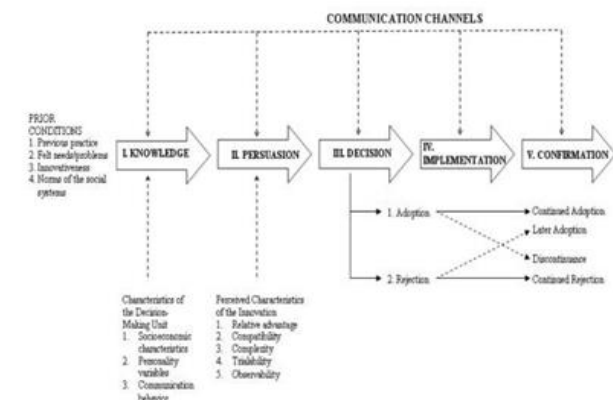


Figure 1. A Model of Five Stages in the Innovation-Decision Process (Source: *Diffusion of Innovations*, Fifth Edition by Everett M. Rogers. Copyright (c) 2003 by The Free Press. Reprinted with permission of the Free Press: A Division of Simon & Schuster.)

2. STRATEGY OF IMPLEMENTATION

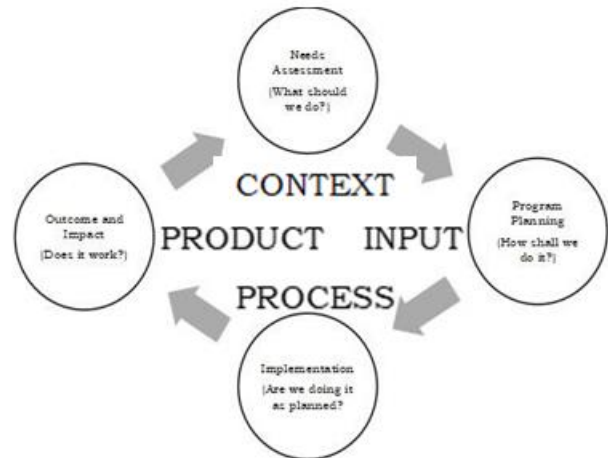


Figure 2 CIPP Model

3. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Context (Needs Assessment)

- The extension coordinator coordinates with barangay Sto. Tomas Officials and disseminate letters, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and IEC Materials for the categorization of the needed extension service/s in their respective area.
- After the identification of training needs and further coordination a copy of the Proposed Extension Program Design, in response to the Training and Needs Assessment (TNA), was provided.
- Concerns on the start of implementation, place of implementation (in consideration with the state of COVID19 pandemic, where *social distancing* should be observed) were settled.

Input (Program Planning)

- The Extension Program coordinator discussed and updated on the adjustments requested by the partner agency (barangay Sto. Tomas, Saguday, Quirino) with the Project leader and constituents (BEED Faculty and student extensionists).
- The Project and the Program Leader settled appropriate adjustments on the program execution and prepared the needed materials/documents/resources prior to the start of the training/activities.

Process (Implementation)

- Orientation of the parents/elders as the participants of

the *Salindunong* Extension activity was conducted.

- B. Gathering of prior and potential experiences from the participants through hands-on experience on the use of technology: (a.) starts with the basics of using the **messenger**, (b.) participating in **learning communities** (*group chats* where the participants can inquire on their children/siblings' learning logs), and (c.) utilizing the *messenger, zoom and google meet* application (for the virtual learning opportunities of their children/siblings).

The result of the preliminary activity will serve as the springboard on the next interventions to the participants.

- C. The extensionist will provide a guided exploration to the participants along the different applications. Modelling/demonstration on activities will be provided to each participant to maintain better practice. Upon the completion of the first task, they will be indulged into the manipulation of the features of the different learning applications.

In this phase each participant will have one-on-one engagement with the extensionist in an environment where they are free to ask questions and clarifications as they are provided with the scaffold.

- D. Enhanced Activities (separate sessions on participation to a *learning community*, and on utilizing the *messenger, zoom and google meet* applications for the virtual learning opportunities of their children/siblings.)

a. Learning Community

Each participant will be tasked to indulge in a *learning community* (all parents/elders from the training are part of the learning community and the extensionist serve as the administrator/facilitator). They can use the linkage to freely state their own perceptions on the learning opportunities of their child/sibling or ask help and/or probe questions which will help them in providing scaffold for the tech-immersed learners.

b. Messenger, Zoom, Google Meet

Provide technological experience on the proper behavior and on the appropriate use of *Messenger, Zoom, and Google Meet* during online classes.

Each participant is tasked to use the applications stated, where they are to become the host and the participants. They are expected to explore the significant features of each

application to address their children's/siblings' needs during virtual sessions on their online classes.

During the implementation of the *Salindunong* activities, children/siblings were also encouraged to attend the orientation so as to strengthen the drive of the program. Further, this also provides both the participants and the tech-immersed learners an opportunity to understand the aim of the program and its significance on the role of parents/elders to the learning of their children/siblings.

Product (Outcome and Impact)

- A. Output presentation of the participants with the infusion of the appropriate technology gained from the different sessions.

a. Learning Community

Each participant relates their success story as a result of their participation in the *learning community*. This success story is validated through the interventions they employed in providing scaffold to their tech-immersed child/sibling.

b. Messenger, Zoom, Google Meet

Each participant, together with their tech-immersed child/sibling, is tasked to perform a virtual learning activity which will be managed/hosted by the extensionist. The activity will not be monopolized by the participant, the activity is still focused on the usual teaching-learning activities where participant's role is to provide scaffold to their tech-immersed child/sibling.

The extensionist, being the host, imposes challenges to the participant to manipulate the features of the application they are using at the moment. This helps the participant to practice and employ his/her knowledge gained from the training/intervention.

- B. Monitoring. School's involvement is vital on monitoring the growth of the participants. Teachers, handling the tech-immersed child/sibling of the digital immigrant participants, serve as the channel to validate how the participants perform in providing scaffold to the learners.

- C. Feedbacking. This further enhances the capability of the participants to better practice and to help them learn to identify their strengths and weaknesses and work on better execution of scaffolding to the tech-immersed learners. The participants, upon using their potentials gathered from the extension sessions, reflect on its impact on providing scaffold to their child/sibling through a short interview via messenger, zoom, or google meet.

Moreover, support from all other members of the family and teachers will help validate the quality of the sessions. The extensionist employs a virtual interview session, coupled with a questionnaire checklist, as a manifestation of this phase.

D. Accomplishments

Orientation, Meetings, and Institutionalization of partnership with the provincial local government unit and the key officials of Sto. Tomas Elementary School were done prior to the start of the project implementation. Due to the strict observance of safety protocols, the project purposively identifies only seven (7) participants for the *Salindunong Program* and were subjected into the two sessions (indulgence to *learning community*, and using the *messenger, zoom, or google meet* for virtual conferencing). All participants signify interest on both sessions.

RESULTS

Online learning opportunity is already part of the 'New Normal' in the educational context; thus, putting premium on the significance of educational pursuit among teachers, learners, and even the members of the family. Due to the challenges imposed by the CoVID19 pandemic, learning has to shift from face-to-face to blended (modular and online learning intervention). Hence, with the absence of a physical teacher at home scaffold from the family has to scale up which underscores the significance of having enough and appropriate knowledge on the tech-immersed educational environment.

As an extension of the *Salindunong* program extended to the recently concluded session for the tech-immersed learners, the EDUC CIRCLE launches a training/intervention to the technology-immigrant being the immediate provider of scaffold to the learners. Moreover, the initiative reveals the lived experiences and observations of digital immigrants prior to the conduct of training/intervention which centers on two (2) themes: Digital knowledge experience of the participants prior to the conduct of the training/intervention, and their impression on the significance of the scaffold on a child's learning success in a technology-immersed learning environment. Responses from the participants serve as a springboard for further enhancement on the delivery of appropriate intervention.

A. DIGITAL KNOWLEDGE EXPERIENCE AND PERCEPTIONS PRIOR TO THE CONDUCT OF THE TRAINING

Theme 1. Depth of understanding and ability on educational technology. Often, an individual's prior knowledge on the use of technology serves as a booster when it comes to the quality of scaffold, he/she can offer to the learners.

Taking this into consideration, the following transcripts from the participants strengthen the claim of the program that technological pursuit strengthens the quality of scaffold which the technology-immigrants may offer with their depth of understanding and ability on educational technology.

Limited knowledge especially on appropriate use of applications for learning hampers my desire to help my child during home learning. P2

I have no knowledge at all. I only know how to read messages and answer calls. When my sibling asks for help, I'm afraid she might be much knowledgeable than I that's why I'm pleased to be part of this training to boost my confidence in using apps for learning. P5

I have enough knowledge based on the applications and websites needed by my child during home learning. However, I still need updates to further hasten my abilities on technology. P7

Theme 2. Impression on the significance of scaffold. The concept of scaffolding was defined based on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) posited by Vygotsky, in his sociocultural theory of learning and it refers to the assistance an adult can provide a child with the purpose of fulfilling the latter's learning objectives (Huertas-Bustos, 2018).

Prior to the conduct of the program, participants impose a high degree of acceptance on the impact of scaffolding to tech-immersed learners. It is however challenging to note that the tech-immersed environment is difficult to handle especially when the family members lack experiences on handling this concern.

The following transcripts from the participants validate the drive of the program that providing scaffold to the tech-immersed learners is significant during home learning.

As per observation, my sibling is much motivated to learn when she learns with me. She is confident during virtual classes when a family member is just around the corner to help her. P1

When it comes to technology, the scaffold is reversed. Our child serves as our teacher, and we are the learners instead—which shouldn't be. Now, we feel and appreciate the vital role of teachers on the learning of a child. P5

It is helpful on the child's further development. The absence of teachers due to the pandemic challenges the preparation of the family members in supplementing the learning needs of learners. P7

B. Factors affecting the scaffold provided by the participants on a child's learning success within a

technology-driven environment. Due to the impact of the CoVID19, the current setting of the educational scene has transitioned from face-to-face to blended learning opportunities (modular and online). Home learning has transpired as the 'New Normal' and challenges the preparation of the immediate family of learners to indulge into the tech-immersed learning environment.

Considering the locale of the study, the participants encounter two (2) significant themes which may affect the delivery of scaffold: strategies/interventions employed to support learning (with sub themes: maintaining a strict schedule and engaging in creative activities) and challenges encountered (with sub themes: impact on daily routine, digital divide, difficulties in shifting to online learning, and resistance to change).

Theme 1. Strategies/interventions employed to support learning. The diversity of learners calls for a diversified intervention to match their learning needs and demands. Using an active learning environment can enhance the integration of theory and practice. An active learning environment should promote students' interest in the subject matter and encourage their participation (Wrenn & Wrenn, 2009).

The following transcripts from the participants support the claim of the program that strategies/interventions employed to support learning are contributory to a child's learning success during home learning.

Sub theme 1: Maintaining a strict schedule

Considering the age of my sibling and with her approval, we both set a schedule for mentoring purposes. I let her create a schedule mounted on her working space to remind her of her duties at a young age. P1

Since it is home learning, I set two schedules patterned on his peak hours and strictly remind him to follow them. We both review the lessons and requirements too. P2

Since the teacher requires online class at 3 o'clock, I allow him to have naptime and playtime and calls his attention for class session thirty minutes before the time. P6

A. Sub theme 2: Engaging in creative activities

I watch exciting videos on YouTube, practice its execution, and share it to my sibling. We usually do tricks and hacks about science and technology. P1

During his free time, we do arts. He is good at making sketches and painting. P2

My child is very talkative, and I use it as a motivator for her to develop a skill in storytelling. We both made a puppet for her to use whenever I ask her to tell a story. P7

Theme 2: Challenges encountered in providing scaffold.

Challenges may be contributory to the failure on the execution of scaffold or may completely hamper the delivery of scaffold to a child/learner. This factor is deemed as an intervening component on scaffolding which gear towards the home-learning success of tech-immersed learners. With this consideration, the following transcripts from the participants qualify the claim of the program that the success of home learning is affected by the challenges encountered in providing scaffold to the tech-immersed learners.

B. Sub theme 1: Impact on daily routine

Since I am the sole member of the family who has knowledge on the use of technology, I am tasked to watch over my sibling. However, I also have class requirements to do and that compromises the time I must render to guide my sibling. P1

At home, we have unlimited roles coupled with unending routines to do. Sitting with my child during his class impedes my other functions thus, most of his learning needs are not sufficiently provided. P2

As a single mom, I need to do the chores at home and prioritize providing for our family. At times, I need to leave him while having classes to sell vegetables and other products. I only address his queries when I got home. P4

C. Sub theme 2: Digital divide

Scaffold, especially those concerning the utilization of technology, is affected by our economic state. The brand and the higher the specification of the gadgets, the better learning opportunities are provided. P3

During our application on the first few sessions whenever my child clicks on something and the screen switches from other window, I become rattled looking for a solution to go back on the previous screen. Constant practice is needed for newbie like us. P5

Although I have prior knowledge on educational apps, I still need to update and even retool on some. Today's generation requires the elders to relearn continuously to be 'in'. P7

D. Sub theme 3: Glitches

In the barrio, there are still dead spots. No matter how we wish to enjoy using virtual learning opportunities, our connectivity hampers our desire. P3
Since we don't have stable internet connection, the quality of online experience is not enjoyed. P4

No matter how good the service provider is, glitches and connectivity lags deprive us of quality online experience. P7
 Sub theme 4: Resistance to change

There are instances where our child knows better than us when it comes to technology. Whenever she's insisting on something, I really feel bad and refuse to accept his idea. P2

Age gap/ generation gap is a big factor on providing scaffold to the tech-immersed learners. I can't learn and apply technology-related things at an instant. It's the teacher's role not ours. P3

Aside from the problem on stable internet connection, my chores, my age, and my inability to grasp information at an instant makes me resist to and indulge in tech-immersed learning environment. P4

DISCUSSION

The impact of the CoViD-19 pandemic has imposed sudden changes in the educational context and the role of parents and elders has shifted to being real-time teachers at home. Despite school leaders' attempts to implement technology designed to provide resources for parent and learner to use at home, many parents of tech-immersed learners are reluctant to use the learning platforms designed for them (Lee, 2018).

This scenario has exposed the teachers, parents/elders, and learners to the realm of tech-immersed environment. With the shift to blended learning (modular and online learning intervention), the need to abruptly adjust has become of paramount importance to adopt to the technological demands of learning. The locale where the study and program conducted was adamant to the technology pursuit for learning thus, the onset of the program is of great importance.

Prior to the exposition of the digital immigrants to the varied training and intervention, participants claimed that **the depth of understanding and ability on educational technology** plays a vital role in providing scaffold to tech-immersed learners. The acceptance of P2 and P5 regarding their limited/little knowledge on technology use is contributory to their fears of knowing-how. P7 however, despite her prior knowledge, underscores the significance of retooling and updating to the present constructs of education. This also opens to the revelation on the participant's **impression on the significance of scaffold** which aptly highlights the role of teachers on the education of the tech-immersed learners. The home learning of tech-immersed learners may have shifted the roles of parents/elders at home but, this also brings realization on a teacher's noble role on the learner's formal academic development.

The rapid technological advances, the expansion of online media use, and the declining cost of mobile technology have introduced a communication factor that has precipitously affected parent involvement and the relationship between parents and children (Patrikakou, 2016). Corollary to this, immersed the factors affecting the scaffold provided by the participants on a child's learning success within a technology-driven environment. These factors may either hamper success or be contributory factor to the success of scaffolding. Participants of the program ascertain that those **strategies or interventions employed to support learning** has high regard to the success of scaffolding. P1, P2, and P6 intensify that maintaining a strict schedule strengthens the value of scaffolding. Further, it is also stated that considerations on the diversified demands and needs of tech-immersed learners are considered in setting schedule for their learning sessions. Moreover, on putting premium to the learner's interest, the participants claim that engaging the learners in creative activities is a manifestation. It is shared by P1, P2, and P7 as they maintain the value of interaction during the height of interventions.

On the other hand, as much as the initiatives on the upgrade on the tech-immersed learning environment are found to be appropriate to address the current need of the situation, it has also given a tough routine to parents who are working from home and simultaneously taking the responsibility that their children's learning process continues seamlessly during the times of COVID-19 (Bhamani, 2020). The admissions of the participants reveal the challenges they encountered in providing scaffold to the tech-immersed learners. P1, P2, and P4 reveals that their involvement to technological pursuit activities for them to have better knowledge in accordance to the value of scaffold they are to render has been intervening their daily routines and activities. This is evident as the participants are mostly farmers and store owners who turned to be teachers for the tech-immersed learners. Claims also highlight the issue on digital divide as voiced by P3, P5, and P7 who put premium on

diversity on cognition, capability to get access, and even the socio-economic state of participants. It is deemed to the fact that they may have their gadgets but not all of them have the same digital range; and that they may have internet access but not all of them have premium access and rely on data usage alone. Their claim on digital divide was further intensified with the challenge of connectivity and glitches—the locale of the program where there are still dead spots is enough evidence on this factor as stated by P3, P4, and P7. Lastly, the factor on resistance to change has become a perennial roadblock to the drive of the program. With the acceptance of all participants and with the representation of P2, P3, and P4, their resistance to change is commonly due to fear and the inability to grasp tech-related concepts at an instant especially when the need for scaffolding arises.

The nub of the program and study: Parents from diverse backgrounds, when given direction, can become more engaged with their children. And when parents are more engaged, children tend to do better (Voorhis et al., 2013). Be it the 'old normal' or the 'new normal' the scaffold provided by parents/elders to the young has potentially impacted their quality of learning. The inclusion of technology and the challenge imposed by home learning may be a new endeavor for these digital immigrants but, continuous practice will eventually lead to mastery and better delivery of scaffold to the young. Moreover, the results of this program and study creates an avenue for the school and the community to address the core concerns relating to capacitating the then digital immigrants to becoming tech-immersed scaffolders as their partner in ensuring quality delivery on education for the tech-immersed learners.

BEST PRACTICES

Conduct of trainings

Series of trainings were conducted by the EDUC CIRCLE (EDUCators' CIRCLE for Community Linkage and Empowerment), an extension organization of the BEED program, and ETS staff of Quirino State University-Cabarroguis. Series of discussions on the *Salindunong Program activities* were among the content of the trainings done.

Infusion of Technology in learning is a timely response to the ongoing demands of education. The digital-immigrants, with very limited knowledge on the educational applications, tools, and websites were given opportunities and appropriate interventions to orient and prepare them in providing scaffold to their tech-immersed child/sibling during home learning (*participation to a learning community, and utilizing the messenger, zoom, and Google Meet for virtual learning opportunities*).

Enhanced activity

The exposure of the participants into hands-on activities from the session categories while maintaining the scaffold given by the extensionist (close supervision to address the participant's concern) will help capacitate their technological pursuit.

The extensionist will facilitate while the participants explore and indulge into technological pursuit.

Empowering activity

As a manifestation of the participant's technological pursuit to learning, the idea on capacitating them through community involvement was set. It was tackled during the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing between Quirino State University (QSU), Cabarroguis and Sto. Tomas Elementary School administration that one of the highlights of the extension program would be the utilization of the capacitated participants as facilitators for the next series of technology-related extension programs within the locality.

This is the core of Salindunong Program— augmenting the level of the participants from being digital immigrants to becoming tech-immersed and using their platform to empower fellow parents/elders to indulge on the process.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Family members of the participants were encouraged to attend the sessions (but due to the restrictions caused by the pandemic, the extensionist addresses this concern through virtual session with the aid of the main participants.) This helps in capacitating other members of the family who can serve as immediate individuals in monitoring, validating, and evaluating the learning progress of tech-immersed learners with the scaffold provided in them.

The extensionist will also seek the teachers' participation in evaluating the participants (mode of participation using the technology tools/applications taught to them.) The feedbacks will be used by the extensionist to establish a better intervention for the next sessions of the program.

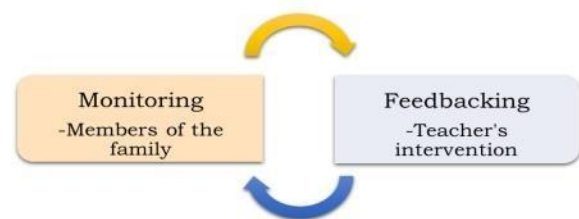


Figure 3 Monitoring and Feedbacking for Salindunong

5. WAY FORWARD



Figure 4 Sustainability Plan for *Salindunong Program*

With the identification of the new set of participants for the sustainability of the *Salindunong Program* comes the exposition of the capacitated participants from the previous session as facilitators/new extensionists.

After the exposure of these capacitated participants into community involvement, the extensionist will prepare new sessions on using *Google Classroom*, *Google drive*, *Google calendar*, and *Google form* as a response to the growing needs and demands in the tech-immersed learning environment.

Future Activities

Looking forward to the success of the first phase of the *Salindunong Program*, added sessions on the features and usage of *Google drive*, *Google calendar*, and *Google form* will be intensified. Hands-on activities and demonstrations were expected activities from the participants.

6. CONCLUSIONS

CHALLENGES	RESPONSES
1. Interaction between a digital immigrant and a tech-immersed learner	1. Retreat/character development activities to strengthen the bond and understanding of both elders and the learner.
2. Attendance and acceptance on the challenge of indulgence to technology	2. Sustainable trainings and exposure to technology-driven environment for mastery and practice
3. Follow-up activities which aim for sustainable learning and practice	3. Refresher activities or attendance to webinars on technology-related topics to further supplement the gained competency during the sessions.

Due to the spread of CoVid-19, schools across the globe closed their doors to decrease the spread of the viral outbreak during the pandemic. This physical closure led to a rapid shift to remote learning which placed more responsibility for learning on parents and guardians/elders. As one of the major stakeholders in the education process, experiences of digital immigrants with their children during remote learning are worth examining to address the growing demands of education (Garbe et al., 2020).

The pandemic has offered opportunities to retool, update, and upskill the digital immigrants to anchor the scaffold they offer to the tech-immersed learners. After a series of sessions on the offerings of the *Salindunong Program*, it was validated that the learning success of tech-immersed learners during home learning is influenced by the quality of scaffold provided by the immediate family. To maintain the impact of this program continuous monitoring, feedbacking, and sustainable activities should be employed.

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