

Extent of Implementation of Solo Parents Welfare Act: Basis for Policy Recommendation in the Department of Education

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Abstract— This study explores the implementation of the Solo Parents Welfare Act and the challenges faced by solo parent-teachers in the Department of Education Region III, Philippines, for the School Year 2024-2025 and proposes policy recommendations for a more inclusive workplace. The study employed a convergent parallel mixed-method approach, utilizing purposive sampling to select 50 DepEd solo parent-teachers. Quantitative data were gathered using survey questionnaires, while qualitative data were collected via semi-structured interviews. Findings indicate that most respondents hold units in a master's degree, earn Php 25,000 and above, have over 21 years of service, have one dependent, and have been solo parents for 6 to 10 years. Results reveal that the overall implementation of the Solo Parents Welfare Act is partial, with employment benefits and livelihood training being moderately implemented, while medical assistance and counseling services are less accessible. No significant difference in benefits was observed based on education, economic status, length of service, years as a solo parent, and mental health, except for the number of dependents, which showed a significant difference. Meanwhile, solo parent-teachers encounter personal and professional challenges. The personal challenges are mental and emotional well-being exhaustion, imbalanced work-life and time management, neglected health and physical well-being, financial and practical support difficulty, and lack of workplace and social support. On the other hand, the professional challenges are neglected professional growth and development, lack of institutional support, additional workload, job financial insecurities, and absence of a school-home boundary. However, solo parent-teachers adopted many strategies to deal with the difficulties of juggling their roles as solo parents and teachers, such as personal strength and resilience, workplace and policy awareness, social and emotional support, self-care and personal well-being, and spiritual sensitivity. Policy recommendations include enhancing livelihood and counseling services, improving DepEd solo parent-teacher medical and employment benefits, and providing financial assistance and flexible work arrangements. Strengthening institutional support through career development and wellness programs is also proposed. These findings highlight the need for improved implementation of policies supporting solo parent-teachers, ensuring a more inclusive and supportive educational workplace.

Keywords— DepEd solo parent-teachers, inclusive workplace, policy recommendations, Solo Parents Welfare Act.

I. INTRODUCTION

Solo parents in the Philippines deal with difficulties that have an impact on both their personal and professional lives. The Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000, also known as Republic Act No. 8972, and then later on revised to Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2022 or the Republic Act No. 11861, was passed by the government to solve these issues. Through flexible work schedules, more leave benefits, counseling, and livelihood support, this law seeks to offer all-encompassing help to solo parents. But even with its provisions, different industries continue to have varying levels of extent of implementation.

This difficulty becomes more noticeable for solo parent-teachers. Teachers who are solo parents have additional challenges as they balance their responsibilities as solo parents, administrative tasks, and rigorous workloads.

Many solo parent-teachers find it difficult to juggle their combined responsibilities because teaching demands emotional fortitude, time management, and energy. These difficulties are worsened by a lack of knowledge about their rights under the solo parent law, resulting in underutilized benefits and restricted access to support networks (Aloro et al., 2024).

Globally, solo parents frequently encounter major obstacles such as unstable finances, rigid work schedules, and restricted access to support networks. These difficulties are especially severe because social safety nets are less developed in developing nations. With this, flexible workplace rules and focused interventions are crucial for reducing the stress that solo parents experience (Garcia et al., 2021).

The experiences of solo parent-teachers in Asia emphasize the significance of policies and support networks in fostering their success both personally and professionally. A study conducted by Tanaka and Nakamura (2022) in Japan examined the COVID-19 pandemic's effects on solo parent-teachers, which concentrated on the added caregiving duties at home and the increased strain brought on by remote instruction. The study made recommendations for policy changes that would help solo parent-teachers in times of need by offering them both financial and emotional support. Meanwhile, an investigation conducted by Kim and Lee (2020) in South Korea looked at the community networks, government aid programs, and school-based support groups that are accessible to solo parent-teachers. According to the study, these support networks considerably raised the job satisfaction and general well-being of solo parent-teachers.

In the Philippines, solo parents make up a sizable and expanding portion of the population. According to a World Health Organization-funded study conducted by the Department of Health and the University of the Philippines National Institutes of Health, there are presently between 14 and 15 million solo parents in the Philippines, with 95% of them being women (Senate of the Philippines Press Release, 2021). The requirements of this population are intended to be met by Republic Act No. 8972 and its revision under RA 11861. Implementing these regulations is mainly the responsibility of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), working in tandem with other government agencies and local government units (LGUs). Benefits include financial aid, more leave, and flexible work schedules. The statute is still not well known despite these provisions. Many solo parents face stigma, lack of access to benefits, and bureaucratic obstacles, especially in rural areas (Garcia et al., 2021).

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) Report (2020) states that there are a number of reasons and forms for being a solo parent, including working abroad, being abandoned, being a widow, being incarcerated, being separated legally or factually, being annulled, adopting a child, or having a toddler who is not married due to inadequate education.

In connection, teachers who are solo parents encounter particular challenges in juggling their work and caregiving obligations. According to research, these solo parent-teachers face discrimination, rigid scheduling, and a lack of institutional support at work,

all of which impede their ability to advance in their careers. Many also make less than the poverty line, which makes their combined responsibilities as wage earners and caretakers even more stressful financially (Garcia et al., 2021; Aloro et al., 2024).

Moreover, implementing benefits for solo parent-teachers under the Act faces several challenges, including a lack of awareness among teachers about their rights and how to access them, inconsistent application across LGUs due to varying resources and processes, and limited workplace policies supporting flexible arrangements like telecommuting. Additionally, the absence of systematic monitoring and evaluation makes it difficult to gauge the Act's effectiveness in improving the lives of solo parent-teachers.

Despite offering a strong structure, this Act's efficacy is compromised by inconsistent implementation and poor awareness. In areas such as Bataan, targeted research is required to pinpoint particular issues and guide the development of legislation that better assists solo parent-teachers. Awareness campaigns and institutional support must be strengthened to enable solo parents to use the available benefits fully.

Moreover, significant implementation gaps still exist even after the Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act was passed, especially in certain areas like education. Although research has looked at how RA 11861 is generally implemented, little of it has explicitly looked at how the Department of Education (DepEd) applies the law to solo parent-teachers. For example, concerns about teachers' access to benefits like parental leave, flexible work schedules, and childcare services are still not well understood (Herrera, 2024; Tuazon et al., 2022). Likewise, reports show that a lot of solo parents are not aware of their legal rights, and bureaucratic obstacles make it difficult to get benefits (Herrera, 2024). On the other hand, DepEd's empirical evidence on awareness levels and accessibility concerns unique to solo parent-teachers is lacking. Lastly, the majority of studies either concentrate on qualitative accounts or quantitative assessments. However, they do not employ a convergent mixed methods strategy to offer a comprehensive understanding of implementation gaps (Tuazon et al., 2022).

This study, therefore, aimed to determine the difficulties solo parent-teachers encounter in their personal and professional lives, their coping strategies, and the extent of implementation of the Solo Parents Welfare Act (RA

8972 and RA 11861). It intended to shed light on their experiences to help stakeholders, school administrators, and legislators develop more inclusive initiatives and policy recommendations that encourage an inclusive working environment for the welfare of solo parent-teachers.

II. OBJECTIVES

This study aims to examine the extent of implementation of the Solo Parents Welfare Act and to identify the challenges and coping strategies of solo parent-teachers, with the end goal of proposing policy recommendations that foster a more inclusive workplace within the Department of Education Region III, Philippines, for the School Year 2024–2025.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the profile of the solo parent-teacher respondents in terms of: educational attainment, economic status, length of service, years of being a solo parent, number of dependents, and mental health.
2. Assess the extent of implementation of benefits and privileges provided under the Solo Parents Welfare Act in relation to: Livelihood and skills training, counseling services, parent effectiveness services, educational benefits, medical assistance, and employment benefits.
3. Analyze the significant differences in the extent of implementation of the benefits and privileges when respondents are grouped according to their profile.
4. Identify the personal and professional challenges commonly experienced by solo parent-teachers.
5. Explore the coping strategies employed by solo parent-teachers in managing their dual roles.
6. Propose a policy recommendation that promotes a more inclusive and supportive workplace for solo parent-teachers based on the findings of the study.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study used a convergent parallel mixed methods design, where quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously, analyzed separately, and then integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

This design was chosen to measure the extent of implementation of the Solo Parents Welfare Act among DepEd Region III solo parent-teachers while also exploring their challenges and coping strategies, serving as a basis for future intervention programs.

A total of 50 solo parent-teachers in DepEd Region III were selected through purposive sampling based on criteria such as having at least one dependent and being a solo parent for at least two years. All participated in the quantitative phase, while 10 were chosen for semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insights into their lived experiences. This smaller qualitative sample is consistent with the approach, which focuses on depth rather than breadth of information.

For the quantitative data, basic statistical tools were applied to describe respondents' profiles, assess the extent of implementation of the Act, and compare results across groups. Meanwhile, qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis using interview transcripts. The integration of findings allowed the researcher to identify patterns of convergence and divergence, leading to a richer and more credible understanding of the issues faced by solo parent-teachers.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Profile of the solo parent-teacher respondents

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Highest Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	10	20.00
Master's Degree Unit	30	60.00
Master's Degree	5	10.00
Doctor's Degree Unit	3	6.00
Doctor's Degree	2	4.00
Economic Status		
Below Php 12,000	2	4.00
Php 12,000 -Php 24,000	9	18.00
Php 25,000-and above	39	78.00
Length of Service		
1 to 5 years	4	8.00
6 to 10 years	9	18.00
11 to 15 years	13	26.00
16 to 20 years	7	14.00
21 years and above	17	34.00
Years of being a Solo Parent		
1 to 5 years	6	12.00
6 to 10 years	20	40.00
11 to 15 years	14	28.00
16 to 20 years	10	20.00
Number of Dependents		
One	22	44.00
Two	14	28.00
Three	10	20.00
Four	2	4.00
Five and above	2	4.00
Mental Health		
Poor	2	4.00
Fair	15	30.00
Good	21	42.00
Excellent	12	24.00

Number of Cases = 50

Data reveals that from the total of 50 respondents, 30 or 60% have acquired units in Master's Degree, 10 or 20% are Bachelor's Degree graduates, 5 or 10% have

Master's degrees, while 3 or 6% have Doctorate degree units', and 2 or 4% have a doctorate degree. As to the economic status of the respondents, 39 or 78% earn between Php 25,000 and above, while 9 or 18% have between Php 12,000 to Php 24,000, and 2 or 4% have below Php 12,000.

In terms of the length of service of the respondents, 17 or 34% have 21 years and above, 13 or 26% have between 11 to 15 years, 9 or 18% have 6 to 10 years, while 7 or 14% have 16-20 years and above, and 4 or 8% have 1 to 5 years of experience. As to the years of

being a solo parent, 20 or 40% have 6 to 10 years, 14 or 28% have between 11 to 15 years, while 10 or 20% have 16-20 years, and 6 or 12% have 1 to 5 years.

On the number of dependents, 22 or 44% have one, 14 or 28% have two, while 10 or 20% have four, and 2 or 4% have four, and another 2 or 4% have five and above.

As to the mental health of the respondents, data shows that 21 or 42% have a good level of mental health, 15 or 30% considered their mental health as fair, 12 or 24% are excellent, and 2 or 4% are poor.

2. Extent of implementation of benefits and privileges provided under the Solo Parents Welfare Act

Table 2
Benefits and Privileges of the Solo Parents Welfare Act

Indicators	Mean	SD	DI
Livelihood and Skills Training	2.61	0.72	Moderately Implemented
Counseling Services	2.42	0.78	Partially Implemented
Parent Effectiveness Service	2.34	0.74	Partially Implemented
Educational Benefits	2.43	0.96	Partially Implemented
Medical Assistance	2.18	0.84	Partially Implemented
Employment Benefits	2.66	0.77	Moderately Implemented
Overall	2.44	0.70	Partially Implemented

Legend: 3.25-4.00 Strongly Agree SA (Highly Implemented HI); 2.50-3.24 Agree A (Moderately Implemented MI); 1.75-2.49 Disagree D (Partially Implemented PI); 1.00-1.74 Strongly Disagree SD (Rarely Implemented RI)

The result of the analysis shows that, in general, the implementation of benefits and privileges of the Solo Parents Welfare Act in terms of livelihood and skills training (Mean=2.61, SD=0.72) is on average, which suggests that it is moderately implemented, counseling services (Mean=2.42, SD=0.78) is partially implemented, parent effectiveness service (Mean=2.34, SD=0.74) is partially implemented, educational benefits (Mean=2.43, SD=0.96) is partially implemented, medical assistance (Mean=2.18, SD=0.84) is partially implemented, and employment benefits. (Mean=2.66, SD=0.77) is moderately implemented. Overall, it can be deduced that implementation of benefits and privileges of the Solo Parents Welfare Act (Mean=2.44, SD=0.70) is Partially Implemented.

Based on these findings, it is inferred that benefits under the Solo Parents Welfare Act are implemented in a variety of ways. Even with the moderate implementation of livelihood and skills training and job benefits, more can be done to provide equal access for all solo parents. However, only a portion of counseling services, parent effectiveness services, educational benefits, and medical support are in place, which shows that there are serious gaps in addressing the requirements of solo parents. The areas where respondents believe services are inadequate,

especially in counseling and parent effectiveness services, are highlighted by these incomplete implementations. There is a significant gap in health services and a notable undersupply of medical aid. Overall, these data show that more thorough and efficient implementation is required to adequately help solo parent-teachers in all of these areas, even with modest progress.

These findings are supported by Ramilo (2024), who states that despite the fact that these measures have been very helpful, there are still issues with service delivery's efficiency and accessibility. To better meet the requirements of solo parent-teachers and guarantee that they take full advantage of the resources provided, the results indicate that expanding the programs' reach and availability, as well as simplifying the application procedures, could be beneficial.

In connection, a study pioneered by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (2019) revealed that difficulties in implementing laws such as the Solo Parents Welfare Act still exist, especially at the municipal level. These difficulties include insufficient funding and uneven service provision, which are consistent with the incomplete implementation of

medical aid, counseling, and parent effectiveness programs that have been noted. Additionally, the study highlights that a lack of awareness among solo parents about their rights and available benefits further hinders

the law's effectiveness. Strengthening information campaigns and ensuring proper budget allocation are crucial steps toward improving the implementation of these support programs.

3. Significant differences in the extent of implementation of the benefits and privileges when respondents are grouped according to their profile

Table 3
Benefits and Privileges vis-à-vis Profile

Profile Variable	F	Sig.	Decision on H ₀	Interpretation
Educational Attainment	0.51	0.73	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Economic Status	0.2	0.82	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Length of Service	0.71	0.59	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Years as a Solo Parent	1.43	0.25	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Number of Dependents	3.2	0.02	Reject	Significant
Mental Health	1.21	0.32	Failed to Reject	Not Significant

at .05 level of Sig.

Table 3 presents the comparative analysis of the extent of benefits and privileges received by solo parent-teachers based on selected profile variables. The analysis shows that among the six variables, only the number of dependents yielded a statistically significant result ($F = 3.2$, $p = 0.02$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that the number of dependents significantly influences the implementation of benefits and privileges. In contrast, variables such as educational attainment, economic status, length of service, years as a solo parent, and mental health did not show significant differences, as all their p-values exceeded the 0.05 threshold. The findings suggest that the number of dependents is a key factor in how benefits are experienced or allocated, highlighting the need for more targeted policies to address the specific needs of solo parents with larger families.

This finding is supported by Hollister (2023) that having several dependents puts a load on a solo parent's finances, time, and emotions. Having more children makes it more difficult to manage spending alone, which frequently results in stress and overwork. These difficulties are made worse by a lack of time and support systems, which has an impact on the well-being of both parents and children. Finding a balance between obligations is made much more challenging by inadequate childcare and employment flexibility. Children may have fewer educational and extracurricular options if they do not receive the right support, which could affect how they develop in the future.

4. Personal and professional challenges commonly experienced by solo parent-teachers

Personal Challenges

Mental and Emotional Well-being Exhaustion. Participants expressed that they experienced mental and emotional well-being exhaustion which refers to conditions of excessive exhaustion and burnout brought on by ongoing emotional strain and stress. Participant 2 said, "I'm stressed. Then I feel like that's the one that triggers why I'm bloated." Participant 6 added, "First, it was difficult. I had some breakdowns."

The comments draw attention to the significant psychological challenges faced by solo parent-teachers as they manage stress, emotional strain, and mental fatigue. Stress can show up in a number of ways, including emotional distress like breakdowns and anger as well as physical health problems like weariness, weight gain, and hair loss. These difficulties are exacerbated by the excessive workload at work and at home, which frequently results in demotivation and feelings of powerlessness. According to Ebor (2020), because of their multiple responsibilities, these teachers frequently suffer from severe stress and emotional weariness. The psychological difficulties that solo parent-teachers encounter brought attention to the difficulties in juggling work obligations and solo motherhood.

Imbalanced Work-Life and Time Management. This is commonly experienced by the participants, who often feel overwhelmed, isolated, and emotionally drained as they struggle to meet the high demands of their teaching roles while trying to fulfill their responsibilities as solo parents, leaving them with little time or energy to nurture their own well-being or connect meaningfully with their families. Participant 3 said, "I'm often lacking in time, given the many tasks to handle; of course, my

time really gets used up.” Participant 4 added, “I really need to sacrifice my time.”

Finding a balance between their professional and parenting obligations is a major problem for solo parent-teachers. They have little to no personal time because they are always waking up early, getting ready for work, and taking care of their children. They frequently believe that there are never enough hours in a day to successfully do both duties due to the excessive demands. According to Ybanez et al. (2022), time management, budgetary restraints, and keeping in close contact with their children are challenges faced by solo parents in educational institutions. These studies highlight the necessity of efficient support networks and coping strategies to assist solo parent-teachers in successfully juggling their two responsibilities.

Neglected Health and Physical Well-being. This is one of the personal challenges according to the participants, many of whom revealed feelings of exhaustion, chronic fatigue, and increased vulnerability to illness due to the relentless demands of balancing their teaching duties and solo parenting, often leaving little time or energy to prioritize their own self-care and health needs. Participant 8 said, “There are times when I shiver. Sometimes, I really just let it be. But it can be really tiring.” Participant 9 added, “You feel tired in the morning, and then again in the evening.”

The lived experiences of solo parent-teachers highlight how the overwhelming responsibilities of managing both work and home life often result in the neglect of their own physical and mental well-being. Chronic exhaustion, as described by the participants, is a reflection of the intense physical and emotional labor they endure daily. According to the American Psychological Association (APA, 2023), individuals in caregiving roles, especially solo parents, are at a significantly higher risk of stress-related health issues due to the lack of personal time and self-care. While some attempt to implement coping strategies such as time management and short leisure breaks, these efforts often fall short of addressing the cumulative strain of their dual roles.

Financial and Practical Support Difficulty. Participants often face overwhelming financial pressure and uncertainty, leading to constant worry and stress as they strive to provide for their families while navigating limited resources and support systems. Participant 3 said, “I also need financial support because our income

is really insufficient, especially since you have many children and you are the only one working.” Participant 8 added, “Of course, money. Money. Assistance indeed.”

Solo parent-teachers confront severe financial difficulties, particularly when they are the sole providers for their families. Frequently, their income is insufficient to cover basic costs, particularly for those who have several children. These teachers find it difficult to strike a balance between their caregiving obligations and financial security since they lack a backup source of income or assistance. According to Sylvanelli (2023), because they must rely on a sole source of income to sustain their families, solo parent-teachers frequently experience severe financial difficulties. The hefty costs of childcare, schooling, and everyday living expenditures add to this financial burden.

Lack of Workplace and Social Support. Solo parent-teachers often feel isolated, undervalued, and overwhelmed due to the absence of encouragement and understanding from the institution and superiors, which intensifies their stress and hampers their ability to effectively balance their professional and personal responsibilities. Participant 4 said, “The leave provided should be flexible”. Participant 10 added, “More flexible work arrangements as a solo parent such as the ability to work from home occasionally or adjust schedules for important family matters.”

It can be very difficult for solo parent-teachers to balance their personal and professional obligations, especially when raising young children. More flexible leave policies that are suited to their needs must be put in place because the few leave days offered are frequently insufficient. Additionally, the presence of a robust support structure among solo parent-teachers plays a key role in promoting emotional resilience and lowering feelings of isolation. According to Lindholm (2021), support from the workplace, such as flexible scheduling and administration awareness, is essential in reducing these stresses.

Professional Challenges

Neglected Professional Growth and Development. This is commonly experienced by the participants, who often feel stuck and frustrated as being a solo parent hinders their ability to improve their skills and advance their careers to better support their families. Participant 7 said, “Another aspect that has been compromised is my

career, particularly the promotion. Yes, because I can't study." Participant 6 added, "Opportunities are lesser if you're a single parent studying. Because of course, you have to prioritize your child."

These statements illustrate the significant sacrifices solo parents—mothers in particular—make for their children's education and future, frequently at the expense of their own career advancement. The participants draw attention to the conundrum of wanting to go to college but continuously putting their children's emotional and financial needs ahead of their own goals. Missed chances, including career promotions, which are frequently associated with advanced degrees, result from this selflessness. According to Administration for Children and Families (2020), because of their immediate financial obligations, solo parents—mothers in particular—frequently put off or completely forego going to college or earning professional credentials. These issues can be lessened by workplace policies like paid parental leave and flexible work schedules.

Lack of Institutional Support. This emerged as one of the professional struggles of the participants, who often felt neglected and undervalued, facing barriers that limited their effectiveness and growth, ultimately increasing their frustration and sense of professional isolation. Participant said 6, "So you don't really feel that support." Participant 10 added, "There is really no strong peer support network within the school."

While parental leave exists, it appears to be the only tangible benefit supplied, leaving employees without other important support mechanisms such as flexible scheduling, childcare assistance, or task changes. The participants stressed the importance of understanding employee rights, but it appears that academic institutions are not doing much more than the absolute minimum to educate or assist working parents. This finding is supported by Carter (2020) that supportive workplace policies, such as flexible work schedules, are essential for assisting solo parents in successfully juggling their two responsibilities. The article also stressed how crucial a supportive and accommodating work environment is for helping employees who are solo parents.

Additional Workload. This emerged as one of the professional challenges of the participants, who often feel overwhelmed and stretched thin, struggling to meet these extra demands while maintaining the quality of

their teaching and managing their personal lives. Participant 6 said, "But often when you have a special assignment, your workload increases. Instead of going home after teaching, you have to stay at school because you have extra tasks to do." Participant 4 added, "They should not be given coordinatorship because it is difficult."

Solo parents manage all childcare and domestic chores by themselves, in contrast to teachers from whole families who might split obligations at home. This makes other school-related responsibilities, like coordinatorship, especially difficult. According to Smith (2024), teachers are experiencing stress and burnout as a result of their growing administrative workload. It draws attention to how teachers' discontent and difficulties juggling work and life are exacerbated by overbearing regulations and a lack of support.

Job Financial Insecurities. This emerged as one of the professional challenges of the participants, who frequently experience financial instability and stress, making it difficult to support their families and maintain a balanced and secure livelihood. Participant 3 said, "I also need financial support because our income is really insufficient." Participant 8 added, "I have a loan, it's really not enough."

Due to having to pay for every household expense alone, solo parents—especially those with several children—face severe financial hardship. Income is still insufficient in spite of these efforts, and many turn to loans to fill the gaps, which only makes their long-term financial stress worse. According to the American Psychological Association (2022), this tendency is representative of a larger global trend in which solo parents need to diversify their sources of income to support their households. It also mentions that one of the most stressful issues that families deal with is money, which affects the well-being of both parents and children.

Absence of a School-Home Boundary. This emerged as one of the professional challenges of the participants, who often find themselves constantly "on call," unable to disconnect from work demands, leading to feelings of overwhelm and emotional exhaustion. Participant 1 said, "Your workload doesn't just end here because if you don't finish it here, you'll take it home." Participant 8 added, "Instead of just staying at home on Saturdays and Sundays, you have to leave because of work."

Since their job stretches beyond school hours, solo parents who are teachers frequently find it difficult to balance their personal and professional obligations. Parents are forced to take home any unfinished business from the day, which further reduces the amount of time parents can spend with their children. For Alonge and Osagiobare (2020), teachers who are solo parents have difficulties juggling their personal and professional obligations, which frequently results in higher stress levels and worse job satisfaction. The pressures of teaching and being a solo parent make it difficult for these teachers to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Their general well-being and productivity at work may suffer as a result of this mismatch.

5. Coping strategies employed by solo parent-teachers in managing their dual roles

Personal Strength and Resilience. This alludes to the special skills and coping strategies some teachers employ to deal with the difficulties of juggling work and family obligations. Participant 1 added, "They just need to be strong. They should be positive in life." Participant 6 added, "So don't lose hope. Today is hard, but tomorrow, it will be different."

Resilience is emphasized by solo parent-teachers as a critical component in conquering their obstacles. Although it is simple to advise someone to "be strong," the reality of their challenges calls for both external and internal assistance. Their faith, hope for a brighter future, and resolve to support their children through all the challenges they encounter are ultimately what drive their perseverance. For Galaven and Villocino (2024), solo parent-teachers frequently used social support systems, time management abilities, and strong personal motivation to get through their everyday challenges.

Workplace and Policy Awareness. Solo parents frequently have difficulties at work that call for special regulations to guarantee fair treatment and assistance. Participant 4 said, "First of all, know what your rights are." Participant 5 added, "I'm just lucky because I have superiors who understand the flexible schedule."

It is important to comprehend and defend the rights of teachers who are also solo parents. Many people think that even if they are aware of their rights, their voices are not heard, and they are unable to get help or see change. While some are fortunate to have understanding supervisors who understand parental leave and flexible work schedules, others struggle to enjoy the same benefits. For Galaven and Villocino (2024), creating a

supportive work environment requires awareness of and advocacy for the rights of solo parent-teachers. Many solo parent-teachers believe that even if they are aware of their rights, their opinions are not heard, which results in a lack of real support and change.

Social and Emotional Support. The networks and services that offer consolation, help, and knowledge to help solo parents help deal with the difficulties of parenting children alone. Participant 2 said, "My best friend is just a phone call away when I have a problem...It's a big deal to have someone who listens to you." Participant 3 added, "Family has a stronger influence on us, so we can cope with life."

Social support networks are important in the lives of solo parent-teachers, especially when it comes to assisting them in overcoming both practical and emotional obstacles. By offering consolation, guidance, and assurance, they help solo parents feel less alone in their difficulties.

Self-care and Personal Well-Being. For solo parents, self-care is essential because it helps them cope with the loneliness and stress that come with being a solo parent. Participant 3 said, "I'm watching Chinese dramas because I feel more relaxed when I watch them all the time." Participant 10 added, "Self-care activities like short walks, journaling, or listening to music help manage stress."

Through showing that even brief periods of enjoyment and relaxation support resilience and general mental health, these self-care practices emphasize the value of leisure time and personal time in preventing burnout. According to Support for Solo Parents (2024), self-care techniques are essential to reducing these difficulties and improving their general well-being. By making self-care a priority, they can lower stress, boost their emotional health, and refuel.

Spiritual Sensitivity. Spiritual sensitivity might assist solo parent-teachers feel less alone and more equipped to handle their obligations by bringing them comfort and serenity during trying moments. Participant 5 said, "Just hold on to the Lord. Everything will pass." Participant 8 added, "I hope the Lord helps us to live longer. May He give us more strength and courage."

Solo parent-teachers deal with everyday challenges by relying heavily on their faith and fortitude. They can withstand emotional adversity and fatigue because of their unshakable faith in God. For Galaven and

Villocino (2024), it is crucial for solo parent-teachers to be spiritually sensitive. These teachers frequently turn to prayer as a potent coping mechanism and source of strength for their path. Solo parents can navigate the challenges of solo parenthood more easily and confidently by maintaining a prayerful mindset.

6. Policy recommendation that promotes a more inclusive and supportive workplace for solo parent-teachers based on the findings of the study

The Department of Education may greatly improve the assistance given to solo parent-teachers, addressing their difficulties and creating a more welcoming and inclusive learning environment. Based on the findings of the study, the following inputs to policy recommendations are proposed:

1. Enhance the livelihood training and skill sets of solo parent-teachers by fortifying relationships with groups such as TESDA and providing financial literacy, entrepreneurial, and vocational programs.
2. Improve counseling services for solo parent-teachers by making them accessible online, setting up group therapy sessions that address stress management and mental health, and setting up referral mechanisms to link them to nearby support services.
3. Strengthen parent effectiveness services by hosting parenting classes on home management and child development, offering childcare assistance to teachers who are solo parents during training sessions, and encouraging community participation through talks presented by experts.
4. Expand educational advantages by negotiating tuition cost reductions, awarding scholarships to solo parent-teachers and their children, and giving them access to necessary learning materials including online courses, textbooks, and tutoring.
5. Improve medical assistance by making healthcare services easily accessible, offering solo parent-teachers and their dependents sufficient health insurance, and putting in place wellness initiatives that encourage general well-being.
6. Enhance employment benefits by introducing flexible work schedules, offering professional development programs for career progression, and providing financial assistance to solo parent-teachers in order to help them deal with unforeseen costs.
7. Address personal and professional challenges by providing professional development opportunities, workplace accommodations like childcare and health clinics, and institutional policies that address

mental health and work-life balance to support solo parent-teachers.

8. Encourage coping mechanisms by by setting up peer support groups, giving access to mental health resources, including self-help books and internet tools, and offering training on resilience and self-care.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of the Solo Parents Welfare Act among solo parent-teachers in the Department of Education remains partial and inconsistent, with many benefits such as counseling, flexible work arrangements, and educational assistance only moderately applied. Key services like mental health support and continuing education are often inaccessible or poorly promoted, limiting their impact on teachers' well-being and professional growth.

Findings show that implementation is generally uniform across demographic variables, except for the number of dependents, where disparities in support were noted. This suggests that caregiving responsibilities significantly affect access to benefits. To address these gaps, the Department of Education should strengthen support mechanisms through a more inclusive policy framework that ensures full implementation of existing benefits while tailoring measures to the needs of solo parent-teachers with varying family responsibilities.

To strengthen the implementation of the Solo Parents Welfare Act, DepEd and its regional and division offices should conduct regular audits and monitoring to ensure policies translate into accessible benefits, particularly for experienced solo parent-teachers. DepEd HR and Welfare Units must design benefit packages that consider the number of dependents, while school heads should be equipped to develop school-level programs responsive to solo parents' needs. The BLSS, in partnership with the DSWD, should enhance counseling, mental health, and educational services, while the integration of Gender and Development (GAD) principles in school and division policies can further foster inclusivity and support for solo parent-teachers.

At the organizational level, the DepEd HR Undersecretary's office should institutionalize flexible work arrangements, wellness, and resilience programs within professional development initiatives. To ensure sustainability, divisions are encouraged to designate solo parent focal persons or establish dedicated desks

that can coordinate support services, training, and partnerships with TESDA and LGUs. Finally, future research should focus on the long-term effects of the Act on solo parent-teachers' mental health and career growth, providing evidence for further policy refinement and program enhancement.

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