

MI O Lm: Stories of Mobile Legend Gamers in Accomplishing their Learning Modules Amidst Covid-19 Pandemic: A Case Study

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Abstract:

The Covid 19 pandemic has heightened the use of mobile phones among learners all over the globe. Hence, the students who got involved and soon got addicted into playing mobile games whether these are pre-installed, offline, or online have also increased significantly. This addiction may be associated to learners' academic performance especially in the implementation of the new learning modality in the School Year 2021-2022. To highlight this issue, the researcher conducted a study describing and revealing the experiences of the two junior high school students, who were habitual mobile legend gamers, and the impact of their addiction to learning module accomplishment and submission. The researcher utilized judgmental sampling technique in this study which qualified the two participants among many of those who met the requirements because of the significant changes on their academic performance relevant to excessive playing of Mobile Legends. Analytic strategy and descriptive approach by Yin (2014) as also used in the study of Cadosales (2018), was employed to gather and analyze data focusing on the common themes emerging from their stories as they battle on the adverse effect of playing ML while accomplishing LM. A narrative story was created through inquiries and storytelling based on the transcribed interview responses. From the two Mobile Legend gamers' revelation of the cases, themes based on their highlighted stories were described, analyzed, and compared to Mobile Legend's heroes and characteristics. The findings of the study affirmed that stress, depression, isolation, and lack of actual communication and socialization lead the two cases to venture in engaging themselves into playing mobile legends. Moreover, their academic performance was badly affected when associated to excessive and unrestrained playing of Mobile Legends.

Keywords: Mobile Legends, Academic Performance, Learning Modules, Case Study, Philippines, Mobile Games Addiction

I. INTRODUCTION

"No pain, no game" and "No game, no fame". Both statements were frequently uttered by a fourteen-year-old Junior High School student/gamer at Binulasan Integrated School, Isko, who is an active player of the legendary online game "Mobile Legends".

Corona Virus Disease outbreak has heightened the use of mobile phones across the globe. According to Watsons (2020), the data revealed from a global survey held in March 2020, 70 percent of responding internet users worldwide were using their smartphones or mobile phones more as a direct result of the coronavirus outbreak.

In addition, due to the threat brought by CoVid-19, the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines implemented the modular distance learning through Basic Education Learning

Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) which made self-learning modules (SLMs) available in print or digital format/electronic copy, whichever is appropriate in the learner's context, as well as other learning tools such as Learner's Materials, textbooks, activity sheets, study guides, and other supplemental activities (DepEd, 2020). This is the Department's response to the challenges posed by CoVid-19 in the field of basic education. "I have always maintained that education must continue, whatever the changes and even dangers we confront now and in the future", Leonor M. Briones (Secretary of the Department of Education).

Meanwhile, according to Elliot (2020) to his published article entitled "The Philippines' Games Market: Data and Insights", 74 percent of the Philippines' online population play games on mobile where 75 percent of men and 72 percent of women play mobile games, while 70 percent of men and 61 percent of women play computer games. It has also been shown in the statistics presented in Philippines Mobile Game Market that the smartphone penetration has increased to 27.6 percent from 2015-2021.

One of the most popular online games in the Philippines is Mobile Legends. It is mostly played by people around 12-35 years old. For the record, it has over one billion installs and 100 million monthly active users in November 2020, according to a report by Business World. During the same time, the Philippines alone had 100 million registered users and 25 million monthly active users.

While Mobile Legends according to some studies poses positive effects among gamers, negative impacts are obviously remarkable most especially to the academic performance of those players who are enrolled in school during this CoVid-19 pandemic wherein most schools offer Distance Learning Modality as a way of educating learners. Hence, spending ample time in playing mobile games constitutes adverse outcomes to the behavior, health, lifestyles, and most importantly study habit among learners (Aviso et al., 2020)

Thus, this research aimed to highlight the experiences of the two selected Junior High School students who are habitual Mobile Legend gamers and the impact of their addiction to their Learning Modules accomplishment and submission. Furthermore, this research undertaking explored the problems and challenges experienced by the student gamers on their academic performance. This study also unveiled the study habits of these selected students. Much more, it also helped the parents, teachers and the community address this issue regarding this addictive online game.

Research Questions

This research aimed to describe the ML gamers experiences and reveal the untold stories of the two Junior High School students during the CoVid-19 pandemic.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. Why does mobile legends seem to be appealing among the students?
2. How may the study habits of the Junior High School ML Online Gamers be described and analyzed?
3. How does the academic performance of the students be affected before and after playing Mobile Legends?
4. What are the problems and challenges they have experienced in accomplishing and submitting learning modules?
5. How do they cope up and overcome with their problems and challenges?
6. What gainful insights maybe drawn based on the findings?

II. BRIEF REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

Mobile Legends

Mobile Legends is a multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) developed, published and released in 2016 by Shanghai Moonton Technology, which is based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The game has reportedly accumulated 500 million downloads and 75 million active players where the Southeast Asia accounts the large portion of its popularity (Chua, 2019).

It has been found in the studies of (Dananjaya & Kusumastuti, 2019) Students' Perception on Online Game Mobile Legends for Vocabulary Development, that playing Mobile Legends could increase the students' vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, and translation of new found words being heard while engaging in the said game. Similarly, they exclaimed that playing ML is a great tool in developing their communication skills for they would have to communicate well with foreign players in order to understand the game's system and to achieve victory since the game relies on teamwork.

Relative to this, based on the study findings of Cationa and Brahmana (2018), character choice is influenced by self-fashion congruity, and that the relation between and among the players is deep and inseparable. This demonstrates that, even though players can select different heroes and skins for each battle from time to time, self-fashion congruency is a significant factor in making decisions.

However based on the studies conducted by several researchers, playing mobile legends poses various negative effects among players such as: harm the interaction process in the real world that makes them passive and dependent on the game Mawalia (2020); get addicted and had a lot of self-changes since starting and continuing to play and joining the community of Mobile Legends; Sunarto et al (2019); affect the mental health and academic performance among students Aviso et al (2020), and worst case scenario, it can lead to death.

Self-Learning Modules

The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines offered modular distance learning which allows learners to use self-learning modules (SLMs) in print or digital format/electronic copy, whichever is appropriate in the learner's context, as well as other learning tools such as Learner's Materials, textbooks, activity sheets, study guides, and other study materials (DepEd, 2020).

A Self-Learning Module is a set of material that is presented in a logical order and may be used to support most essential learning competencies, course aim, purpose, topic, idea, or theme Blackboard Help (n.d.). Furthermore, Hambre, (2019) defined Self-Learning Module as one of the most popular methods devised by teachers to meet the needs of students in mastering concepts in different subjects. The SLK is a tool that uses manipulative methods and thought skills to improve learning and innovation. It also helps students gain self-confidence in the subject by connecting the lesson to the real world.

Modular learning is a form of distance learning that employs the use of self-learning modules. These self-learning modules are based on the most essential learning competencies (MELCS) provided by DepEd. The modular learning approach is hanging by a thread, and it's not the teachers' or the students' fault. The plan seems to be flawed from the start. With so many students, especially in public schools, it would be hard to give each one equal and undivided attention.

Teachers also struggle to reach out to all of their students but fall short because economic and social factors stand in their way (Estrada,2021)

Meanwhile, Cariño said in a virtual press briefing that one of the major challenges experienced by the teacher, of course, would be the distance of the houses of these learners and the kind of road that they have to pass through, some have to cross rivers,". He also said there are learners who do not have parents that could help them in studying their lessons at home while there are parents who answer the SLMs for their children. Thus, to resolve these issues, the DepEd in Cagayan Valley is coordinating with local officials and law enforcers to help teachers in distributing the SLMs.

Furthermore, distribution and retrieval of SLMs will be done quarterly in coastal areas and monthly in the mainland to avoid constantly exposing teachers to the threat of COVID-19. Schools also assigned "para-teachers" to guide learners at home while teachers living in certain barangays or puroks were instructed to tutor the learners in their community. He also appealed to parents to refrain from answering the self-learning modules so their children could truly learn , Cariño in a virtual press briefing as cited in ABS-CBNNews.

Academic Performance

The academic performance of the students was significantly affected based on the revealed study findings of Cornillez Jr. (2020) relative to playing online mobile games. The poor performance of the students in their academics was linked to playing online mobile games.

Due to reduced contact hours brought by Covid-19 for learners and a lack of communication with teachers when learning/understanding challenges, students' level of academic performance is likely to suffer in classes held for both year-end and internal examinations (Sintema,2020).

In connection to the above-mentioned statement the academic performance of students when being linked to playing online mobile games such as Mobile legends and the like has significantly interpreted as less favorable (Delos Santos et al., 2020). In addition, according to Arockiyasamy (2016) the average time spent in playing online mobile game engagement per week and the history of gaming when the learners were kid is significantly correlated to their academic performance.

Meanwhile, the study of Rahayu (2020) revealed that the academic performance of the grade 11 students particularly in writing skills has significantly increased which means that the use of mobile legend as a learning medium can improve student learning outcomes in the procedure text. Similarly, the use of gamification elements indirectly affected the academic achievement due to their positive effects on engagement in the classroom (Çakıroğlu, et.al.,2017)

Study Habits

Study habit is important for students to enhance a learning style or suitable studying habits that will help them keep focused on their ultimate goal which is academics. Similarly, Atieno (2019) in her published article released in The New Times, Rwanda, teachers can help students since they are the ones who know the strengths and weaknesses of all students, Aminadhad Niyonshuti, an English teacher at Apapper Complex School, Kicukiro, adding that this can be achieved by identifying areas in a student's life that need more attention.

However, in the study findings of Mozeliuz, et.al (2016), the study habits among digital gaming natives' gaming habits absolutely were strong enough and that students' study habits have collided in many situations. This supports to the findings of Cornillez, Jr. (2020) which states that study habits of the students were greatly affected due to playing mobile games.

According to Jafari, Aghaei and Khatony (2019), the status of study habits was at moderate level for most students. Therefore, it is recommended to consider and assess students' study habits at the time of entry into university, in addition, specific training should be offered to students in order to help them learn or modify study habits to increase their academic achievements. This means that study habits among students are innate, and that it should be developed among themselves with the help of the teachers as teaching and learning is happening.

Problems Encountered

According to Fernando as cited in Sunstar Baguio (2020), "modular learning is challenging because learners are required to read and reread. This is a thing that does not appeal to many of our learners today so they will surely ask their parents or guardians to answer their modules for them. Learners understand that it is their role to work on their modules but if parents and other persons do not adhere to this value, the learners will soon ignore the rule. This might even become a practice". On the same note, he also added that, some learners may not also submit their modules in due time, so parents initiate to answer these modules for their children. Or they do the work simply because they want their children to obtain a high mark. The virtue of honesty in these cases is totally ignored. The practice of dependence on parents is promoted. Laziness is supported and lack of motivation is not being addressed.

In addition, Estrada (2020) as cited in Rappler, that there are a lot more challenges concerning modular learning, but these are the most prevalent. Both the students and the teachers are at a disadvantage. The quality of education, however hard it is to admit, may have dropped. But because we're still in the middle of a pandemic, it's not their fault. Learning is hard when done on your own. Similarly, The modular learning approach has several weak spots. If DepEd refuses to address them, both students and teachers will have an even harder time adjusting to the new normal.

In addition, there is little to no feedback regarding what they have learned and if their answers are correct. Therefore, the modular approach becomes an endless stream of paperwork for both the student and the teacher with no way of knowing its effectiveness.

The main challenges that emerged were lack of school funding in the production and delivery of modules; students struggle with self- studying, and parents' lack of knowledge to academically guide their child/children (Pe Dangle and Somaoang 2020). This means that the role of teachers is vital in the academic success of the students. In addition, as far as the distance learning is concerned, the following problems occurred in the process of the students taking the online exams, the students' level of computer literacy, the test environment being new to the students, the presentation of the questions in a computer environment and technical difficulties (Karal et.al. 2020)

Coping Mechanism

With students unable to socialize and make connections as easily as they could prior to the pandemic, many are experiencing increased feelings of isolation and depression (Sherren, 2020). Hence, students might do something to minimize stress to avoid the negative consequences of long term stress William et.al. (2017).

Corona Virus Disease outbreak has heightened the use of mobile phones across the globe. According to Watsons (2020) in an article published at statista.com, the data revealed from a global survey held in March 2020, 70 percent of responding internet users worldwide were using their

smartphones or mobile phones more as a direct result of the coronavirus outbreak. This means that most people are coping up through the use of mobile phones.

Coping techniques are the methods people employ to master, diminish, or minimize the effects of a stressful situation. Coping is multi-faceted and requires a variety of tactics, some of which are more effective than others Gnilka, Chang, and Dew, (2017). Chao (2017) distinguishes between two types of stress management: social support and dysfunctional coping strategies. People naturally seek social support, such as from their family and friends, to help them manage their stress. Focusing on and venting emotions, as well as behavioral and mental detachment, are examples of dysfunctional coping methods.

According to research by Sideridis (2018) students' most common coping mechanisms are internet browsing, sleeping and resting, watching TV shows or movies, and instant messaging. Moreover, communication through the use of social media is also another way to cope up with stress in terms of relationship problems De Guzman, et. al (2020)

Similarly, the results of the studies entitled "Stress and Coping Strategies Among Distance Education Students" conducted by Kwaah, and Essilfe (2017), showed that 'academic workload', 'high frequency of examinations', financial problems, family/marriage problems were the major causes of stress among the students. Students used multiple strategies, mainly praying/meditating, self-distracting activities such as watching TV and listening to music to cope with stress. Other important stress coping strategies were emotional and instrumental support from family, friends, and lecturers.

Synthesis: the above-mentioned authorities emphasized that Covid 19 really brought drastic changes not only in different institutions, but also in the lives of the students. The cause of being engaged with using mobile phones and other electronic devices which can relieved stress among students is the result of isolation due to community lockdown. Moreover, browsing the internet, communication using different social media platforms, and playing online games are some of the coping mechanisms of the students which could negatively affect the completion and submission of their learning modules that could lead to academic failure.

III. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This case study focused on the experiences of two selected students who were habitual Mobile Legend gamers and the impact of their addiction to their Learning Modules accomplishment and submission in the School Year 2020-2021. Furthermore, this research undertaking explored the problems and challenges experienced by the student gamers on their academic performance. The locale or setting of the study is at Binulasan, Integrated School, Binulasan, Infanta, Quezon, where the school of the respondents is situated.

IV. METHODOLOGY

In order to develop a thorough understanding of the case, a single-case study design by Yin (2014) as also used in the study of Jordan (2008), which has been cited in the study of Cadosales (2018) was utilized to reveal the untold experiences and stories of the two Junior High School students who were habitual Mobile Legend gamers and the impact of their addiction to their Learning Modules accomplishment and submission. According to (Thomas, G. 2021), a case study provides the most vivid, the most inspirational analysis that an inquiry can offer and is done across the disciplinary and methodological spectrum. Moreover, A case study is acceptable to use if a contemporary phenomenon is being investigated in the context of real-life situations, as pointed out by Yin (2014).

This kind of approach is found to be the most appropriate method since the researcher wanted to unveil the stories and experiences of the two Junior High School Mobile Legend gamers. In addition, the choice of single-case study was chosen in accordance to the criteria of Yin (2014) in which the case was employed for revelatory objectives (Jordan, 2008), as cited in the study of Cadosales (2018).

Research Setting

Binulasan Integrated School is the locale of this study. It is a public educational institution situated at Brgy. Binulasan, Infanta, Quezon with a school ID of 500028. It is located along the highway and near the coastline with about 6 km drive from the town proper. BIS has 91 nationally funded teachers, 36 Elementary teachers, 43 Junior High School Teachers, 12 Senior High School Teachers, and 5 Non-teaching personnel. The school has 1133 Elementary pupils, 1259 JHS students and 323 SHS students divided into 26 classes of ES, 26 classes of JHS, and 7 classes of SHS.

Research Participants

The research participants of this study were the two selected Junior High School students who were currently enrolled at Binulasan Integrated School. These two participants were chosen among many of those who were qualified because of the significant changes to their academic performance during the School Year 2020-2021 relevant to excessive playing of Mobile Legends. Judgmental or purposive sampling technique was utilized in this study. Judgmental sampling design is based on the judgement of the researcher as to who provides the best information to succeed for the objectives study. The person conducting the research need to focus on those people with the same opinion to have the required information and be willing of sharing it (Etikan, I., & Bala, K. 2017).

Research Instruments

The research instrument used in this study is personal unstructured interview. An unstructured interview is a type of interview that does not make use of a set of standardized questions. Here, the interviewer does not generate any specific set of standardized questions for research, rather he or she asks different questions in line with the context and purpose of the systematic investigation, (Formplus 2020). In addition, according to Burino, et al. (2017), This type of interview may often take place straight investigation or other way round. In the direct inquiry, the investigator has to collect the information through one's own involvement from the sources concerned. Conducting such kinds of interviews ensure accurate investigations. Observation will also be used as a method by the researcher to identify varied emotions and mannerisms relative to the experiences and ideas shared by the research participants.

Data Gathering Procedures and Techniques

These were the procedures employed in conducting this study for a systematic data collection and consolidation:

A letter of permission to conduct the study was forwarded to the school head of Binulasan Integrated School and to the District Supervisor. Moreover, the researcher obtained participant's parent consent for the purpose of undertaking the study. Initial interview had also been done by the researcher with the student's adviser and parents for a background check and verification of the students' academic performance.

Meanwhile, the researcher explained to the participants the overview and focus of this study which is the impact of their addiction in playing Mobile Legends to the Learning Modules accomplishment and submission.

To collect the needed inputs in this study, the researcher engaged different techniques in qualitative research. These were the structured interview, participant observation, narrative inquiry and storytelling.

1. In structured interview, two stages of interviews were performed for this study. The first stage involved an interview guide containing questions sent to the participants either through online chat or distributing it personally. The questions were answered offline for a week, providing the participants enough time despite their busy schedule. The second stage involved the researcher arranging a time with each participant to be interviewed personally to illuminate some responses gathered in the first stage. The researcher assured that following health protocols and guidelines in the midst of COVID-19 were observed. All questions and discussion were transcribed in Filipino or Tagalog.

2. Participant Observation. Another technique employed is the participant observation. As the name implies, is a way of collecting data through observation. According to (Spradley, J. 2021) participant observation is a type of research strategy that is widely used methodology in many disciplines, particularly, cultural anthropology, but also sociology, communication studies, and social psychology. In this stage, the researcher keenly observed the facial expressions, mannerisms, and the way the participants revealed their stories. Learning environment were also observed.

3. Narrative inquiry and story telling. This techniques allowed the researcher to capture the rich data within stories, including for example giving insight into feelings, beliefs, images and time. It also takes account of the relationship between individual experience and the wider social and cultural contexts. Crucially, it also involves collaborative inquiry and co-construction of meaning between participants and the researcher explain by Lumsden (2018).

Data Explication and Analysis

In this research study, all information and data gathered were processed into the two stages of explication under case study method. This is also called the thematic analysis. Thematic Analysis (TA) thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) as cited in the study of Nowell (2017) is a qualitative research method for identifying, analyzing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set

In this study, the researcher closely examined the data to identify common themes – topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly while using various approaches following six-step process such as: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes, and finally writing up Caulfield (2020).

The two stages of explication used were exploration and interpretation. According to Formplus (2020), exploration is the process of investigating a problem that has not been studied or thoroughly investigated in the past, while interpretation is the process of reviewing data through some predefined processes which will help assign some meaning to the data and arrive at a relevant conclusion. It involves taking the result of data analysis, making inferences on the relations studied, and using them to conclude.

Research Ethical Consideration

The ethical considerations were ensured throughout the study. The researcher explained to the participants the overview and focus of study. Since the participants of this study were minors, parents were given an informed consent letter and participants were asked to volunteer for the study, understanding all the rights of withdrawal and refusal. There were no data seek which could exhibit participants' direct identity like names, telephone numbers, address, area or national identification number. The anonymity of the research participants was kept with utmost confidentiality. Ethical and professional considerations were always observed while in the conduct of the study.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the study through the qualitative approach which employs single-case study design and interpretation of the gathered data regarding the experiences of the two selected Junior High School students who habitually play Mobile Legends and the impact of their addiction to their Learning Modules accomplishment and submission.

Revelation of the Case

Case Study 1-Isko

Isko is a fourteen-year-old lad who grew up in a family of educators. In fact, his mother and father are both teachers. In addition, his three uncles and an aunt are also teachers. He is the first son and first grandson in the family. This means that Isko has all the means to study since his family can afford him to send to school.

Growing up, Isko was sent to an exclusive school in Infanta when he was a preschooler. *"I remember the time when I learned to read, write, and count at the age of five. My parents are very happy. They are so proud of me"*. That was the very moment when his family concluded that he could be a great achiever in class. Isko pursued his elementary years and showed diligence in academic performance. He graduated in Elementary with special awards and with good academic performance.

Similarly, he showed constant progress when he stepped into Junior High School at Binulasan Integrated School. He was a consistent honor student in grade seven and eight. *"Isko was very studios, he was good in class. He could easily grasp the lesson"*, said his adviser in grade seven. *"He was friendly, he had a lot of friends because I guess he was approachable. He was my favorite, he gives brightness to a day whenever he smiles"*, his adviser in grade eight added.

However, everything seemed to change when he eventually stepped into Grade 9. This was the school year when the global pandemic brought drastic effect to the educational sector all over the world. Despite the threat of Covid 19, his parents decided to enroll him through printed modular distance learning. *"This learning modality is quite tough for me, studying at home is boring. I missed my classmates and friends in school"*. This was the time when Isko lose his interest in studying and started to use mobile phone. *"At first, I use my phone for research since activities in learning modules require internet to easily answer the given task. But every time the boredom strikes, I learned to use my phone for online gaming, and I was surprised only to find out that some of my classmates and friends are also playing the same online game I am into"*, said he. And that is how his story about the famous Mobile Legend game developed.

A Knight that Battles Against Boredom

Challenged by the situation he was in, Isko was able to balance the accomplishing of learning module and playing mobile legends at the same time. He had scheduled himself in answering the activities in LM in the morning and afternoon, while playing ML in the evening after dinner. In spite of his routine, Isko was able to achieve good grades in school during the first quarter of the school year 2020-2021.

However, during the second quarter and as the days went by, he got fed up of the routine and found mobile legends as more interesting than accomplishing his learning modules. *“At first, I enjoy answering my modules because the lessons are easy, but as time went on, the activities became more and more difficult, and that is the moment I stop answering my module. I could not help myself but to make myself busy playing mobile legends whenever I got bored and stressed about the modules. I also found myself socializing using ML because I can chat my classmate and friends who are also my teammates in a ranked game. I got addicted to it, I feel that I am with my friends in isolation”*. said Isko. Later, Isko has eventually found out that his self-dedication has shifted from accomplishing LM first to playing ML.

The subtheme “A Knight that Battles Against Boredom” is the term that best fit to describe how Mobile Legends saved the learners from boredom, stress, and even the difficulties in accomplishing their learning modules during the pandemic. Given the fact that this is the first time learners of today’s generation experienced lockdown, the feeling of depression and isolation instead of socialization and actual communication has been taken place.

Valir – Son of Flames

Valir, the son of flames is one of the heroes/characters in mobile legends whom Isko is fond of using as well. He is a very popular pick in ranked game in ML, very versatile, able to deal with damage, and land kills consistently. He possesses various skills like bursting fireball, searing torrent, and vengeance flame – gamingphone.com.

Valir’s characteristics and superpowers can be described as Isko’s study habits before getting addicted to playing ML. The fire symbolizes his passion, desire, and hope. The torch with a burning flame is even used by the Department of Education to represent the power and knowledge. Isko was described both by his advisers as “studious, good in class, and brightness bringer whenever he smiles”. It was even shown in his school records that he made good grades before the pandemic and getting attached to playing mobile legends. As a matter of fact, he has awarded with honors during his first consecutive years in junior high school.

However, fire does not always portray positive outcomes. When fire is not used properly, it can cause great damage and perilous destruction, worst, it may lead to death. That is when Cecilion – the Embrace of Night started to join in the battlefield.

Cecilion – Embrace of Night

Cecilion in mobile legends is always underestimated. He is less picked in a ranked game because of his weak life skill. He could easily be slain by an opponent, most especially if a player is not used to using him. He holds the following skills: bat impact, sanguine claws, and bats feast – gamingphone.com.

Cecilion’s characteristics and skills can be associated to Isko’s academic performance after getting addicted to ML. Due to stress and difficulties in answering his modules, Isko learned to embrace the night. *“I usually turn the pages of my modules in the morning and decide whether I can answer the activities or not. Some of the activities were still manageable and answerable, but most were*

difficult to accomplish. I hate being stressed so I do excuse myself whenever it is impossible for me to answer the modules. I would just play ML”.

In the middle of the second quarter, Isko’s mother was informed by his adviser regarding the late and incomplete submission of modules. *“I was stunned when I was informed by his adviser about his grades in school. He even has incomplete grades in some subjects”,* said his mother. His parents then disallowed Isko in using and playing with his mobile phone in the morning not until his modules were fully accomplished. Since his mom and dad are both busy working, they could not often supervise Isko. This was when Isko get used to playing ML at night. *“I was not able to play in the morning because my parents told me to accomplish first the module, so then I play at nighttime. It is much better because internet is faster and that no one can disturb me while playing,* Isko said.

Bats are nocturnal bird, they are awake at night, just like Isko, he is awake at night playing ML in the dark. Bats as Cecilion’s special skill often represent death in the sense of letting go of the old and bringing in the new. Hence, ironically, Isko let go of his good performance in school, and begun to take the risk of embracing the night which leads to academic failure. Thus, Isko needed someone to motivate him, someone who will support him. There she goes joining in the battle – Rafaela, The Wings of Holiness.

Rafaela – The Wings of Holiness

Rafaela, the classic support in Mobile Legends also known as Wings of Holiness is one of the Guardians of the Palace alongside Uranus and Kaja. She’s well-rounded support that heals, boosts teammates’ movement speed, and equipped with skills to damage, slow, and stun enemies. Her skills, holy healing, and holy baptism.

Since Isko has started to embrace the night playing ML, he would wake up usually by ten in the morning. There is no chance for him to finish answering all his modules, so *“I would ask my parents to help me answering the activities in the modules. Sometimes, I divide the modules to my family members, those who are teachers too.”* Isko said. These people who helped Isko in accomplishing his modules are learning warriors who support and give hope to him. They work as a team in the battlefield to make him win the game not only in ML, but also in his schooling.

However, Isko would not learn by himself if the learning warriors would continue answering his modules, plus they are also busy in printing modules and checking the outputs of the students like him. *“His tito and tita also help him in answering the activities, but most of the time, they are busy doing school-related works since they are both teachers. I would like him to learn by himself and not to just depend on us in answering his modules. He could ask questions or ask us to explain the concept, but he still chose to play ML”,* said his mom. Due to Isko’s addiction in playing ML, he has met a lot of problems and challenges and eventually lost his way, so Moskov – The Spear of Quiescence adopted him.

Moskov – Spear of Quiescence

Mobile Legends Moskov is really a powerful marksman with huge burst damage, but his biggest drawback is the lack of damage in the early and mid-game. This means that he needs his ally support to be able to fight well in the battle. Once Moskov is farmed, he is really a waking death machine who can reap any one in front of him. Moskov’s skills, spear of misery and spear of destruction can really make his rival hit badly – gamingfreak.com

Isko has met a lot of problems and challenges as he got addicted to playing mobile legends. *“I often dream of myself playing ML, sometimes it made me feel that I am in the actual battle.”* Almost

every night, he would go to his granny's house sitting alone in the dark corner, trying to avoid distractions from anyone. "I would usually hear him talking all alone by himself in the wee hours, shouting awful and foul words as if he was talking to a foe. He would not even listen to me, when I told him to stop playing and sleep, worst is he would mock to my face and sometimes talkback to me like I am of his age", his granny exclaimed. The spear of quiescence has hit him so bad that he has totally disregarded answering and submitting his learning modules.

Isko's eyebags are significantly noticeable due to lack of sleep. Since he would not get enough of sleep, he usually wakes up late in the morning. He started ignoring his learning modules and decide to play all day. "Everyone in the family would always scold me because I play ML. I would just ignore them as if I heard nothing most especially when I was in a ranked game, I needed to focus to win the battle", Isko said. He would also skip the meal with his family just to finish the game. "Isko's behavior really has changed. He would not help in doing house chores not until you allow him to play. He would not answer the modules when his phone is not with him", his mom said. His parents decided to disconnect their internet connection and confiscated his mobile phone.

This resulted him to not answer and submit his learning modules on time. As I personally interviewed Isko in their house, I see learning modules of different subjects of the consecutive weeks piled unanswered. According to him, it is also the reason why he loses his interest in answering the modules. "Whenever I see those pile of modules, it would just give me stress. I would rather play ML to entertain myself", he said. He had already envisioned that he may not make it this school year, and it is totally fine for him. "I am still young to be in grade nine, so it is not a problem", he said. As he said the previous statements, I know that there is somehow a regret, I could feel and could see it through his eyes. Isko quit schooling but promise that he would be focusing his study next school year.

I ended up the interview with this question, "If you had a chance to be one of the heroes in Mobile legends, who would that be and why? "I would choose Diggie – the timekeeper. He is not my most picked hero, but he could reverse time. If I could only turn back time, I would have answered and submit my modules on time, I would have listened to my parents, and I wouldn't have quit schooling". Lastly, I asked him, "In the next school year, what will you choose, LM o ML? Isko closed the conversation with "LM na po!"

Case Study 2-Queenie

Queenie is a fifteen-year-old lass who was raised in a simple family. She was the second eldest among the 8 siblings. Unlike Isko, Queenie grew up in a broken family. Her parents got separated when she was ten. "My father left us for his mistress". By that time, only her mother works to put food on the table and to be able to send them to school. "It is very hard to work and support my family alone. My husband left me for someone he just met while fishing in Aurora province." her mother said.

Queenie did not experience to buy delicious food during recess and lunch time, it is because, her money was just enough for her transportation expenses. "I just sit alone in the corner looking at my classmates eating banana cue, cake, candies, etc. Sometimes, my good friends give me food". Life was not easy for her.

Despite the hardships in life, Queenie still managed to finish her schooling in Elementary. She was so happy. At that time, she never thought of going to high school. She would just want to help her mother working and let her older brother to finish high school first. But her mother wanted her to study, so her mom asked her boss to take Queenie to look after the twins. To make the story short,

Queenie works to take care of the twins. She only took care of the twins when her bosses are at work. Her bosses promised her that they would support her study in high school. Some of Queenie's hard-earned money was given to her mom for expenses at home.

Queenie's boss is kind and generous. In fact, her boss bought her a smart phone during the first quarter of the new normal education. She requested a smartphone because she would be needing it for research purposes and to help her answering the activities in the module. Queenie had enough time to answer the modules in the evening. The whole house is connected to a high-speed Wi-Fi. She was also fond of chatting her friends online, most especially her boyfriend who lives in Manila.

Queenie was able to accomplish and submit the modules during the first and second quarter, according to her adviser. But suddenly has changed when she learned how to play mobile legend which was introduced by her boyfriend.

Meeting My Knight and Shining Armor in the Battlefield

Covid19 affected Queenie so much. She missed a lot of things such as meeting her friends and family, playing with her siblings, swimming at the beach, etc. *"It was stressful and boring moment of that time. I was waiting for my bf's response, but I could not get a hold of him. He messaged me back after 30 minutes. He told me that he was busy in a ranked game."* Queenie said. Her boyfriend asked her to download ML so they could play and chat there together. He also added that ML is good to kill boredom and stress.

Queenie downloaded ML and asked her bf to teach him how to play it. *"It is a nice online game. I felt like I am very powerful. I also enjoyed playing with my bf in a game, he kept on saving me when someone attacked me, I also support him when he is being attacked."* said she. Later, ML became their chatting, meeting, and dating field together with their other friends.

Queenie's perception about being powerful and being guarded always in the game made her loved the game. Just like Isko, she also plays ML when she is boring and stressed. Meanwhile, the theme "Meeting My Knight and Shining Armor in the Battlefield" best explains how she got involved in the game. This becomes their platform in meeting and chatting without any interruptions.

Mathilda – Swift Plume

Mathilda is one of the heroes in ML usually played by Queenie. She is the very first Assassin/Support hero character. The character design resemblance is of a lively tribal girl. As a support hero, she can boost teammate's movement speed. But her abilities are certainly interesting with high damage output. In this article, let's just analyze the abilities of Mathilda to see what her main role is; an Assassin or Support in Mobile Legends – gamingphone.com.

Before getting involved in ML, Queenie's plume was always used to answer the learning modules. She is as swift as Mathilda's plume in accomplishing the set of activities in the LM. She also used to be the initiator in her circle of friends to finish and submit the modules on time. *"During the first and second quarter in school, I always submit my modules though some of the answers were not totally correct"* she said. Her performance in school, though average, was significantly consistent. On the other hand, because of her being so supportive, she also took the risk in supporting her boyfriend by downloading ML and playing it with him. Soon, his Knight in Shining Armor turns into "Leomord – The Hell Knight".

Leomord – The Hell Knight

This hero was inspired by the Black Knight in Arthurian Legend. The Black Knight was the grandson of King Arthur. He is the great protector of the kingdom. No one can avoid the fate of death by Leomord's sword. His powerful skills: momentum, decimation assault, phantom steed – gamingphone.com

When Queenie started to meet Leomord – The Hell Knight, everything seemed to fall into pieces. She had skipped answering the modules. According to her adviser, she never gets and returns the module during the third quarter. This made the adviser home visit her. Upon home visitation, her adviser found the reasons behind her not accomplishing and submitting the modules. *“I will stop schooling na po”, I could not answer all the activities given to me. It's quite hard for me to work and study at the same time”,* Queenie said. *“I was really shocked when she made mention those statements, I never knew that she was not answering her modules. I often asked her if she had already accomplished them, and she would say yes!”*, her boss said. This made her boss talk to her adviser privately. According to Queenie's adviser as revealed by her boss, she often heard Queenie talking to her boyfriend over the phone inside the comfort room about “ranked games, heroes, mobile legends”. This proved the reasons behind her not accomplishing the modules.

As I got to interview Queenie, she said that she really tried to avoid playing ML because she needed to answer the activities in her learning modules, but there is like a persuasive effect that force her to play again. It happened most of the time when she found it hard to understand the concept of the lesson in LM's. Her adviser would always chat her regarding the distribution and retrieval of modules. *“Sometimes, I just made excuses, saying that I am still answering the modules, but the truth is I was no longer answering the LM's. My boss did not even know that I did not answer my modules,”* said Queenie. She also told her boss that she had to be in school every Friday to submit and get the modules, but the truth is she just went to her friend's house to play ML. She spent money in exchange of her hero's skin, to make it powerful and stronger. Queenie had only had nighttime in accomplishing her LM's, but instead, she made use of her time in playing ML. Before she got addicted in playing ML, she would wake up very early in the morning and do the house chores, but it changed when she learned to play ML.

Queenie's study habit and urge for learning can be associated to Leomord's characteristics and powers. Problems and challenges had been encountered as she was trying to accomplish her learning modules. Her momentum in accomplishing modules was decimated and soon became a phantom steed. In addition, her boyfriend's influence can also be related to Leomord's personalities, welcoming her in the dark night while enjoying killing opponents in the battlefield.

Angela – The Guard/Support Bunny Love

Angela the Lovebunny is one of the Support class heroes that's frequently used in the ranked games in Mobile Legends. Her specialty is guard and support as she's capable of healing and giving massive shield plus speed buff to a target ally-gamingphone.com.

“Everything that's done in the dark must come to light”. Upon knowing the reasons behind why Queenie stopped accomplishing her modules, the adviser had called the attention to invite Queenie, her mother, and her boss in school to talk about the matter. In a closed-door meeting, Queenie opened everything why she got involved and eventually got addicted to playing ML. She also mentioned that those numerous activities in the different LM's made here stressed and depressed which resulted here to skip answering them. She said that she had made a lot of friends in ML who supports her in the game, and that this support was not same as the support she had in answering the LM's. Conversations among them got intense, and eventually subside as Queenie, the mother, and the boss started to shed tears on their faces.

To address this problem, the adviser had to create an agreement among them. *“Queenie is a good student. I believe that she really wants to finish her schooling. She loves her mother, and she apologized to her boss already for what she did”*, her adviser exclaimed. The adviser soon called a meeting among Queenie’s subject teachers to give her considerations and allow her to accomplish and submit the unanswered LM’s. Meanwhile, her boss and her mother agreed working together to inform and guide Queenie for the accomplishment of the LM’s. In the agreement, deletion of the application Mobile Legends is stated, so Queenie immediately deleted the game ML and promise to focus in answering the activities in the modules. Some of Queenie’s subject teacher conducted an online intervention class for her, some modified the LMs to lessen the unnecessary activities.

Queenie persistently attended the online intervention class and accomplished all the activities in ML. She said that she had even forgotten about playing the Mobile Legends. *“I thought the stress I felt while answering the LM is worse than playing ML. Now I have come to realize that, when you play ML, you will be stressed when you have been defeated in a ranked game, while in answering the LM, yes, you would get stressed, but when you accomplished them all, stress turned into the feeling of success”*, Queenie said.

I ended the interview with Queenie by asking her this question, “If you had a chance to be one of the heroes in Mobile legends, who would that be and why?” *“Sir, I would love to be like Angela-The LoveBunny because just like her, I would like to have a capability of healing those students who are also addicted in playing ML and could not focus on their schooling. I would like to tell them that it’s never too late, that there’s still hope, and that they would have to call upon their parents and adviser in school for the love and support that they might probably need”*.

Synthesis of the Cases

The revealing stories of the two cases in the study were analyzed using analytic strategy and descriptive approach by Yin (2014) as used in the study of Jordan (2008), which has been cited by Cadosales (2018). In analytic strategy, the data collected were linked to the research topic to serve as a guide in the analysis of data. Themes were observed in order describe their contextual experiences to address the research questions. Using the descriptive approach, the findings of the case study were organized into different phases according to how the participants revealed their stories in playing ML and accomplishing LM’s amidst Covid19 pandemic.

The two Junior High School students, who were habitual Mobile Legend gamers, and the participants of this study revealed that the primary cause why they got involved into playing ML is due to the effect of Covid 19. Furthermore, stress, depression, feeling of isolation, and lack of communication among friends during this time of pandemic were the great factors that contributed to their addiction in playing ML and not accomplishing their LM’s. Such result was supported in the findings of (Sheren, 2020) in her study where she found that students who are unable to socialize and make connections as easily as they could prior to the pandemic may increase feelings of isolation and depression. Hence, students might do something to minimize stress to avoid the negative consequences of long-term stress (William et.al., 2017). Therefore, the use of mobile phones for online gaming made them addicted to playing mobile legends as the two participants described.

Meanwhile, both participant’s academic performances in school prior to getting addicted in Mobile Legends were remarkably outstanding and satisfactory. In fact, the first participant was an honor student for the two consecutive school years, while the second one had no failing grades. This means that they were focused and that they value the importance of study habits. However, both of their performances in school were significantly affected after getting addicted to playing Mobile

Legends. They started to ignore accomplishing the learning modules and spent their time in gaming. This resulted one of the participants to quit schooling, while the other got almost failing grades. These statements can be associated to the research findings of (Cornillez Jr., 2020) where he found that the academic performance of the students was significantly affected relative to playing online mobile game. He also made mention that the poor performance of the students in academics was linked to playing online mobile games. In addition, the academic performance of students when being linked to playing online mobile games such as Mobile legends and the like has significantly interpreted as less favorable according to (Delos Santos et. al., 2020).

This study also identified the problems and coping mechanisms of the two participants during the accomplishment of their learning modules while into playing mobile legends. Aside from the threat and stress brought about by the Covid 19. The new normal education which promotes distance learning is quite challenging. Both of them made mention that the numbers of activities in the modules are too many and too difficult which affect their interest and motivation in answering the LM's. In addition, understanding the instructions and some concepts in the learning modules are not easy and that they need to reread again the texts to absorb ideas. Due to these problems, late submission and incomplete answers in their modules were observed. Hence, they would prefer, browsing the internet, watching TV, chatting online through different social media platforms, and playing online games (Sideridis, 2018) than to stress themselves in answering the activities in all subjects. In addition, according to (Fernando, 2020) as cited in Sunstar Baguio, "modular learning is challenging because learners are required to read and reread. This is a thing that does not appeal to many of our learners today so they will surely ask their parents or guardians to answer their modules for them.

Finally, both participants portray positive mindset towards their studies in the following school year. When asked, if they had a chance to be one of the heroes in Mobile Legends, who would that be and why? Isko chose to be "Diggie", the timekeeper who could revert the time. This shows that he somehow regrets the time when he would have chosen to accomplish the LM's that to play ML. On the other hand, Queenie chose "Angela", the Lovebunny who has the capability of healing and giving support and guidance among her allies, as Queenie saw the importance of valuing the people who supported and guided her in studies. This study made them realize that LM should not be taken for granted and that playing ML has significantly affected their academic performance. Hence, the interrogative statement "ML o LM" should not be a question that a learner should choose from.

Although these findings were generated only from two case studies, yet these can provide significant data to value the importance of accomplishing students' learning modules as to improve their academic performance in times of pandemic, to inform the educational institutions regarding the numbers of activities, essential competencies, and context in the learning modules, and to be aware of the undesirable effect of playing mobile legends among learners.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the synthesis of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The revealed stories of the two cases shed light on the realities that students went through difficulties in accomplishing their learning modules due to the effect of Covid 19 which resulted them to get involved and soon be addicted to playing mobile legends.
2. This study also identified that not only male, but also female got addicted to online gaming.

3. Numerous activities in the learning modules, aside from worksheets and supplementary activities contributed to the lack of interest and motivation, and stress in accomplishing their LM's which may lead to entertaining themselves by playing mobile games.
4. The findings of the study affirmed that stress, depression, isolation, and lack of actual communication and socialization lead the two cases to venture in engaging themselves into playing mobile legends.
5. Furthermore, their academic performance when associated to excessive and unrestrained playing of mobile games has an adverse consequence.
6. Finally, the voices of the two mobile legend gamers in their revelations of their real-life experiences provided a different lens in pursuing and improving their studies amidst the threat and effect of Covid 19 pandemic.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the aforementioned findings and conclusions, the following are hereby recommended:

1. Teachers should closely and consistently monitor and inform parents and students regarding the status of module accomplishment and submission thru constant communication and or conduct home visitation at least once a week while strictly following the minimum health standards. Modification of work sheets and other supplementary activities without compromising the most essential competencies should also be done to lessen the activities in the modules. Continuous intervention program should also be conducted to those struggling students.
2. Parents should have a regular supervision of their students' daily learning tasks and SLM's accomplishment. Guidance, love, motivation and support should be observed at home.
3. Students should adhere or adopt to the Weekly Home Learning Plan provided by the teachers. Watch educational videos that will help them on the lessons that they find difficult instead of playing Mobile Legends.
4. Collaboration of Sangguniang Barangay and Kabataan (SB,SK) of each barangay should set a conducive learning environment and propose program such as Group Study or Study Buddy to promote actual communication and socialization with fellow students while learning, of course considering the number of participants and strictly following the health protocols. They could also use fund intended for education for reinforcement activity, reward/merit system for students who accomplished their learning modules on time.
5. Future researchers may replicate or continue this study in another setting such as elementary, or even college students who are also Mobile Legend gamers utilizing different methodologies. In depth explanatory mixed method approach with a greater number of participants is highly recommended.

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