

# **MEETING DIVERSE NEEDS: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY ON TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES IN HANDLING LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE BLENDED LEARNING MODALITY**



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## Meeting Diverse Needs: A Quantitative Study on Teachers' Experiences in Handling Learners with Special Needs in the Blended Learning Modality

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### Abstract

This study aimed to investigate teachers' experiences in handling learners with special needs. A descriptive-correlational research design was used in this study. The investigation was conducted in the Schools Division of Cotabato, where teachers were handling learners with special needs. Fifty-four (54) respondents were qualified to participate in this study. Fifteen (15) were identified for our pilot testing, and the other thirty-nine (39) were identified for the final survey. A research-made survey questionnaire through Google Forms was used in data gathering. Frequency and percentage distribution, mean and standard deviation, and ANOVA were used to treat the data. The study revealed that the teachers handling learners with special needs encountered problems such as difficulty using the blended learning modality since they needed more training and seminars about it. The study also revealed that the teachers found ways and alternatives and became resourceful in handling learners with special needs. The results also showed that parents' support plays a significant role in the education of the learners. With the teachers' experiences with learners' behavior and parents' support, the teachers could reflect on what went well and what required more work. Despite the challenges, teachers can create a supportive and engaging learning environment that meets the unique needs of learners with special needs, helping them to succeed in their educational pursuits.

**Keywords:** *teachers' experiences, blended learning, learners with special needs*

### Introduction

"Some teachers feel that if they ask for emotional help, they are a failure. But teaching is a team sport" (Gruwell, 2013). Whatever your profession, making partners (within or outside of your company) who understand what you are trying to do can "uplift you when you are down," as Gruwell put it. Special education teachers work hard to help children with learning, mental, emotional, and physical challenges to improve their learning capabilities. Lesson plans must be adjusted regularly to meet the requirements of these kids. Despite the hard work and devotion of exceptional education instructors, it can be difficult for outsiders to comprehend the enormity of their labor, presenting them with several societal challenges to address (Woods, 2021).

In the United States of America, the scarcity of special education teachers is so severe that it is the most pressing issue confronting the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (Arundel, 2023). According to data, in the Philippines, the number of students with disabilities enrolled in the School Year 2021-2022 was 93,895, a 74% decrease from the previous year's record of 360,879 (Yang, 2022). Over the past ten years, digital and online learning options have increased in popularity and usage among the general population, even though many schools have been reluctant or slow to adopt new technologies for a variety of complicated reasons varying from insufficient technologies, computing networks, and finance to general organizational resistance and opposition to change.

### Research Questions

The main objective of this study is to analyze the teachers' experiences in handling learners with special needs. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the teachers in terms of:
  - 1.1. age; and
  - 1.2. years of teaching experience?
2. What are the teachers' experiences in handling learners with special needs in terms of
  - 2.1. instruction;
  - 2.2. learners' behavior, and
  - 2.3. parents' support?
3. Is there a significant difference in the experiences of teachers in handling learners with special needs in terms of their age and years of teaching experience?

### Literature Review

#### Teaching Experiences

While other teachers grapple with the new normal, special education teachers stand out. They are confronting unprecedented hurdles in shifting both their instruction and their students' needs to home-based learning to tailor these learners' needs (Fleming, 2020). This

chapter reviews the related and cited literature related to this study that would support this academic paper. Moreover, this chapter shall provide the necessary information to strengthen this study. The idea that all kids can learn is one of the twenty-first century's central tenets of the public education system. However, this viewpoint has sometimes translated into societal perceptions of educators. Although the policy and research communities agree that teachers make rapid progress in their early careers, there is disagreement about whether or not instructors continue to learn even after gaining a substantial amount of classroom experience. That is, do educators become more successful as they accumulate experience in teaching? "Teachers show the greatest productivity gains during their first few years on the job, after which their performance tends to level off" (Teaching Experience and Teacher Effectiveness, 2023).

According to Pandya (2023), experience is the most outstanding teacher, and now it impacts a school's ability to adapt. Telling narratives from the past is a role that I have performed as an experienced teacher, even though it is not something I ever imagined for myself. I've had a hard time this year striking a balance between my desire to support our continuous and increasingly urgent need for adaptation and my school's history and culture. We all find it hard to age gracefully, but for me as a teacher, it's been more challenging than I anticipated, she added. 'Teaching is my calling,' says the trio of Filipino teachers who came to the United States to work at a school for special education (Morton, 2023). Being a special education teacher was a highly personal decision for Cruz, one of the three Filipino teachers. Cruz explains, "At first, I wanted to be a teacher for my brother, Miguel," adding that Miguel has emotional deregulation and is deaf. "I witnessed his predicament. He was not communicating with anyone due to the obstacles." Cruz struggled with the choice to leave Miguel and relocate overseas to provide for his sister and parents financially following the recent and terrible deaths of both of them from different diseases. "This is a significant choice my brother and I must make. I remind myself that it's only a short situation and that it will help us prosper," he adds. Cruz notes that his motivations have grown beyond his family after seven years of teaching. He declares, "I understand that teaching is my calling, and I want to help others even in the most difficult situations."

### Blended Learning as Instruction

Instructional strategies for primary students can be efficiently prepared and implemented via blended learning (Horn et al., 2014; Moran, 2010). Superintendents nationwide are adopting blended learning to increase student success and provide a high-quality learning environment (Bonk & Graham, 2007; Horn et al., 2014; Watson, 2008). Blended learning's primary goal is to aid instructors in helping "students to flourish in today's environment" and "making online communication simple and economical" (Horn & Staker, 2015).

Nearly two million students attend school online, including students with disabilities (According to Coy 2014). Blended learning is defined by Behjat, Yamini, and Bagher (2012) as "the integration of face-to-face classroom instruction with online activities so that learners can benefit from both e-learning and face-to-face instruction." Blended learning requires students to take responsibility for their learning through responsibility and self-motivation while providing exploration opportunities (Krishnan, 2016). The "No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)" of 2002 mandates full inclusion for students with special needs (Byrnes, 2013); blended learning gives general education teachers effective methods for incorporating computer-based supplemental activities to improve reading, math, and communication skills in their learning-disabled students.

As a result, blended instruction has the potential to bridge the gap between the teacher's physical presence and the benefits of online tasks by increasing knowledge acquisition, students' satisfaction, and connection to the instructor (Mason et al., 2010). A meta-analysis done by the Department of Education between 1996 and 2008 concluded that a blended learning environment outperforms its traditional, face-to-face classroom and online learning counterparts in achieving learning goals (Mccown, 2014).

### Future Readiness

As the world becomes more technologically advanced, improving students' 21st-century skills frequently motivates teachers to implement blended learning strategies in the classroom, enabling learners to prepare for college and careers (Common et al., 2016; Parsad & Lewis, 2008). Researchers have identified blended learning as another effective medium for supporting learning outcomes in a rapidly evolving world (Awaad, 2019). "Faculty standpoint in integrating technology into the classroom becomes highly significant as colleges and universities seek to make wider use of technology in their course and program offerings," using blended learning approaches in an educational management system is crucial for students' future success (Picciano, 2009).

### Challenges of Blended Learning

The blended learning paradigm does not always influence a teacher's self-perception of efficacy but rather how education links to students meaningfully (Veres, 2013). Effective teachers use technology-based lessons to create classrooms where students know what to do with their learning and use it thoughtfully to complete digital online tasks or face-to-face collaborative class discussions (Awaad, 2019). According to Aldalalah and Gasaymeh (2014), blended learning can be used effectively by teachers if it is designed, adequately planned, and goals are strategically implemented.

Although special education teachers recognize the benefits of online validation and blended instruction, there are challenges in implementing complementary programs. According to the Center for Online Learning and Students with Disabilities (2016), many special education teachers are not given training or equipped with the skills required to use blended learning in their classrooms. This is mainly due to teachers who prefer traditional, tried-and-true methods and resist new, innovative technology (Herold, 2016). Research

conducted by Chen (2010) found that the schoolchildren in the study needed to gain the digital literacy skills required to complete online reading strategies successfully. According to Ludlow (2014), developing a framework for students with special educational needs techniques to use in reading and understanding text to be successful in online courses is required for online success with students with special needs and learning disabilities.

### Learners' Behavior

The more teachers believe a student's behavior deviates from their educational aims, the stronger the negative feelings (Chang, 2013). Mitchell (2019) states that strong teacher self-efficacy is also related to teachers' capacity to handle challenging responsibilities, such as classroom management. Students' behavioral issues in the classroom. Teachers experience a variety of behavioral issues in their classrooms. Students showed their work. Such issues necessitate the involvement of instructors' professional expertise to assist them in implementing initiatives that support positive conduct in pupils, apply problem-solving techniques abilities, decrease aggressive behavior, and boost compliance with the regulations, which supports the development of a secure environment throughout the classroom, there is a friendly atmosphere. Understanding student conduct and its administration is a significant aspect of education for people with disabilities. It is also critical for instructors to understand that every student's conduct is the result of a distinct cause.

According to Ali (2014), disruptive behaviors, impulsivity, apathy, stereotyped actions, and tantrums are examples of inappropriate behaviors that harm students' learning and limit their social acceptance both within and outside the classroom. These behavioral issues are more prevalent in children with disabilities than in their typical counterparts, which negatively affects their academic progress and success. He added that it is also critical for exceptional education instructors to hone their skills in dealing with the many behavioral issues that kids with disabilities face in the classroom. In addition, Hambrick (2021) states that each classroom's main objective is successful teaching and student learning, emphasizing turning negative students' behaviors into good ones. This shift can occur when teachers keep students' conduct at the forefront of their instructional objectives. Instructors must understand their pupils' academic and behavioral demands, as the interplay of a lack of academic abilities and behavioral issues might complicate their learning. If a pupil is having academic challenges, when given a difficult academic task, individuals are more inclined to engage in escape behaviors. Instructors must make modifications or offer facilities such as defining clear and explicit academic and behavioral objectives for pupils, providing reinforcement for positive actions, and dealing with disruptive behaviors. As behavioral issues occur, they are addressed. In the study of Mensah et al. (2021), they investigated teachers' experiences with behavioral problems and the strategies used to mitigate these problems among students with visual impairments in Ghana, emphasizing that students suffered from a wide range of classroom-based behavioral problems that can be classified as physiological, psychological, and social (emotional issues, noncompliance, and hostility) as well as physical as well as social issues (verbal abuse, tiredness, chatting, frequent lateness, as well as harassment). The analysis also revealed that the most important aspects were the unfavorable sentiments of those who produced behavior issues with instructors, ineffective instructional techniques, family dynamics, and the classroom setting.

A study by Amsad and Müller (2020) investigated how much stress and strain teachers working in special needs schools for kids with intellectual disabilities felt as a result of specific behavioral problems of students with intellectual impairments. Instructors were asked to define a wide variety of common student community behaviors. According to the findings, behaviors that put offending students or others in danger, such as kicking, striking, biting, or discussing suicide, were judged as more stressful. Disruptive and antisocial behaviors were rated the most stressful, whereas communication disorder-related behaviors were rated the least stressful. Alajmi (2013) also sought to determine the most prevalent behavioral issues among children with intellectual impairments, as seen by their instructors. According to the findings, one of the most severe behavioral issues among children with intellectual impairments is a lack of drive. Low communication skills significantly develop challenging behavior (Hollo et al., 2014). According to Memisevic and Hadzic (2013), the majority of children with disability have delayed language development, which typically lasts into adolescence and adulthood. According to Children's Mental Health Ontario (2020), irritability among children with special needs has increased throughout the pandemic.

### Parents' Support

There is a need for instructors to communicate with parents in order for them to collaborate and exchange knowledge. Effective communication occurs when instructors and parents are honest and supportive of one another's obligations and tasks (Lee, 2013). According to Epstein (2018), parents should understand child and adolescent development to create suitable home situations that support children as students and interact with instructors to understand the kids' needs. School curricula, as well as children's limitations and talents. Such parental assistance is a powerful instrument for pupils to succeed in obtaining regardless of the scenario; students should have the competencies and information required in an educational setting. Teachers and administrators should also reach out to parents and assist them in developing confidence and competence in their children's education. Moreover, partnership programs that are broad and balanced allow all families to discover ways to be actively involved at school and in their children's education at home and in the community.

In addition, Sukys et al. (2015) confirmed that parents help their children in school. They identified their child's learning issue at home, reported it to the instructors, and were the reasons for correct evaluation and intervention. This improved the association between parental involvement and learning outcomes supporting kids' accomplishment. However, it was shown that parental participation had a favorable association with the progress of students with special needs. Nevertheless, they emphasized that the economic and

sociocultural characteristics of the parents must be examined since they may alter the level of parental participation in the beneficial link to the rehabilitation of kids with learning difficulties. According to Llego (2022), when parents and teachers collaborate, it is possible to establish a healthy learning environment for all kids. Parental engagement is parents' involvement in their children's education at home and school. This can include assisting with homework, attending school events and parent-teacher conferences, participating in decision-making processes, and communicating with the child's teacher regularly.

Moreover, Morin (2021) stated that the best school success recommendation is to ensure that parents and teachers collaborate as partners. Nonetheless, it may sometimes appear like a chalk line has been drawn down the center of your child's existence. On the home front, there are all of the facts you know about your child, the homework assistance you provide, and their social growth with siblings and friends. On the school side of the line, there are all of the facts your child's teacher knows about them, the assistance they receive with their schoolwork, and their social growth with classmates. Parental involvement in a child's education benefits teachers and parents and promotes student success. It fosters a positive relationship based on mutual respect. They can collaborate to improve student learning and performance. Parents get an understanding of the difficulties that instructors confront. It makes them feel important. This enhances teacher morale and performance, resulting in greater work satisfaction. The instructor and parent relationship allows the teacher to learn more about the pupil. It allows them to educate more individually (Positive et al., 2021).

According to Delgado (2022), Waterford.org, an organization dedicated to assisting children in succeeding through access to lifelong education, parental involvement in the educational process means that teachers and parents share the responsibility of teaching students and working together to achieve educational goals. The group recommends that instructors bring parents to frequent school meetings and activities and that parents volunteer to prioritize these goals. Blackboard statistics show that parental engagement in the educational process has been declining since 2016. Many parents think that face-to-face contact with teachers is unsuccessful. Thus, they prefer online communication techniques (through texts, emails, or social networks) over attending face-to-face conferences or instructor briefings. Parents also play an essential role in student success by assisting the teacher in establishing the blended curriculum and completing online assignments at home (Coy, 2014).

## Methodology

This section presented the study's respondents, sampling design, research instrument, data gathering procedure, locale and respondents of the study, validity and reliability of the instrument, as well as statistical tools and data treatment.

### Research Design

This study used the descriptive comparative research design as it describes more than two variables, which are the socio-demographic profile of the teachers in terms of age and years of teaching experience and the teachers' experiences in handling learners with special needs in terms of instruction, learners' behavior, and parents' support and the relationship of these variables.

### Participants

The study's respondents were public elementary teachers of the Schools Division Office of Cotabato, found in the province of North Cotabato. The study was composed of thirty-nine (39) respondents from the teachers teaching students with disabilities in these public elementary schools.

### Instruments

Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003) define a research instrument as a simple tool for gathering data pertinent to the research subject. In this study, the researcher made use of a researcher-made questionnaire. This questionnaire is a checklist type of questionnaire. All the items included were based on cited literature and studies. This questionnaire has two significant parts and uses a 5-point Frequency Likert Scale, which consists of: (1) Never, (2) Rarely, (3) Sometimes, (4) Often (5) Always.

The first part of the questionnaire contained the respondents' socio-demographic profile in terms of age and year of teaching experience. These were answered by having the respondents check the applicable information. The second part of the questionnaire dwelt on the teachers' experiences regarding instruction, learners' behavior, and parents' support. This part consists of 15 questions, answered by checking the appropriate boxes depending on the respondents' experience.

### Procedure

This research followed a systematic and orderly procedure as follows: A letter of permission to conduct this study was sent to our subject teacher, to the office of the Dean of the College of Education, after which we sought permission from the school's principal by also sending a letter as a gesture of protocol in conducting the study.

Upon receiving the approved letter from the principal, the survey questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. Before distributing the survey questionnaires, the respondents were given proper guidance and clear instructions. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents via the Google form link using Facebook Messenger. The respondents received a 100% percentage retrieval of the questionnaires, which the respondents fully accomplished.



## Statistical Treatment of Data

The data was gathered from the survey questionnaire and analyzed using a statistical program. For the problem questions, percentage distribution and frequency content percentage distribution were used to treat respondents' profiles according to age and number of years in teaching. Frequency and ranking were used to treat the variables for teachers' experiences in instruction, learners' behavior, and parents' support. We utilized weighted mean and standard deviation to describe the teacher's experiences handling learners with special needs in terms of instruction, learners' behavior, and parents' support. ANOVA, or Analysis of Variance, was utilized to test the significant difference between the teachers' experiences in handling learners with special needs when grouped according to their age and years of teaching.

## Results

This presents the results of the data gathered. The analysis and interpretation of the data presented in each table were based on the study's objectives in the form of statistical figures.

Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of seventy respondents according to age and years of teaching experience.

Table 1. *Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

<i>Profile of the Respondents</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Age		
31 – 40	8	20.5
41 – 50	17	43.6
51 and above	14	35.9
Total	39	100.0
<i>Years of Teaching Experience</i>		
4 - 7 years	6	15.4
8 - 11 years	10	25.6
12 and above years	23	59.0
Total	39	100.0

### Age of the Respondents

Table 1 shows that the most significant number ( $f=17$  or 43.6%) of the respondents are 41 to 50 years old; some ( $f=14$  or 35.9%) of them are 51 and above; and the small number ( $f=8$  or 20.5%) them are 21 to 30 years old.

### Years of Teaching experience

Table 1 shows that the most significant number ( $f=23$  or 59.0%) of the respondents are 12 and above years in the service, some ( $f=10$  or 25.6%) of them are 8 to 11 years, and the small number ( $f=6$  or 15.4%) of them are 4 to 7 years in the service.

Table 2. *Teacher's experiences in handling learners with special needs in terms of instruction*

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Description</i>
I am more comfortable in using blended learning as a medium of instruction.	3.69	0.69	Often
I attend training and seminars in using the blended learning modality.	3.03	0.87	Sometimes
I am confident that I can deliver my lessons well in the blended learning modality.	3.82	0.64	Often
I find blended learning effective in teaching learners with special needs.	3.59	0.91	Often
There are improvements in the academic performance of learners with special needs in the blended learning modality.	3.41	0.79	Often
I adjust my teaching strategies when using a blended learning approach for learners with special needs.	4.10	0.72	Often
I find blended learning helpful in accommodating different types of special needs among my learners.	3.67	0.74	Often
Blended learning is an effective medium for supporting learning outcomes in a rapidly evolving world.	3.64	0.74	Often
Blended learning makes teaching more interesting and reduces classroom management problems.	3.82	0.79	Often
Blended instruction has the potential to bridge the gap between the teacher's physical presence and the benefits of online tasks by increasing knowledge acquisition, students' satisfaction, and connection to the instructor.	3.56	0.75	Often
Overall Mean/SD	3.63	0.76	Often

Legend: 1.00 to 1.80 Never; 1.81 to 2.60 Rarely; 2.61 to 3.40 Sometimes; 3.41 to 4.20 Often 4.21 to 5.00 Always

The findings show that the ten items have an overall mean of 3.63 and are described as often under Teacher's Experiences in Handling Learners with Special Needs in terms of Instructions indicated in the questionnaire. Item number 6, "I adjust my teaching strategies when using a blended learning approach for learners with special needs," got the highest mean of 4.10 and was described as often. The next highest mean was followed by item 9, which stated that blended learning makes teaching more exciting and reduces classroom management problems, with a mean of 3.82. Meanwhile, item 2, "I attend training and seminars in using the blended learning modality," received the lowest mean of 3.03. Followed by item number 5, there are improvements in the academic performance of learners with special needs in the blended learning modality with a mean of 3.41.

Table 3. *Teacher's experiences in handling learners with special needs in terms of learners' behavior*

	Mean	SD	Description
I can manage my learners who are hostile.	3.77	0.71	Often
Their behavioral issues do not affect their academic performance.	3.05	1.12	Often
I am patient to deal with the behavioral issues of these learners with special needs.	4.26	0.64	Always
I am implementing an initiative that supports positive conduct among my learners.	4.15	0.59	Often
I understand my learners' academic and behavioral demands as well as their abilities and behavioral issues.	4.31	0.66	Always
I am able to manage my learners who are always chatting.	4.26	0.68	Always
I am able to manage my learners who has emotional issues.	4.18	0.72	Often
I am able to communicate with my learners who are antisocial.	4.28	0.69	Always
I feel stressed when my learners show offending behaviors like kicking, biting, and striking.	3.46	0.97	Often
Children with special needs are more irritable.	3.56	1.05	Often
Overall	3.93	0.78	Often

Legend: 1.00 to 1.80 Never; 1.81 to 2.60 Rarely; 2.61 to 3.40 Sometimes; 3.41 to 4.20 Often 4.21 to 5.00 Always

The data revealed that of the ten items with an overall mean of 3.93 and described as often indicated in the questionnaire, item number 5, "I understand my learners' academic and behavioral demands as well as their abilities and behavioral issues," has the highest mean of 4.31 and was interpreted as always. Following item 8, "I can communicate with my learners who are antisocial," received a mean of 4.28. Meanwhile, item number 2, their behavioral issues do not affect their academic performance, received the lowest mean of 3.05 and was followed by item number 9, "I feel stressed when my learners show offending behaviors like kicking, biting, and striking," with a mean of 3.46.

Table 4. *Teacher's experiences in handling learners with special needs in terms of parents' support*

	Mean	SD	Description
1. I collaborate effectively with parents or guardians of learners with special needs.	4.36	0.71	Always
2. I keep a good relationship with my learners' parents.	4.69	0.57	Always
3. Parental involvement increased my learners' confidence and competence.	4.51	0.64	Always
4. My learners' parents understand the difficulties I face.	4.23	0.74	Always
5. I provide resources to help parents support their children's learning.	4.18	0.72	Often
6. It makes me feel important if my learners' parents get an understanding of the difficulties that I confront.	4.46	0.60	Always
7. Parental involvement allows me to learn more about my pupil.	4.38	0.59	Always
8. Parents are able to access resources to help them support their child's learning at home.	3.82	0.64	Often
9. I reach out to parents and assist them in developing confidence and competence in their children's education	4.28	0.56	Always
10. Parents are actively involved at school and in their children's education at home and in the community.	4.05	0.65	Often
Overall	4.30	0.64	Always

Legend: 1.00 to 1.80 Never; 1.81 to 2.60 Rarely; 2.61 to 3.40 Sometimes; 3.41 to 4.20 Often 4.21 to 5.00 Always

The data revealed that of the ten items with an overall mean of 4.30 and described as always indicated in the questionnaire, item number 2, "I keep a good relationship with my learners' parents," received the highest mean of 4.69 and interpreted as always. Following item number 3, parental involvement increased my learners' confidence and competence with a mean of 4.51. Meanwhile, item number 8, parents can access resources to help them support their child's learning at home, received the lowest mean, 3.82.

Table 5. *The significant difference in the experiences of the teachers in handling learners with special needs if grouped according to age*

Age	N	Mean	SD	P-value	Interpretation	Decision
31 - 40	8	3.95	0.33	0.989	NS	Do not reject H <sub>0</sub>
41 - 50	17	3.95	0.42			
51 and above	14	3.96	0.32			

NS = Not significant at .05 level (2 - tailed) S = Significant at .05 level (2- tailed)

It means there is no significant difference between the teachers' experiences in handling learners with special needs and their age. The p-value is 0.989, which is greater than the level of significance of 0.05. Do not reject the H<sub>0</sub> or null hypothesis.

Table 6. *The significant difference in the experiences of the teachers in handling learners with special needs if grouped according to years of teaching experience*

Years of Teaching Experience	N	Mean	SD	P-value	Interpretation	Decision
4 - 7 years	6	4.06	0.29	0.433	NS	Do not reject H <sub>0</sub>
8 - 11 years	10	4.04	0.29			
12 and above years	23	3.89	0.40			

NS = Not significant at .05 level (2 - tailed) S = Significant at .05 level (2- tailed)

It means there is no significant difference between the teachers' experiences in handling learners with special needs and the years of teaching. The p-value is 0.382, which is greater than the level of significance of 0.05. Do not reject the H01 or null hypothesis.

## Discussion

This section discusses the present findings of the investigation based on the problem statement of the study.

### Teacher's Experiences in Handling Learners with Special Needs in terms of Instructions

The findings show that the items under Teacher's Experiences in Handling Learners with Special Needs in terms of Instructions indicated in the questionnaire state that "I adjust my teaching strategies when using a blended learning approach for learners with special needs" got the highest mean and described as often. The highest teacher's experiences handling learners with special needs were followed by items stating that blended learning makes teaching more exciting and reduces classroom management problems. This implies that respondents often adjust their teaching strategies when necessary to teach learners with special needs. This means that teachers are more comfortable using blended learning to teach learners with special needs. The findings of this study agree with the study of The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2002, which mandates full inclusion for students with special needs (Byrnes, 2013); blended learning gives general education teachers effective methods for incorporating computer-based supplemental activities to improve reading, math, and communication skills in their learning-disabled students. The findings in item number 9 are supported by (Horn et al., 2014; Moran, 2010). Instructional strategies for primary students can be efficiently prepared and implemented via blended learning. Superintendents nationwide are adopting blended learning to increase student success and provide a high-quality learning environment (Bonk & Graham, 2007; Horn et al., 2014; Watson, 2008). Blended learning's primary goal is to aid instructors in helping "students to flourish in today's environment" and "making online communication simple and economical" (Horn & Staker, 2015).

On the other hand, the item states that "I attended training and seminars using the blended learning modality" received the lowest mean. The following item states that there are improvements in the academic performance of learners with special needs in the blended learning modality. This finding supports that, according to the Center for Online Learning and Students with Disabilities (2016), many special education teachers are not given training or equipped with the skills required to use blended learning in their classrooms. This implies that there are teachers whose students with special needs need to be fully equipped due to a lack of training and seminars.

### Teacher's Experiences in Handling Students with Special Needs in terms of Learners' Behavior

The data revealed that of the items indicated in the questionnaire, the item states that "I understand my learners' academic and behavioral demands, as well as their abilities and behavioral issues" received the highest mean and interpreted as always., followed by the item states that "I can communicate with my learners who are antisocial." Meanwhile, the item stating that their behavioral issues do not affect their academic performance received the lowest mean. It was followed by the item stating, "I feel stressed when my learners show offending behaviors like kicking, biting, and striking." According to Ali (2014), disruptive behaviors, impulsivity, apathy, stereotyped actions, and tantrums are examples of inappropriate behaviors that harm students' learning and limit their social acceptance both within and outside the classroom. These behavioral issues are more prevalent in children with special needs than in their typical counterparts, which negatively affects their academic progress and success.

### Teachers' Experiences in Handling Learners with Special Needs in terms of Parents' Support

The data revealed that of the items indicated in the questionnaire, the item states that "I keep a good relationship with my learners' parents" received the highest mean and was interpreted as always. This implies that teachers handling learners with special needs maintain or have a good relationship with their learners' parents to monitor or help them with things they do not know about the learners. According to Lleo (2022), when parents and teachers collaborate, it is possible to establish a healthy learning environment for all kids. The item states that parental involvement increased my learners' confidence and competence. This finding supports that according to Delgado (2022), Waterford.org, an organization dedicated to assisting children in succeeding through access to lifelong education, parental involvement in the educational process means that teachers and parents share the responsibility of teaching students and working together to achieve educational goals. The group recommends that instructors bring parents to frequent school meetings and activities and that parents volunteer to prioritize these goals.

### Significant Difference in the Experiences of the Teachers in Handling Learners with Special Needs if Grouped According to Years of Teaching Experience

Based on the result, the teachers' experiences in handling learners with special needs and the years of teaching are the same. The p-value is 0.382, which is greater than the level of significance of 0.05. Accept the H01 or null hypothesis.

## Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, the researchers concluded that teaching learners with special needs in a blended learning modality requires a thoughtful and individualized approach. Teachers should be flexible, utilize technology, communicate regularly, incorporate multi-sensory learning, provide clear instructions and feedback, and collaborate with special education professionals to ensure that



learners with special needs receive the support they need to succeed. By taking these steps, teachers can create an inclusive, engaging, and effective learning environment for all learners, regardless of their individual abilities and challenges. Ultimately, a successful blended learning experience for learners with special needs requires a dedicated, patient, and willing teacher to go the extra mile to ensure that each student is given the opportunity to reach their full potential. The teacher's responsibility was to reflect on their own and the students' experiences; with the experiences of teachers' experiences in instruction, learners' behavior, and parents' support, the teachers could reflect and think about what went well and what required more work. The study recommended that teachers handling students with special needs should also be given training and exposed to various relevant workshops to be equipped with the necessary skills to teach those kinds of learners. The teachers, the school, parents, the community, and the government should work together to help and assist the learners with special needs and address ways to improve their level of education.

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