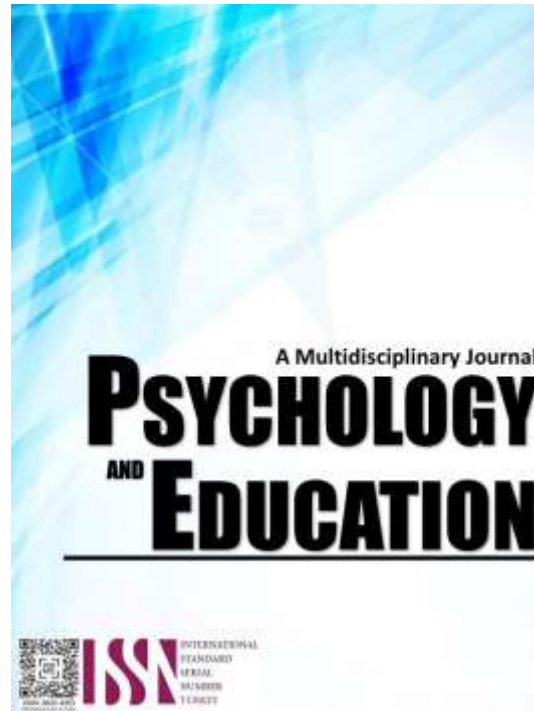


INQUIRY ON THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS HANDLING LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE DIVISION OF BIÑAN CITY



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Inquiry on the Lived Experiences of Teachers Handling Learners with Special Needs in the Division of Biñan City

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Abstract

This study aims to describe, understand and explore the lived experiences of teachers handling learners with special needs in the Division of Biñan City. The study's results will serve as the basis for designing various learning and development programs and pieces of training that would enhance the capability of teachers in dealing with learners with special needs and provide a support system to teachers in the implementation of inclusive Education. Based on the findings of the study, teachers are the core facilitators of future leaders' skills, knowledge, and values. Teachers who are motivated enough can perform their duties and responsibilities well and yield good results in the long run. They could produce excellent leaders in the present who will contribute to the country's sustainable development in the years to come. Learning about teachers' experiences and challenges in handling students with special needs will strengthen their role in the educational system. Despite the difficulties encountered by the teachers in accommodating students with special needs, they provide the best possible strategies to cater to their student's learning needs. The skills of the teachers, coupled with dedication and resiliency, help overcome the challenges they encounter in accommodating students with special needs. As teachers were challenged in instruction, preparation, and strategies, they dealt with these difficulties using coping techniques because it was challenging and stressful. Hence, teachers must be really in any circumstances that may occur during their teaching careers.

Keywords: *lived experiences, special education, public school teachers, handling learners with special needs*

Introduction

In recent years, inclusive Education has emerged as the dominant paradigm in Special Education across the globe. In the realm of Education, the majority of nations around the world are moving in this direction. The Philippines is one of those countries that included this educational reform in their official curriculum. On the other hand, implementing inclusive Education in schools across the country, whether public or private, was always challenging for educators.

There are a significant number of public and private schools in the regions of the Philippines that provide inclusive Education for their students. According to Sanchez et al. (2021), frustrations for teachers in inclusive classrooms can be caused by a lack of skills and professional competence to deliver the lesson to children with special needs effectively. Therefore, holding a degree and having Special Education (SPED) training is highly beneficial for teachers in an inclusive classroom. Unfortunately, there are teachers in some schools in Cebu City who accommodate students with special needs despite needing more training or experience in Special Education. The researchers were only aware of a few inclusive education teachers lacking a Special Education background and worked with intellectually disabled students. These educators discussed their feelings,

burnouts, and stresses associated with teaching students with special needs and regular students in the same classroom setting.

In each classroom, students with varying talents and personalities are paired together. Because each student has unique skills, some children learn faster than others. Teachers must devise and implement effective teaching tactics to satisfy each student's particular needs in the classroom. (Mahanta, 2019)

Special education teachers in the Philippines take a practical and individualized approach when instructing their disabled children. However, this is even more difficult because they must use a personalized approach while considering their students' various limitations, whether through emergency e-learning or flexible learning. Only 3 050 elementary-level special education teachers were employed nationwide in 2017–2018, according to a Department of Education draft report. (National Council on Disability Affairs, 2020)

To meet the various demands of its people, the Philippine government has been looking for and creating solutions. The administration needs to work on implementing policies and laws that support Education for all, especially in implementing SPED classes. However, Education is one of the areas that need to be improved. This is especially true in Special

Education. (Allam & Martin, 2021). Nevertheless, Special Education development has received strong support from both government and non-governmental organizations over the years. Despite efforts to implement and uphold progressive reforms for the educational system for students with disabilities, teachers appear to believe that the current condition of Special Education indicates the opposite (Gallarde et al., 2022).

The implementation of inclusive Education is crucially dependent on teachers and administrators. As key players in integrating students with disabilities into regular courses, they were crucial to effective inclusive education implementation. Somebody can only accomplish this if understanding and attitudes toward inclusive Education are practiced and fostered (Dalonos, 2016). Given all of the references, it is crucial to understand the difficulties SPED teachers encounter when managing their classes.

Moreover, this study addressed the issue of children with learning disabilities by exploring the challenges faced by SPED teachers who teach learners with learning disabilities and how they try to overcome them. Teaching learning-disabled children in Binan has been difficult. Most Binan City, primary school teachers lack special education training for students with learning difficulties. Hence, the researcher will explore lived experiences of the teachers, the challenges that exceptional education teachers experience, and the adaptive strategies they apply in dealing with the needs of their learners.

Research Questions

This study aims to describe, understand and explore the lived experiences of teachers handling learners with special needs in the Division of Biñan City. The study's results will serve as the basis for designing various learning and development programs and pieces of training that would enhance the capability of teachers in dealing with learners with special needs and provide a support system to teachers in the implementation of inclusive Education. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of the teachers handling learners with special needs in the Division of Biñan City in terms of Classroom Setting and Teaching and Learning Process?
2. What challenges do public elementary school teachers encounter in handling learners with special needs in the Division of Biñan City?
3. How did the public elementary school teachers face

the challenges of handling learners with special needs in the Division of Biñan City?

4. Based on the findings, what learning and development programs may be proposed to enhance the capability of teachers teaching learners with special needs in the Division of Biñan City?

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). It aims to give definite assessments of personal lived experiences. It delivers a record of lived experiences. It is explicitly idiographic in its obligation to examine each case's detailed experience in turn before the transition to more broad cases and claims (Smith & Osborn, 2015). Smith and Osborn believe IPA is a beneficial methodology for inspecting perplexing, equivocal, and emotionally laden themes. The method is phenomenological as it requires an intensive examination of the participants. It means to examine an individual's information. It concerns a person's translation or portrayal of an article or event rather than an effort to make an empirical statement of the thing or event itself.

This qualitative research approach provided the most selected opportunity to understand the innermost reflection of research participants' lived experiences. According to Alase (2017), IPA presents the research participants with a chance to tell their stories without distortion or prosecution. Significantly, it allows them to express themselves in a manner that is fitted to the context. The researcher decided to utilize the IPA approach to emphasize the study's primary objective: to identify the lived experiences of teachers teaching learners with special needs in the Division of Biñan City. As such, the method is phenomenological for the study to deal with the experience of the self. Through this, the researcher will be able to investigate the underlying concern of the current study by describing and interpreting the participants' lived experiences based on their own perspectives.

Research Locale

The locale of the study is the Division of Biñan City which caters to 26 public elementary schools.

Population and Sample

The participants of the study were the teachers handling learners with special needs in the Division of Binan City. Purposive sampling was used. Arikunto (2010: 183), purposive sampling means picking a sample based on a specific objective rather than level or location. A researcher chooses a sample for the study using purposive sampling. Sample purpose determines participant selection. Study requirements determine participant selection. This entails finding and choosing people who know a phenomenon well. (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). These are the inclusion criteria in the study:

1. The participants should be the teachers handling learners with special needs in the Division of Biñan City.
2. The participants are teaching in a mega school category. Based on the Enclosure No. 2 of DepEd Memorandum No. 036, s. 2019 the number of teachers in a mega school category should be 51 and above.
3. The participants should need to gain training in handling or teaching learners with special needs.

Instrumentation

The main instrument used in gathering data is a structured interview. The overall purpose of using structured interviews for data collection is to gather information from key informants with personal experiences, attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs related to the topic of interest (DeJonckheere et al., 2019).

The interview questions were generated by the researcher and were validated through content validity. The researcher did the draft checked by the adviser. Then, it was given to the validators: 2 Master teachers and 1 Education Program Supervisor.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to the interview, informed consent was given to the participants, and let them sign for the confidentiality of the information gathered. The researcher sought permission from the Chief Education Supervisor and Public Schools District Supervisor to conduct the study. After the approval, the researcher scheduled an interview following the protocols for health purposes. The interview responses were transcribed, coded, and analyzed.

Trustworthiness, also called validity in qualitative designs, is the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meaning between the participants and the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). According to Creswell (2009), validity is one of the

strengths of qualitative research. It seeks to determine whether the findings from the standpoint of the researcher, the participants, or the readers of an account are accurate.

To achieve data trustworthiness and rigor, their credibility was ensured through the consistency of the responses of the 10 participants. There was a continuous data analysis (transcribing responses and reviewing them to develop the main themes).

In terms of Dependability and Confirmability of the Research, according to Korstjens and Moser (2018) dependability refers to the consistency of the findings and checking whether the analytical process is aligned with accepted standards for a particular design. Concerning confirmability, Korstjens and Moser (2018) state that it refers to the neutrality in data interpretation and the interpretation of data untainted by the researcher's preferences and viewpoints.

Ethical Consideration

In this study, the following procedures were undertaken: The researcher sought permission from the School Principal. After permission is granted, the interview was conducted personally by the researcher with the participants.

Informed and voluntary consent ensures that people understand what it means to participate in a particular research study so they can consciously and deliberately decide whether they want to participate. Thus, the participants were assured anonymity and confidentiality and were reminded that their participation is voluntary. They were also informed that they were free to withdraw at any stage and that they could choose not to answer any questions that they did not feel comfortable with.

The study was designed and conducted in accordance with the ethical principles established by the Marinduque State College.

Results and Discussion

Several themes were formulated from various subthemes. These are summarized in the below with several excerpts from the statements of the research participants during the interview.

Lived Experiences of the Teachers Handling Learners with Special Needs in the Division of Biñan City in terms of Classroom Setting and

Teaching and Learning Process

Theme 1: "It Was Tough But A Fulfilling Battle"

Teaching in an inclusive classroom has always been challenging as it demands much preparation. This task consists of preparing varied activities, teaching materials, and assessment tools that cater to both regular and SPED students. Managing students' behavior is also a crucial responsibility of the teacher. However, amidst all the dedication and sacrifices an inclusive education teacher makes to gain an extra guarantee of students' learning, a simple student improvement is celebrated. Being able to change students' inappropriate behavior and seeing academic improvement and social skills improvement are considered fulfillment. From the central theme, sub- themes were culled out from the responses.

Table 1. *It Was Tough But A Fulfilling Battle*

	<i>Frequency</i>
Work Contentment	7
Finding the Right Spot	5

Subtheme 1.1 Work Contentment

The term "work contentment" alludes to the degree to which an individual is happy and at ease in his or her own work environment. Satisfaction with one's job is widely regarded as an essential component of creating a conducive educational setting, which immediately boosts levels of motivation and output (Rahman et al., 2016). Within this particular piece of research, the concept of "work contentment" refers to the degree to which teachers feel satisfied with the role they currently fill as special education personnel.

"Tiring and at the same time fulfilling."(P1)

"It was a difficult job. You have to have long patience and be more understanding towards the learners with special needs as well as making sure that the other learners understand the situation."(P2).

"It is very challenging but fulfilling."(P3)

"It is a big challenge to be an inclusive education teacher but I always look positive to the situation because at the end of the day the feeling of being satisfied matters on me as their teacher."(P4) *"Simple, grateful and contented."*(P6)

"It was tiring yet fulfilling at the same time. As a teacher, you have to make sure that the learner would not feel left behind, so you have to give more attention and a different activity that would suit his level. However, after some time and seeing even a little progress, there is a different sense of happiness and fulfillment."(P10)

"I can satisfy his needs and help him learn. I can make him feel he is normal and accepted in a regular class."(P13)

The responses from the participants indicated that special education teachers were happy with their jobs. With addition to this, it demonstrates a high level of contentment with both the task that they are performing and the degree of autonomy that is linked with their work roles. SPED teachers feel they have sufficient opportunities for periodic changes in their responsibilities, which makes them happy. According to Abina et al. (2022), employees will be more satisfied with their occupations if the attributes of the job and the environment in which it is performed reflect their own beliefs and the work expectations they have. If the employee's working environment is not conducive to their well-being, it will be difficult for them to feel satisfied in their job. The findings were supported by a study conducted by Strydom et al., (2017) and Abushaira (2017) in both of these studies, the researchers found that special education instructors in schools are job contented primarily due to job income, work atmosphere, and professional environment. The subsequent explanations provided by the participants provide evidence of this fact.

Subtheme 1.2 Successes and Greatest Accomplishments

According to Schwatz et al. (2019), one indicator of success for the performance of special education teachers is the increased scholastic achievement of their exceptional learners. In addition, the influence of the teacher is critical to the success of the students in their scholastic endeavors. This was also supported by Feng and Sass (2016), who wrote an article in which they stated that the knowledge and skills of teachers has a positive impact on the achievement of students.

"It is a success if he obeys you, makes and say sorry, responding to my discussion and participates like his other classmates."(P3)

"I'm happy to share that my LWD can now write his name, recognized alphabets and numbers. He can say my name and he knows his classmates."(P4)

"I'm happy to share that my LWD can now write his

name” (P5)

“Thank God because I am able to teach how to read my learner with special needs in Tagalog hopefully next in English word. You just have to be patient and persevere for them to attain the kind of learning they deserve. And of course treat them as a normal kid as well.”(P9)

“Her mother that is on the U.S. sent me an email. Telling that she was very thankful that her child was in good hands. According to her, her child telling her what was happen to her everyday and As her mother she felt that her child was enjoy and happy in our class.”(P12)

This suggests that special education teachers see inclusion as the culmination of their commitment to assisting children with special needs in getting integrated into classes with learners who are usually developing. When they are able to submit their children for inclusion, teachers of pupils who require special education are thrilled. This is because it is an indication that the students' academic performance in school has been satisfactory. When evaluating their own level of professional achievement, special education teachers take into consideration a variety of factors, one of which is the academic performance of students with special needs in their classrooms. When we talk about "school progress" in the context of this conversation, we might be referring to things like when students participated in a competition, when their reading and writing skills improved, or when the students' aggressive conduct was tamed in certain situations.. According to Vaughn and Thompson (2018), teachers of special Education regard the progress of their students as an indication of how successful they are as special education practitioners. When students who have special needs are able to participate in a variety of activities at school and, at the same time, acquire new skills through their academic studies, it helps teachers understand how important a role they play in the Education of these students. (Ford, 2018).

Challenges Do Public Elementary School Teachers Encounter in Handling Learners with Special Needs in the Division of Biñan City

Theme 2: " A Tough Roe to Hoe"

Teaching has been the noblest profession as well as the most challenging kind of job. A teacher has to perform various roles all at the same time. Being a teacher comes with many responsibilities. However, these tasks and responsibilities are somehow not teacher friendly. According to a journal called “Teachers

Matter” published on 2015, the teachers are now expected to have much broader roles, taking into account the individual development of the students, the management of learning process in the classroom, the development of the entire school as a learning community and connections with the local to global worlds. The journal also added that there are concerns about the image and status of teaching and teachers often feel that their work is underestimated. Hence, teacher’s relative salaries are declining in most countries. This theme discusses the challenges encountered by the participants. Likewise, the following sub-themes were identified from the data gathered and which are based on their own perspectives.

Table 2. *A Tough Row To Hoe*

	<i>Frequency</i>
Lack of Support and Resources	6
Reinforce Behavior	6

Subtheme 2.1 Lack of support and resources

The participants stated their thoughts and feelings as follows:

“I would say that lack of resources is the biggest challenge as well as financial support on the learner's side.”(P1)

“I must say lack of finances is the most difficult challenge because no matter how much effort the teacher would give, if the parent would not be able to support the therapy for the learner, every help that the teacher had given would somehow be put to waste.”(P2)

“I don’t have enough resources especially instructional materials that will cater the need of my special learners.”(P4)

“I don’t have enough resources that I can use in teaching .”(P5)

“Most of the time ,I need to research on the resources that I can use to provide a better instruction and learning to my student.”(P8)

“Lack of support from the parents of the learners and also with the administration.”(P14)

The teachers acknowledged that there was insufficient support and help readily available, which contributed to the challenges they faced in efficiently instructing

students who had additional requirements. There are also problems with disparity regarding the professional development programs offered at some schools that provide special education. According to Rastamilda et al. (2020), a teacher who develops instruction may experience a decline in confidence and excitement if they do not receive adequate support. According to Rastamilda et al. (2020), the administration plays a vital role in creating and executing policies that are acceptable. Keeping this in mind, support from the administration can be a form of encouragement to sped teachers, which in turn could offer students with an appropriate education.

Subtheme 2.2 Reinforce behavior

“The crying moments, because it ruins his mood. He would do nothing for the rest of the day and would want to go home early. So more of my time is focused on him to make him feel better and to regain his interest in class.”(P2)

“For me the most challenging was in times that she act a very young age. She sometimes has tantrums that she feels jealous to other student.”(P4)

“I think the tantrums, because I can make some strategies to manage it.”(P6,P8)

“Controlling his tantrums. Because if I will tell him that I will call the guard, he stays calm and promise not to hurt his classmates.”(P9)

“The sleeping moments. Though I know he will miss the lessons when he is asleep, but if it is what he needs then I just give him some time to sleep. Then resume with the lessons when he wakes up. Time and effort consuming but that's how it works for us.”(P10)

Dealing with the learners misbehavior creates even another obstacle that is frequently encountered when teaching special education. Many students who have disabilities struggle to cope with the demands of their educational environment. These children can be a challenge for their teachers in a variety of ways, including when they struggle to learn the subject or when they must cope with emotions that they find difficult to control. Every student is unique, and the strategies that are successful with one student might not be applicable to another. The student may be able to regain control of their behavior if the teacher takes the time to educate themselves about the student's impairment and works with the student to develop coping mechanisms. Additionally, rather than using the student's punishment as a form of deterrence, a system that awards the student for positive behavior may prove to be more effective. It is necessary to address inappropriate student behavior; however,

guiding the student toward right behavior and providing incentives may assist drive the kid to behave more responsibly while at school. When you're in the thick of it, teaching special education can feel like a difficult and thankless profession. Nevertheless, if one is successful in overcoming the obstacles presented by the job and assists students with disabilities in reaching their full potential and achieving their objectives, then the effort may be considered worthwhile.

Dealing with learners that exhibit challenging behavior is one of the most difficult challenges you may face in the classroom. Not only does the child disrupt with your ability to give a lesson while maintaining control, but they also interrupt the overall productivity of the class. Children that exhibit difficult behavior do not usually do so voluntarily. There is usually a cause for their behavior, or it may be their sole means of communicating with you that something is wrong. Every action is a type of communication. As a result, it is critical that you understand the causes of problematic behavior and are aware of the tactics that will assist you in dealing with it (Collier, 2018).

Public Elementary School Teachers Face the Challenges of Handling Learners with Special Needs in the Division of Biñan City

Theme 3: "Do the Tricks"

This theme shows the coping mechanisms of teachers to handle the challenges encountered in handling learners with special needs. This theme contains sub-themes perceived in the interview.

Table 3. *Do The Tricks!*

	<i>Frequency</i>
Commitment and Dedication	4
Resiliency	6

Subtheme 3.1 Commitment and Dedication

The participants reported that one of the aspects of teaching that they appreciated the most was being able to see interest in the eyes of their students and smiles on their faces whenever they were teaching. It acted as a source of inspiration for them and encouraged them to pursue their interest in educating students.

Specifically, Teacher no. 1 said;

"Our students need teachers now. As a teacher, I gave people the chance to learn. Despite the challenges in handling them, their reactions while I teach motivate me to do my best."

Teacher no. 3 shared the same sentiments;

"I become more determined to go above and beyond to guarantee that marginalized these students, such as those learners with special needs, are given the same opportunities as others. I'm inspired when I'm helping my students achieve their goals. Their bright grins and willingness to learn motivate me to work harder as a teacher."

Their devotion to teaching is strengthened by the students they have. It became one of the reasons why they cherished every single moment that they got to spend in front of their students, explaining the material.

Teacher no.4 also elaborated her reason.

"Reaching out to students encourages them to follow their aspirations. In addition to being a teacher's accomplishment, parents' gratitude for our sacrifices to reach their region and hear their issues is remarkable. I wish to visit them to help them achieve their aspirations. Recognizing the profession's flaws, teachers love teaching most.."

Teacher no. 5 proved it when he cited his reason for persistent commitment.

"No matter how far the school or how arduous the journey, Education should be inclusive. I think being a teacher goes beyond my job description."

In spite of the problems that the new normal posed, all of the teachers reported feeling a sense of fulfillment as a result of their participation in it. They found that the students' appreciation, participation, and achievements provided them with all they needed. According to Norman (2020), a strong partnership between teachers and parents leads to the development of children who have healthy study habits, improved social skills, and improved adaptability. Teaching is both a calling and a profession in its own right. These are the aspects of the teaching profession that cannot be found in any other line of work. It's like having to face the challenges and the harsh realities of learning every day, but deciding to pursue the vocation anyway when you wake up the next morning.

When viewed in a broader context, the difficulties and drawbacks associated with a career in teaching are

likely more apparent. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that children in our country are as safe as possible, as receptive to school as possible, and that they can succeed while the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing. Those teachers who continue to light the candles of their students despite the challenges that the world presents are the ones who continue to make every effort to ensure the fire is burning.

Subtheme 3.2 Resiliency

The feeling of resiliency is the second sub-theme that developed from the participants' responses. The participants felt resilient in the face of the challenges that were brought on by handling the learners with special needs as a result of the things that they had learned and as a result of the experiences that they had lived through, and the decision that they made to continue to take care of them. To be more specific, a few of the participants shared their thoughts in the following manner:

"Patience helps me become more robust; it enables me to keep going even when things are tough for a while longer." (P3)

"It assisted me in working harder despite all the challenges I have encountered in handling learners with disabilities, which in turn increased both my self-confidence and my self-esteem."(P4)

"Being resilient enables me to think clearly and make sound choices, both of which are especially important when confronted with challenging circumstances." (P6)

"I was able to overcome challenges by first accepting the reality of the situation and being resilient - I realized that things will not work if I continue to contemplate on the challenges so quickly I gathered my thoughts and resolved to use my potential and become more realistic in going over my plans for my students." (P7)

"The method in which I respond to the difficulties that arose in the classroom as a result of the pandemic has made me more resilient."(P8)

"Making an effort to remain resilient in all challenging circumstances." (P11)

According to Naidu (2021), resilience is not an unusual commodity. It is the culmination of one's zeal and determination. This form of resiliency among educational institutions and teachers can be established and enhanced by active activities in the online learning mode of instruction. The educators prevailed, even though it was challenging for them to adapt to the new

ways of instructing students in this new normal. The participants emphasized the significance of maintaining one's physical and mental health in order to successfully navigate the difficulties that are a direct result of the unique circumstances. McCarthy (2020) stressed how crucial it is to care for oneself. One of the first things that must be done is establishing boundaries that divide personal and business time. There is a chance of having a total shutdown mentally or physically when one is mentally overworked, overtired, or depleted of energy. When this occurs, no tasks will be completed because the individual is unable to function normally. On the other hand, a few of the participants in the survey were teachers, and they expressed concern about their learners. Their past experiences helped them become more resilient, and they have increased their level of concern for their kids because everyone has been adjusting to the new environment. The majority of what the teachers learned is that for them to continue to meet the problems that this configuration will still present and to provide the children with more outstanding assistance, they need to be able to help themselves.

Learning and Development Programs Proposed to Enhance the Capability of Teachers Teaching Learners with Special Needs in the Division of Biñan City

Based on the findings of the study and the analysis that was done on them, the researcher has concluded that the educational system as a whole should give full support to special education teachers in order to guarantee that learners who have special needs receive an education of the highest possible standard. From the teachers' lived experiences, how they narrate their unique stories, and how they describe their experiences, especially in handling learners with learning disabilities. To teach, and to teach at one's best in times of the new landscape of Education, has always required resilience and dedication. Teachers must become resilient to increase their tolerance for challenging work conditions, especially in delivering instructions to learners with learning disabilities. Also, teachers' dedication to students and learning is one of the most critical factors in the development of a passion for teaching. Dedicated teachers are the key factors that make great changes in students' lives.

This learning and development program serves as a guide by educators especially those teachers handling learners with special needs and learning disabilities on how to deal with and respond to the challenges in the new educational landscape and develop solid adaptive strategies to address the challenges that they may

encounter. On page 53, in Appendix A, there is a potential learning and development plan that is included. The proposed learning and development program will benefit not only the teachers in Division Biñan City to enhance the capability of teachers teaching learners with special needs but also all teachers handling learners with special needs experiencing related issues and challenges in the conducted study.

Conclusion

Teachers are the core facilitators of future leaders' skills, knowledge, and values. Teachers who are motivated enough can perform their duties and responsibilities well and yield good results in the long run. They could produce excellent leaders in the present who will contribute to the country's sustainable development in the years to come. Learning about teachers' experiences and challenges in handling students with special needs will strengthen their role in the educational system. Despite the difficulties encountered by the teachers in accommodating students with special needs, they provide the best possible strategies to cater to their student's learning needs. The skills of the teachers, coupled with dedication and resiliency, help overcome the challenges they encountered in accommodating students with special needs. As teachers were challenged in instruction, preparation, and strategies, they dealt with these difficulties using coping techniques because it was challenging and stressful. Hence, teachers must be really in any circumstances that may occur during their teaching careers.

Based on both the findings and conclusions, the following are recommended: (1) Since the study reveals the crucial responsibility of teachers, the Curriculum Planners may conduct strategic scenario analysis for the best possible and worst scenarios in handling learners with special needs. (2) Since there is insufficient of funds in Inclusive Education, DepEd Officials and Policy Makers are encouraged to allocate funds to provide all the necessary materials to cope with the new normal situation in special Education. (3) Considering the result of the study, the researcher recommended to the School heads may provide a support system that could help teachers deal with the challenges that may arise when handling learners with special needs. (4) Further, a similar study may also be conducted quantitatively so that the SPED teachers' perceptions, based on the themes that emerged in this study, can be measured numerically. Likewise, they are encouraged to investigate other factors that may



contribute to teachers' lived experiences handling learners with special needs.

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