RECEIVING TEACHERS' PREPAREDNESS IN HANDLING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

This research assessed the receiving teachers' level of preparedness in handling students with special educational needs in the Junior High School of Talisay City National High School, DepEd Talisay City Division during the School Year 2021-2022. The design used in this study is the descriptive-correlational method of research for teachers and of the aforementioned school. Study population was comprised of one hundred fourteen teachers of the school. The instruments used for the study was adopted from the study of Aldabas (2020). It is used to obtain the teachers' profile as to their age, gender, civil status, years in service, performance rating, highest educational attainment, type of classroom, number of years with students with special needs mainstreamed in class, disability type of students taught, and appropriate trainings attended. The teachers perceived level of preparedness in terms of collaboration and teaming skills, use effective instructional methods, implementation of inclusion, skills for planning and implementation of behavioral interventions, access to general education curriculum, and skills for transition planning are tackled. The data revealed that the teacher's perceived level of preparedness in the abovementioned areas is at moderately prepared with eight out of thirty-one aspects perceived by the teachers as not sure. Data revealed that there is significant difference between the teachers' profile and disability type of the students and their perceived level of preparedness to handle students with special educational needs. Hence, it is recommended that the capacity building centered around awareness raising, coaching process, and identifying thematic issues be adopted.

Keywords: Special Education, LSENs, Inclusive Education, descriptive-correlational method, Talisay,Cebu.

INTRODUCTION

Rationale of the Study

For many years, the inclusion of kids with special needs in general education classrooms has been a hot matter of debate. Inclusion education emphasizes that all children, regardless of their skills and shortcomings, are a member of the school community. Students with impairments do not need to be separated from their peers. They are entitled to complete access to all materials and social interactions available in a general education classroom. Inclusion is a prominent subject in today's culture since it focuses on offering high-quality education to all students while taking into consideration their unique needs. Inclusive education occurs when students with and without disabilities attend the same classrooms and collaborate to achieve appropriate achievements and social inclusion.

Inclusive education is based on the belief that each student is unique and should be appreciated regardless of whatever issues, impairments, or disorders they may have. Students with disabilities are entitled to the same chances for growth and self-realization as other students. Just like any other children or learners, they too deserve the basic and unalienable right to basic quality education. For students with significant impairments, this method necessitates a greater emphasis on the paradigm. Students with disabilities can socialize and avoid being discriminated against or constrained because of their special needs through inclusive education (Roger & Johnson, 2018).

Rightfully so, these students should get the same access to all resources and social interactions as other students in a typical classroom. The ultimate goal of many schools is to build a classroom with as few constraints as possible in order to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs.

Talisay City National High School, as one of the few Inclusive Learning Resource Centers in Talisay City per RA 11560, has produced considerable number of learners to date and have mainstreamed students into regular Junior High School classrooms since the push for inclusive education began. Retrospectively, the school has started its SPED program during school year 2005 – 2006. It started humbly with a SPED teacher and few students with varying disabilities. An inclusive SPED room was then provided by the teacher and students with equipment and facility that were purchased using the SPED funds. When inclusion was rolled out, the school participated as well as the rest of the schools with SPED programs like Tabunoc Central Elementary School and Talisay City Central Elementary School. Majority of the students from these schools continue with their basic education in Talisay City National School.

As one of the teachers who experienced having students with special needs in her class, she could not help but feel how onerous the task gets. Further, she noticed that many receiving teachers feel flabbergasted specially during their first time handling these types of learners. While it is understood that ultimate objective is to construct a classroom with the fewest restrictions possible in order to satisfy the needs of all kids, including those with special needs. Many receiving teachers, on the other hand, have never been instructed how to educate students with special educational needs. Teachers should be given the chance to learn more about how to establish inclusive classrooms that work. As a result, the goal of this research is to examine the many teaching techniques that teachers might employ in order to create a successful inclusion classroom. Hence, this study is conducted for the purpose of knowing the teachers' perceived preparedness to teach students with special needs in their classrooms.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This study is anchored on the Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Learning, Zone of Proximal Development, and Scaccia, Cook, Lamont, Wandersman, Castellow, Katz, and Beidas' $R=MC^2$ (readiness equals motivation times general capacity times innovation-specific capacity). Likely so, the legal bases that this study is anchored on are Republic Act 7277 or the Magna Carta for Persons with Disability, Republic Act 11650 or the Act Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services of Education Programs and Services for Learners with Disabilities in the K to 12 Basic Education

Program, Republic Act 9155 or the Governance of Basic Education Act and DepEd Order Number 044, s. 2021 or the Policy Guidelines on the Provision of Education Programs and Services for Learners with Disabilities in the K to 12 Basic Education Program.
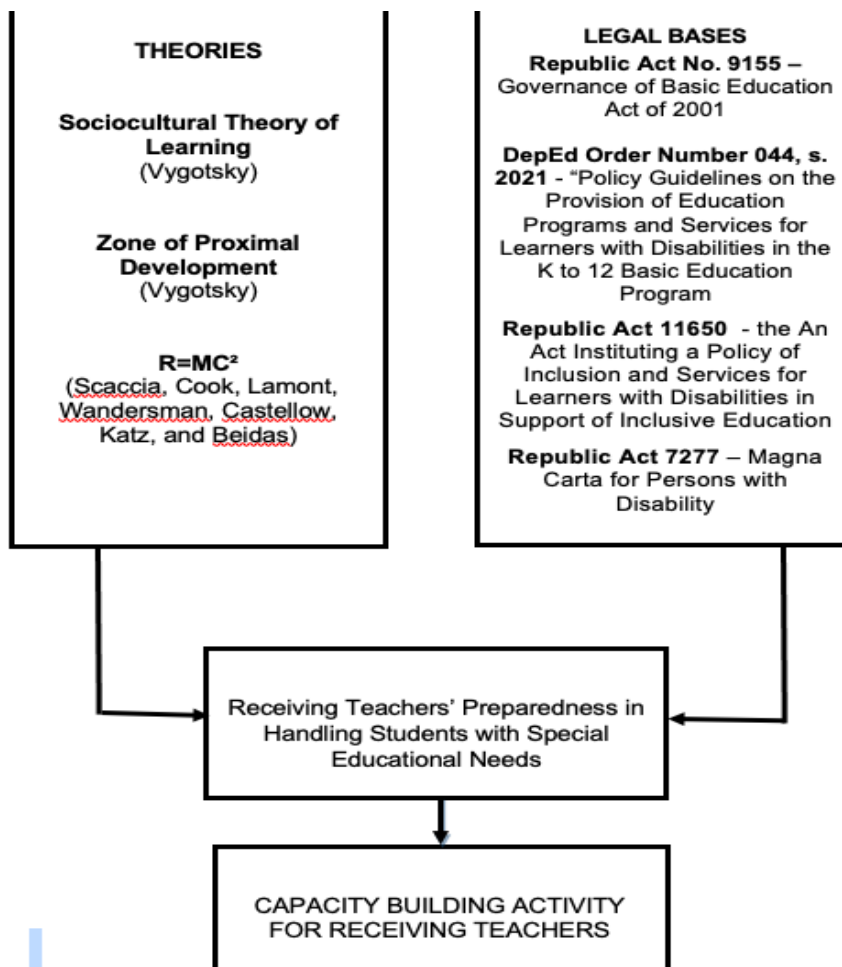
THEORIES

Sociocultural Theory of Learning
(Vygotsky)

Zone of Proximal Development
(Vygotsky)

R=MC²
(Scaccia, Cook, Lamont, Wandersman, Castellow, Katz, and Beidas)

LEGAL BASES
Republic Act No. 9155 – Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001

DepEd Order Number 044, s. 2021 - "Policy Guidelines on the Provision of Education Programs and Services for Learners with Disabilities in the K to 12 Basic Education Program

Republic Act 11650 - the An Act Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education

Republic Act 7277 – Magna Carta for Persons with Disability

Receiving Teachers' Preparedness in Handling Students with Special Educational Needs

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITY FOR RECEIVING TEACHERS

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of the Study

Sociocultural Theory of Learning. Several educationalists, academics, and school administrators believe that Vygotsky's (1896-1934) social constructivist learning theory is critical to improving instruction, changing classrooms, and redeveloping schools. Vygotsky's (1962) and subsequently Wertsch's (1991). Sociocultural theory has substantial consequences for teaching, schooling, and education. The individual learner must be analyzed within a specific social and cultural framework, according to this approach. Higher order functions may only be learned and nurtured through social contact, and such situatedness is required for their growth. As a result, social engagement is critical for cognitive growth. In addition, unlike previous approach regards education as a continuous process rather than a finished result.

Drew (2021) explained that learning happens via social interactions between individuals, according to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning. It is currently one of the most popular educational philosophies. It thinks that social engagement is the initial step in learning, followed by individual internalization of social actions. Students and teachers establish relationships in the classroom to assist students learn, according to sociocultural theory. Social engagement and active involvement in learning tasks are facilitated by the connections. Students learn through observing, listening, and discussing their work.

Bates (2019, pp. 19) explains sociocultural theory, also known as social constructivism or socioculturalism, by claiming that "knowledge and interactions are built via social encounters with family, friends, instructors, and peers."

We learn via social interactions, which is the most crucial principle in the sociocultural theory of education. This notion differs from Piaget's 'cognitive-constructivist' views in a crucial way. Children, according to Piaget, are "lone scientists" who learn by investigating their surroundings and absorbing knowledge. Sociocultural theorists, on the other hand, such as Lev Vygotsky, believe that learning is profoundly affected by interactions between children and the adults in their surroundings. This begins in early childhood and continues throughout adulthood (Drew, 2021). In other words, in sociocultural theory, the teacher or parent plays a larger role than in any other educational theory.

Interpretations of Vygotsky's and other sociocultural researchers' work have resulted in a wide range of viewpoints and innovative educational techniques. Sociocultural theory and similar techniques are now generally acknowledged and accepted in psychology and education, and are particularly respected in the field of applied linguistics due to the underlying premise that language and mind are linked. In addition, sociocultural theory is gaining traction in the field of instructional design. Vygotsky's ideas on sociocultural learning are often associated with three themes: (1) human development and learning are rooted in social, historical, and cultural interactions; (2) the use of psychological tools, particularly language, mediates the development of higher mental functions; and (3) learning takes place within the Zone of Proximal Development. these concepts are inextricably linked, nonhierarchical, and interconnected (Polly et. al., 2017).

Learning is a social process, according to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of human learning, and human intelligence emerges from society or culture. The central concept of Vygotsky's theoretical framework is that social contact is crucial to cognitive growth. Everything, according to Vygotsky, is taught on two levels. Interaction with others comes first, followed by integration into the individual's mental framework.

Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals (Vygotsky, 1978, pp.57).

The concept that cognitive growth is restricted to a "zone of proximal development" is a second feature of Vygotsky's theory (ZPD). This "zone" of discovery is one in which the learner is cognitively competent but requires assistance and social contact to properly flourish (Briner, 1999). A teacher or a more experienced peer can provide "scaffolding" for the learner's increasing comprehension of knowledge domains or the development of complicated abilities. Collaborative learning, dialogue, modeling, and scaffolding are all ways for supporting and developing learners' intellectual knowledge and abilities.

The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978, pp.86).

Zone of Proximal Development. A crucial proposition of this theory is Vygotsky's idea of the zone of proximal development, which refers to a degree of development obtained when learners participate in social behavior. The notion of the Zone of Proximal Development is perhaps the most extensively used sociocultural concept in the design of learning experiences (ZPD). "The gap between the actual developmental level as measured by autonomous issue solving and the degree of prospective development as indicated by problem solving under adult direction or in partnership with more capable peers," Vygotsky (1978) defined ZPD (pp. 86). He felt that learning should be suited to an individual's developmental level, and that distinguishing between actual and prospective levels of development is crucial to comprehend the relationship between development and learning. When the focus is on processes rather than products, learning and growth may be

better understood. He thought the ZPD was a better and more dynamic indication of cognitive growth because it represents what the learner is learning rather than just assessing what the learner can do independently, which reflects what has previously been taught (Vygotsky, 1978).

Polly et. al. (2017) opined that according to Vygotsky, fruitful interactions orient teaching toward the ZPD, and providing instruction and direction inside the ZPD helps a learner to build abilities and techniques that they may later use independently in other settings. This emphasizes how important instructional decisions about the types and quality of interactions are in creating effective learning experiences.

Whether these exchanges are with a more experienced person or another student with similar skills, there should always be a degree of intersubjectivity, or shared comprehension of the job. The partners should have a feeling of shared power over the process and work together to co-construct understanding. It's vital to remember that ZPD encompasses "any circumstance in which any action leads persons beyond their existing level of functioning." The concept of instructional scaffolding is linked to the concept of ZPD. Scaffolding is a series of tools or behaviors that assist a learner in completing a task successfully in ZPD. Scaffoldings usually have a reciprocal and dynamic character of engagement, in which both the learner and the scaffold provider influence and alter their behavior as they collaborate.

The expert stimulates and directs the learner by offering just enough assistance, modeling, and emphasizing key aspects of the job, as well as reviewing and changing supports as required. Furthermore, incorporating chances for reflection into the learning process promotes more complex, meaningful, and long-lasting learning. Scaffolds are not always given by persons in digital learning experiences, but they may be integrated in the experience.

Concepts like ZPD and scaffolding reveal a fundamentally different perspective of the instructor as a facilitator of learning rather than a source of information. Concepts like ZPD and scaffolding reveal a fundamentally different perspective of the instructor as a facilitator of learning rather than a source of information. When combined with effective pedagogical practices, this shift in roles promotes individualized, differentiated, and learner-centered types of instruction, and it has the potential to be a powerful alternative for reforming current educational systems and creating environments where many different individuals develop deep understanding of important subjects (Watson & Reigeluth, 2016).

Polly et. al. (2017) expresses that sociocultural theory provides a number of well-known advantages. For starters, it stresses every human activity's larger social, cultural, and historical context. Individuals are not seen as separate entities; rather, a fuller perspective is offered, concentrating on the fluid border between self and others. Second, sociocultural theory takes individual and cross-cultural differences into account. Unlike many other universalist theories, sociocultural theory recognizes both individual differences within a culture and individual differences between cultures. Finally, by combining the concepts of learning and development, sociocultural theory makes a significant contribution to our theoretical understanding of cognitive development. Furthermore, nothing is known about whether a child's zone is comparable across learning domains, with various individuals, or whether the zone's size varies over time. There isn't even a standard metric scale for measuring ZPD.

Polly et. al. (2017) added that the sociocultural perspective has its own set of constraints. The first constraint stems from Vygotsky's untimely demise, as many of his theories remained undeveloped at the time of his death. Furthermore, due to political considerations and translation challenges, his work was virtually ignored until recently. The ZPD's ambiguity is the second main problem. Individuals might have large or narrow zones, which can be beneficial or harmful depending on the situation. Vygotsky's most important contributions are the concept of social roots of learning, the link of language and mind, and the Zone of Proximal Development. However, practical applications of sociocultural theory that emphasize creating learner-centered instructional environments that foster learning by discovery, inquiry, active problem solving, and critical thinking through collaboration with experts and peers in communities of learners and encourage self-directed

lifelong learning habits are also significant. This strategy includes presenting realistic and cognitively hard tasks in the context of collaborative activities, scaffolding learners' efforts by offering a framework and help to complete complicated tasks, and providing chances for authentic and dynamic evaluation. Sociocultural concepts may be used to develop education for learners of all ages and ability levels across the curriculum, and they can be effectively incorporated utilizing a number of technology and learning settings. Educators and instructional designers still face a challenge in moving away from efficient, systemic approaches to teaching and instructional design and toward a focus on individual learners and effective pedagogical practices in order to develop empowered learners capable of successfully navigating the rapidly changing information age. It is up to us to professionally use technology's unique affordances in order to encourage new ways of educating and supporting deep, meaningful, and self-directed learning. Our efforts will be greatly aided if we base our practices on sociocultural theory.

It is critical to build learning teams with specified responsibilities, develop genuine situations, and scaffold learners when using social views of learning for K-12 students and adults. Positive interdependence, individual accountability, equal participation, and simultaneous interaction are the principles of collaborative learning that Kagan (1999) devised the abbreviation PIES to symbolize. Positive interdependence refers to the notion that the group's potential work output is larger than if each member in the group worked alone. Individual responsibility refers to the fact that each student is responsible for a portion of the task. Equal participation means that everyone does their fair share of the labor. Simultaneous interaction refers to the notion of learners working on the project together at the same time, as opposed to a jigsaw method in which learners work independently on distinct parts that are combined at the end. The activities that instructional designers provide for adult social learning experiences must be complicated enough to generate good interdependence and keep people accountable. Individuals from various backgrounds may be grouped together in this way. An instructional designer may create learning exercises in which teams included a mortgage consultant, a retirement consultant, a manager, and a teller if bank personnel were being trained on new financial principles. The scenarios throughout the course would differ, requiring each participant's knowledge and background to be utilized in debating and addressing the problem. Projects, real assignments, and other activities rooted in settings should be part of K-12 instructors' collaborative learning experiences for students. It is proposed that students form learning teams or groups in which they have particular duties to enhance cooperation. In an elementary school classroom, for example, a teacher could divide students into groups and assign the following roles: Leader/facilitator: The person in charge of keeping the group organized and on target. Recorder: A person who keeps track of and organizes notes, facts, and information. Timekeeper: Someone who keeps track of time and ensures that tasks are performed on time. Spokesperson: The person in responsibility of completing the project and presenting it.

For both K-12 teachers and instructional designers, the purposeful formation of learning teams is critical in promoting social learning experiences. Both K-12 instructors and instructional designers must construct learning activities that provide scaffolds and supports for learners in social learning situations. Without considerable direct teaching and presentation, teachers or learning facilitators facilitate social learning situations. This does not imply that the instructor is absent or in the corner; rather, they should use tactics to enhance these learning experiences, such as asking questions, presenting examples, or encouraging student cooperation.

These theories by Vygotsky are imperative in employing differentiated instructions. According to Strogilos (2018) quoting the works of Tomlinson (2003) Differentiated instruction is one of the most important components of a successful education for all students, including those with impairments. Differentiation is connected with responsive education rather than "one size fits all" instruction. As a result, when teachers differentiate, they "proactively plan varied approaches to what students need to learn, how they will learn it, and/or how they will demonstrate what they have learned in order to increase the likelihood that each student will learn as much as he or she can, as effectively as possible."

Despite various problems in the delivery of individualized instruction documented by research, it is nevertheless regarded a successful and valuable technique in the teaching of all kids. Strogilos (2018) wrapped up his study by highlighting some key prerequisites for the integration of differentiated instruction, including (a) policymakers including differentiated instruction in National Curriculum-Policy; (b) universities including relevant courses on teachers' pre-service and in-service training; and (c) schools encouraging the development of differentiated instruction as the primary approach/practice for the inclusion of students with disabilities.

$R=MC^2$ (readiness equals motivation times general capacity times innovation-specific capacity). Further, because education, regardless that of normal children or those with special needs, require the full, unified, and collaborative effort of the school in general. Hence, it is imperative that school heads give utmost support to his teachers with students with special needs mainstreamed in their classes. This unified support may come as another feature of professional development that will enhance motivation among teachers through the heuristic "$R=MC^2$ of Scaccia et. Al. (2015). This proposal aims to contribute to the implementation science literature by arguing that, in addition to general and innovation-specific competence, schools that want to achieve their targeted results must have sufficient motivation to implement innovations effectively. General capacity, innovation-specific capacity, and motivation are the three key components of preparedness, according to this idea. The heuristic "$R=MC^2$" (readiness equals motivation times general capacity times innovation-specific capacity; Scaccia et al., 2015) might be used to recall this notion. For perspective, Markle (2016), provided a description of the three readiness components is provided below.

General Capacity. The processes that are required for an organization to function smoothly in order to properly adopt any innovation are referred to as general capacity. General capabilities are separated into human, technical, fiscal, and evaluative categories and encompass components of organizational functioning such as leadership, resources, connections, finance, and organizational structure. Technical capacities require the ability to use various program tools and materials (such as implementation tools or curriculum manuals), fiscal capacities refer to funding and resources, and evaluative capacities refer to the skills and knowledge required to collect data and evaluate organizational progress.

Innovation-specific capacity. These capabilities include innovation-specific knowledge, skills, and talents, program advocates, and implementation climate support, all of which are necessary for a given invention to succeed. Organizations must ensure that they have adequate innovation-specific capacity for the innovations they desire to deploy, as each invention requires its own set of knowledge, skills, abilities, and supports to be successfully implemented. The implementation atmosphere surrounding a certain invention is one innovation-specific capacity worth noting in terms of motivation. The level of support, prioritization, and attention given to an invention in an organization is referred to as the implementation climate.

Motivation. The perception of rewards or disincentives that contribute to the desirability of implementing new organizational practices may be defined as motivation (Scaccia et al., in press). For the sake of this study, motivation is defined as the desire to implement change in general as well as the desire to execute a specific innovation. Prior to analyzing the elements that influence motivation, it's important to note that there are certain differences to be made between motivation and preparedness.

On to the legal basis of this study, first cited is the Republic Act 7277 otherwise known as the Act Providing for the Rehabilitation, Self-Development and Self-Reliance of Disabled Person and Their Integration Into the Mainstream of Society and for Other Purposes. This Republic Act come to be known as the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons. This is designed to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else. The legislation encourages their full engagement

in society as well as their absorption into the mainstream. This obligation is spelled out in legislation, and the government must guarantee that people with disabilities have equal opportunities and access to health care. However, the ideals and goals set forth in Republic Act No. 7277, such as providing a full range of accessible services for people with disabilities, will not be fully realized unless an office is established in each local government unit to oversee the provision of services to people with disabilities. As a result, every province, city, and municipality is being pushed to establish a Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office (PDAO). This office will develop a master plan for instituting a national health program for disabled people. Its goal is to make health-care delivery more comprehensive and efficient. In local government entities, there is currently no office that caters to the requirements of people with disabilities explains Senator Francis N. Pangilinan in his Explanatory Note in his attempt to pass the bill creating PDAO during the Fourteenth Congress002E

Republic Act 9155 emphasizes the study's legality, stating that "it is hereby declared the State's policy to protect and promote all citizens' right to a quality basic education and to make such education accessible to all by providing all Filipino children with a free and compulsory elementary education and a free and compulsory high school education." Such education must incorporate alternative learning methods for out-of-school adolescents and adult learners. Students should get the skills, information, and values they need to develop into compassionate, self-reliant, productive, and patriotic citizens.

Another legal to this study is DepEd Order Number 044, s. 2021 otherwise known as the "Policy Guidelines on the Provision of Education Programs and Services for Learners with Disabilities in the K to 12 Basic Education Program" This policy aims to provide overall direction and guidance in the organization, management, and implementation of appropriate and relevant programs, services, and other educational interventions for learners with disabilities, regardless of their gender, race, culture, ethnicity, religion, or economic status, at the various levels of governance in the Department. This is based on Annex No. 5 of DO No. 21, s. 2019 or the Inclusive Education Policy Framework for Basic Education which establishes an overarching framework for the execution of programs that promote inclusive education, such as Madrasah Education, Indigenous Peoples Education, Specific Education, Alternative Learning Systems, and special curricular programs, among others. As a result, these policy guidelines apply to all children and youth with disabilities who are covered by basic education, including but not limited to Muslim, indigenous peoples, out-of-school children and youth, children in armed conflict, children on the street, children in conflict with the law, and children in special cases. Furthermore, this policy will serve as a tool for the Department to fulfill its commitment to ensure that the basic education program is inclusive. In the report of Magsambol (2022) of Rappler, he explained that according to the new law, early and basic education curricula in all public and private schools must include inclusive education for students with disabilities. The law also calls for the establishment of an Inclusive Learning Resource Center (ILCR) for disabled pupils. Further, the Child Find System, a mechanism that will guarantee that all kids with disabilities who are not getting early and basic education programs are identified, located, and evaluated, is being implemented by ILRCs. The aforesaid law further strengthened the earlier released DepEd Order Number 044, s. 2021 also known as the "Policy Guidelines on the Provision of Education Programs and Services for Learners with Disabilities in the K to 12 Basic Education Program" which defines disabilities as referring to a long-term physical, mental, intellectual, behavioral, or sensory condition that significantly affects one or more physiological or anatomical functions or activities of an individual, resulting in difficulty or limitation in performing a task or activity.

According to the Department of Social Welfare and Development Listahanan, almost 60% of Filipino children with disabilities were out of school in 2019. Furthermore, one of the key issues raised in the 2020 survey by the Council for the Welfare of Children Sub-Committee on Children with Disabilities was the difficulty to access education services and learning tools. The answer to this is the newly enacted Republic Act 11650 or the An Act Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and

Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education which is one of the legal basis to this study as well. This law will provide additional resources to learners with disabilities to support their holistic education needs, such as inclusive learning resource centers with multidisciplinary teams of professionals, accessible materials, child find systems, public awareness raising, consultative mechanisms, family education, pre- and in-service professional development for teachers and child development workers, and an advisory council, among other things.

DepEd Order No. 55, s. 2016 gave the general description of those learners with special needs. They are those who require special education assistance and changes to school processes in order to participate in educational opportunities and the general education curriculum. Those who have trouble seeing, hearing, walking or climbing stairs, remembering or concentrating, and communicating are among them. The more detailed classification of these students with special educational needs are discussed by Planchamp (2016) stating first that "students with special educational needs" is a relatively new term taken from an Anglophone statement that refers to a wide variety of students. The term "handicap" is somewhat related with this expression. However, during the last few years, people's perceptions of "handicap" have shifted dramatically. We no longer regard a disability or disease to be significant unless it is discussed in the context of its surroundings. A learner may be in a "position of handicap" at any one time, but with focused modifications, he or she can be helped. When talking with others who communicate themselves verbally, a person with an auditory problem, for example, may be at a disadvantage. When sign language is employed or this individual can lip-read, they are no longer regarded to be handicapped. Despite this, they have "Special requirements." So, who precisely are these students? In the classroom, students with special needs may face a variety of difficulties. The following situations are the cases: Neurodevelopmental disorders, Organic disorders, Psychological disorders, Socio-economical or cultural difficulties, and the particular cases of gifted students.

In the Philippines, students with special needs were taught in special education classrooms in public and private schools. Because inclusive education addresses need for tolerance, a humanistic approach, and values, it has become one of the key driving forces for the push laws and DepEd Orders. More recently, there is a new law that President Rodrigo Duterte signed on inclusive education for students with disabilities. According to the new law, early and basic education curricula in all public and private schools must include inclusive education for students with disabilities. This is the Republic Act No. 11650 otherwise known as the act "Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act." The state's policy is to safeguard and promote all citizens' right to a high-quality education at all levels, and to take reasonable efforts to make such education available to everyone. It shall recognize, protect, and promote the rights of all learners with disabilities, including those from ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin, to an equal opportunity education, make such education compulsory and accessible to them by ensuring that no learner with disability is denied access to an inclusive, equitable, and quality education, and promote lifelong learning opportunities for them," according to the law.

Neurodevelopmental disorders. This grouping includes issues relating to the development of one's nervous system. These issues often manifest themselves in early infancy, prior to the commencement of a child's formal education. They manifest as a developmental delay that impairs a person's ability to operate in several aspects of their daily lives: personal, social, educational, and professional. Examples of neurodevelopmental disorders are: *Communication disorders:* dysphasia (speech, language, fluency other non-specific communication. *Motor function disorders:* Transitional disorders, motor function or vocal abnormalities, Tourettes Syndrome, and coordination and development difficulties are all examples of transitional disorders. *Developmental disorders:* intellectual deficiency – profound, severe, moderate, light.

Attention deficit disorder: with or without ADD/ADHD. *Autism spectrum disorders. Specific learning difficulties*: light, moderate or severe degrees of dyscalculia (maths), dysorthographia (writing), dyslexia (reading). *Other neurodevelopmental disorders*. Specific learning disorders. Despite regular education, chronic learning challenges and lower academic abilities in reading, writing, or mathematics develop in the absence of any visual, auditory, neurological, or intellectual disability. *Dyslexia*: a learning disability associated to a specific difficulty in identifying letters, syllables, or words while writing. *Dysorthographia*: significant and long-lasting issue when learning spelling. *Dyscalculia*: calculation-related disorder or, more broadly, arithmetics or mathematics. *Dysgraphia*: writing movement has become disorganized. Motor function disorders. These include problems with coordination, stereotyped movements, or tics that interfere with social interactions. Dyspraxia: disease that affects motor development alone. Tourette's Syndrome: Many involuntary motor tics and unusual behaviors come from a neurological disease.

Organic disorders. Students with sensory or physical impairments, as well as those with a persistent organic ailment, fall into this group. Example of these organic disorders are: *Sensory deficiencies* (auditory or visual). Impaired hearing or deaf (partial or total loss of function). Visually impaired or blind (partial or total loss of function). *Motor deficiencies*. includes genetic, systemic, neurological, neuromuscular, or arthritic illnesses that can have varied degrees of impairment on motor function. *Chronic illness*. Long-term diseases that cause absences from school and may result in the student being temporarily withdrawn from school, with the danger of marginalization and an inescapable feeling of exclusion

Psychological disorders. Mood, behavioral, and personality problems are all included in this area. Examples of these psychological disorders are: *Depression*: Sadness, sense of failure, remorse, inability to experience joy, difficulties starting a task/activity are common symptoms of psychiatric diseases in adolescence, although they can take many various forms. *Bipolar disorder in adolescence*: Pathological mood swings that have a considerable influence on social and academic functioning depending on their duration, severity, and recurrence. *Anxiety disorder*: Excessive and persistent anxiety, sometimes accompanied by bodily symptoms such as perspiration, heart palpitations, or stomach pain. *Behavioural disorders*: Consistently trespassing on and degrading another's fundamental rights: rash, frequently hazardous, and socially unacceptable behavior. *Obsessive-compulsive disorders*: Obsessions (thoughts) or compulsions (repetitive behaviors) that are severe enough to be time-consuming and cause evident suffering or severely impair daily tasks. *Oppositional Defiant Disorder*: A need to disturb or anger others, as well as persistent behaviors (aggression and provocation).

Socioeconomic or cultural difficulties: This group includes pupils who are experiencing problems as a result of socioeconomic, cultural, or linguistic reasons. Examples of these socioeconomic or cultural difficulties are: *Difficult family or social situation*: Students whose family are experiencing major professional, familial, social, or financial issues, which make it impossible to supervise their child's progress in a beneficial way. *Recently arrived in the country*: Students who do not speak the native language of the nation. *Nomadic lifestyle:* Children from nomadic or sedentary households who have never attended school and occasionally struggle with the French language.

Particular cases of gifted students (HP or intellectually premature). Students with HP have remarkable intellectual abilities (IQ above average), as well as a fundamentally distinct style of thinking and affective functioning, which can lead to learning challenges.
While mainstreaming students with special educational needs offer considerable advantages to these types of learners there, too, are drawbacks. Another disadvantage is that a child with special needs might quickly become lost in a conventional classroom. They can be distracting and jeopardize other kids' learning environments in some circumstances. Because neither

mainstreaming nor any other kind of inclusion is appropriate for every child, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) should be created for each special-needs kid to assist them strike a balance between normal classroom exposure and the individualized care they require. These students are exposed to mainstream students while receiving the attention they require for their particular issues by employing both the normal classroom and specialized time in special education classrooms. According to several studies, incorporating impaired students in regular schools enhances academic success, self-esteem, and social skills (Editorial Team of Resilient Educator, 2020).

Lynch (2020) noted the following cons to mainstreaming these students with special educational needs as follows:

Social Disadvantage. Some special needs students have behavioral concerns that must be handled in the classroom. These challenges are not only inconvenient for their peers, but they may also be embarrassing for the learner, inflicting greater harm to their self-esteem and social life than if they were not mainstreamed.

Academic Disadvantages. While learners with special needs can use the same curriculum as other students, they may struggle to keep up with the workload. They may feel as though they are the odd man out as a result of this. Educators' efforts to ensure that everyone learns the material may detract from the remainder of the class. This may have an influence on the class's overall pace. While certain mainstreamed students with special needs will be given pull-outs to a resource room or other forms of individualized tutoring, any reduction in the class pace that might affect the achievement of specified goals is a concern.

Tolerance. It is a wonderful skill to master, but it comes with costs. Learners who do not have special needs may believe that the special needs student "gets away" with more than the rest of the class.

According to Aldabas (2020) the reason why this is a hot topic in today's culture is that it focuses on providing all students with access to high-quality education while taking into account their various requirements. When students with and without impairments attend the same classrooms and work together to achieve suitable outcomes and social integration, this is referred to as inclusive education. The study of Ballard and Dymond (2017) it was stated that when compared to other educational settings, inclusive education yields better results. Hence, activating the advantages of inclusive education gives this population fresh opportunity to succeed in the future. It's vital that these students grow up in an atmosphere that encourages social development and allows them to practice these abilities.

Further, in the country some notable studies were centered on the issues and challenges of inclusion. For instance, in the study of Allam & Matronillo (2021) they noted that it. might be inferred that placing special needs students in an inclusive classroom with other students is insufficient without suitable assistance. Learners with disabilities did not obtain all of the essential assistance and services for accessing curriculum facilities, and stakeholders' support for students enrolled in SPED programs is very limited. On the other hand, technological concerns and problems were resolved in order to maintain a pleasant working atmosphere among school administrators, instructors, and stakeholders. Hence, their suggestion that continuous professional development opportunities on inclusion techniques for learners with SPED needs should be organized by the Department of Education Training and Development, in partnership with regional in-service officers. The SPED program implementers must closely adhere to the principles, and strong stakeholder participation must be promoted by forming an active organization led by the school principal.

Ambiong (2020) quoting the statement of a training coordinator at St. Louis University for Inclusive Education, Alphalyn Pedro, saying that when asked if there had been any changes in schools or

classrooms over the years, professionals in the inclusive education area said, "Struggles are always present." Schools are so preoccupied with their regular pupils that the needs of people with disabilities are overlooked. If we had trouble reaching out to teachers before, it's even more difficult now that we can't physically see them. The most significant shift in educators' perceptions of inclusive education is that they recognize it as a right, but they have yet to assume responsibility for providing it. They are only more compassionate to disabled people. Teachers will always think that education of individuals with disabilities is not their job, but rather that of SpEd, as long as our department of education adheres to the SpEd philosophy.

Collaboration of SPED teachers and receiving teachers proves to be vital in the holistic well-being of the students with special educational needs. According to Ripley (2022), general education and special education instructors each add their talents, expertise, and views to the team in a collaborative format. To improve teaching and learning opportunities, techniques, and effectiveness, resources are pooled. "One thing that came out of this connection was that we both had experience in a variety of areas, and by combining these talents, both instructors were more effective in fulfilling the needs of all kids." The major job of general education instructors is to apply their knowledge and abilities to instruct pupils in school-mandated courses. Specific education instructors' major role is to give instruction by customizing and producing resources to meet each student's learning styles, skills, and special needs. Individual learners' needs frequently drive curriculum in special education settings. Content specialization comes from general educators, whereas evaluation and adaptation expertise comes from special education instructors. Both have expertise and training in teaching methods and learning processes. Their combined purpose is to give suitable classroom and homework tasks to all kids in their class so that each is learning, challenged, and engaging in the classroom process.

In the words of Zagona et. al. (2017) there are several studies on the subject underline the importance of teachers' commitment to educational innovation. They must be able to adapt to a variety of situations and change their working approaches to deal with kids individually. Teachers in this category should possess specified professional traits to ensure their ability to deal with students and assist them in improving. To begin, instructors should get extra and ongoing training on how to assess the requirements of children with SD in order to provide a suitable learning environment stated Rakap et. al. (2017) and Reese et. al (2018). Special education teachers are still in low supply, despite the rising need for them, because to the complexities and special demands of this industry. Unfortunately, many instructors have received little or no training in inclusive or special education, which means they will have to learn new skills while teaching. Special courses have been introduced to enable teachers to interact with students in an attempt to address the issue. These classes are for conventional instructors who wish to learn more about dealing with students with additional needs and extend their expertise.

Despite all these concerns, there is seen a great need to have these students with special educational needs to be with other learners as the way to treat people with disabilities is first by attaching them more to community they belong rather than detaching them. In the words of DepEd's Undersecretary for Legal and Legistative Affiars and Save the Children Philippines Chief Executive Officer, Atty. Alberto Muyot, disabled students have long been subjected to various types of prejudice and inequity. Even before the epidemic, almost 5 out of 10 Filipino households with children, including those with disabilities, had insufficient access to quality and basic education, putting them at danger of falling behind.

The aforementioned theories are important as they call for teachers to differentiate their way of teaching the lessons to the students according to how they get to understand the lessons best and to facilitate learning through supporting the learners' intellectual knowledge and abilities through collaborative learning, conversation, modeling, and scaffolding. Most especially, these ways encourage connections – the learners with special educational needs getting to converse, be with, and associate with other children as they should be and not getting disconnected by having them in a room with other students with special educational needs also with whom they

could not feel, see, communicate, and appreciate the activities that they ought to be doing had it not for their disabilities. That is precisely what the lawmakers and curriculum makers are trying to achieve in releasing these laws and DepEd Orders; to make sure that these children with special educational needs get to feel that they may be special but they also have places in schools with children without disabilities, that their situations be understood to avoid discrimination, and that they deserve to get equal access to quality education. And, that quality education could only be attained if the receiving teachers, firstly, are ready to take on the much bigger challenge with these students with special educational needs placed in their classrooms, secondly, when they are equipped with the right tools and resources needed in handling these kinds and students, lastly, that they have sufficient knowledge of making use of these available resources to teach these learners.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the receiving teachers' perceived preparedness in handling students with special educational needs in the Junior High School level at Talisay City National High School, Talisay City Division for SY 2021-2022 as basis for proposed capacity building activity.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1.   What is the profile of the respondents ?

1.   What is the respondents' perceived preparedness in handling students with special educational needs, in terms of:

2.   Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and their perceived level of preparedness in handling students with special educational needs?

4.   Is there significant difference on the respondents' perceived level of preparedness in handling students with special educational needs when grouped by its disability type of students?

5.   Based on the findings, what capacity building activity could be proposed?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part contained the research methodology which include the method used, the flow of the study, research locale, research respondents, research instruments, data gathering procedures, statistical treatment of data, scoring procedures and definition of terms.

Design

The researcher employed the descriptive correlational method of research in determining the receiving teachers' perceived preparedness in handling students with special educational needs.

Flow of the Study

 The input of the study included the relevant information of the teachers in terms of age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, number of years in service, performance rating, type of classroom, number of years with learners with additional needs mainstreamed in class, and appropriate trainings, seminars and workshops attended. This covered the teachers' perceived preparedness in terms of their collaboration and teaming skills, skills for using effective instructional methods, skills for   implementation   of inclusion, skills for planning and implementation of behavioral interventions, skills for accessing general education curriculum, and skills for transition planning. The process of the study includes the research procedure to be strictly followed guided by the research approach, which is the quantitative method of research.
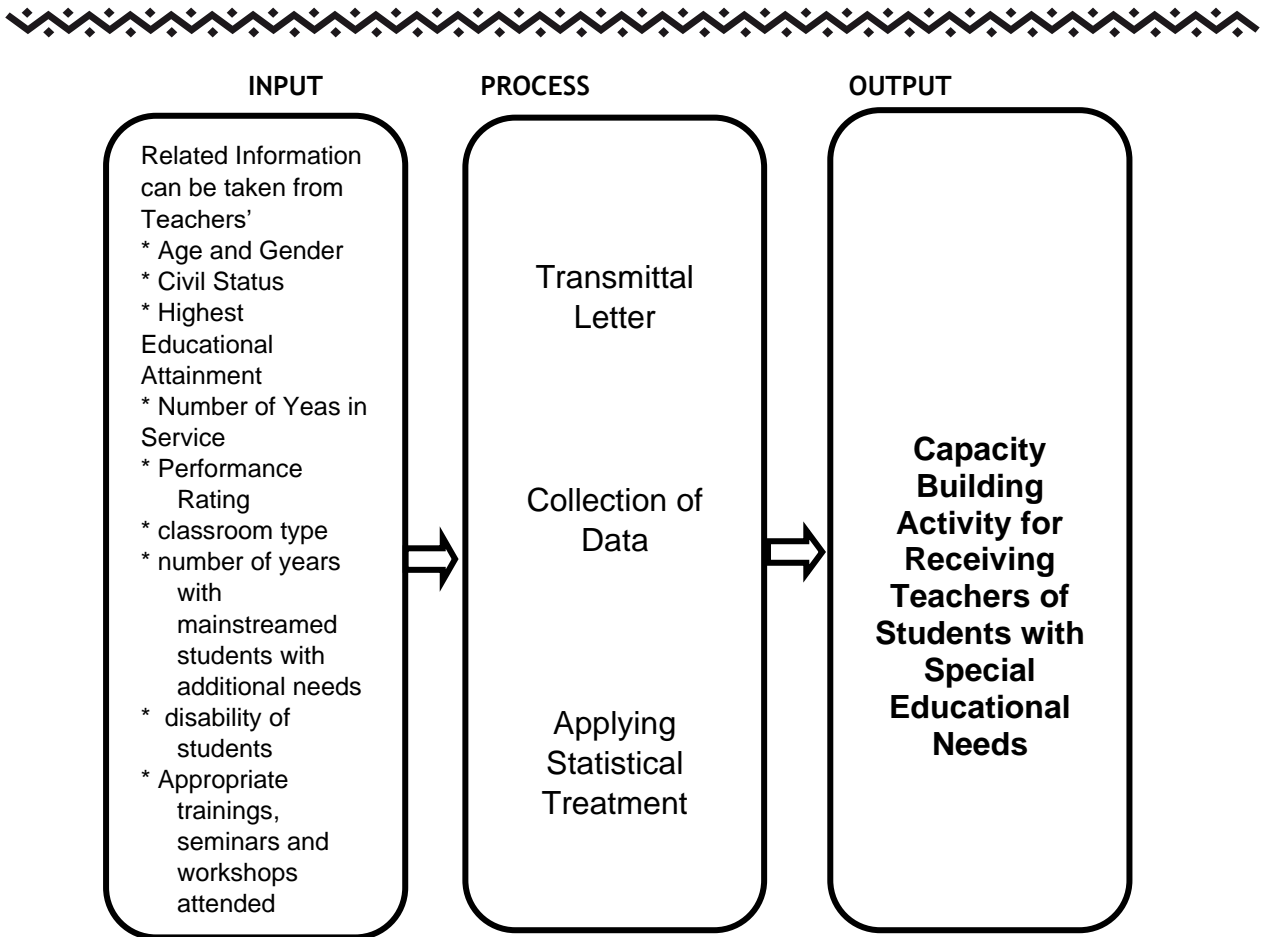
INPUT   **PROCESS**   **OUTPUT**

Related Information can be taken from Teachers'
* Age and Gender
* Civil Status
* Highest Educational Attainment
* Number of Yeas in Service
* Performance Rating
* classroom type
* number of years with mainstreamed students with additional needs
* disability of students
* Appropriate trainings, seminars and workshops attended

Transmittal Letter

Collection of Data

Applying Statistical Treatment

Capacity Building Activity for Receiving Teachers of Students with Special Educational Needs

Figure 2 The Flow of the Study
The output of the study was a capacity building activity for receiving teachers.

Environment
The study was conducted at Talisay City National High School which was 3 meters away from National road. The school is located at Rizal St., Poblacion, Talisay City, Cebu. It had a total of 5778 students this school year 2021-2022. The school had 175 teachers, supervised and managed by a school principal, Mr. Eamon A. Alido. He was DepEd Region VII's Most Outstanding School Head for 2020, CSC Region VII's Most Outstanding Public Servant for 2021, DepEd Talisay's Best Performning School Head for 2021 and surpassing all these accolades is the researchers' award bestowed to him as the "Best Husband of All Time". The teachers are classified according to their positions were as follows: 1 Master Teachers IIs, 0 Master Teacher Is, 47 Teacher IIIs, 7 Teacher IIs and 110 Teacher Is.

Respondents
The respondents of the study were the one hundred fourteen (114) Junior High School teachers at Talisay City National High School. This study employed universal sampling techniques as all of the teachers in Junior High School teachers of the aforementioned school were included.

Instrument
This study employed the two-part adaptive survey questionnaire from Aldabas (2020). The participants' demographic information (gender, degree of education, disability type of pupils taught, previous teaching experience, and kind of classroom) was requested in the first section. The second segment consisted of 31 questions that asked participants about their readiness to

teach students with special educational needs in inclusive settings. The 31 items were divided into six subscales: (a) collaboration and teamwork skills, (b) effective instructional methods, (c) skills for inclusion implementation, (d) skills for behavioral intervention planning and implementation, (e) skills for accessing general education curriculum, and (f) skills for transition planning. The respondents will respond to the items on a 5-point Likert-type Scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating that they were not confidence and 5 indicating that they were very confident.

Data Gathering Procedure

This research followed a step-by-step process in the conduct of this research endeavor.

First, a letter was made addressed to the Schools Superintendent of the Division of Talisay City for approval of the conduct of the study.

After the letter was approved, the questionnaires personally distributed to the respondents. The respondents were given ample time of 20-30 minutes to answer the questionnaire.

Data collected and submitted to the statistician for statistical treatment. It was subjected to further presentation, analysis, and interpretation with the guidance of the research adviser.

The final draft will be submitted for finalization and corrections.

Ethical Considerations

Before the questionnaire was distributed, the researcher discussed the gist of the study and emphasize the importance thereof. Express assurance provided to the receiving-teacher respondents that whatever data gathered for the purpose of this study dealt with utmost care and confidentiality.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The following are the statistical procedures that used by the researcher in the presentation and interpretation of the data.

Simple Percentage. This determined the profile of the teachers and school heads in terms of age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, number of years in service, performance rating, type of classroom, number of years with learners with additional needs mainstreamed in class, and appropriate trainings, seminars and workshops attended.

Weighted Mean. Computation of the mean is employed to determine teachers' perceived preparedness in terms of the following: collaboration and teamwork skills, (b) effective instructional methods, (c) skills for inclusion implementation, (d) skills for behavioral intervention planning and implementation, (e) skills for accessing general education curriculum, and (f) skills for transition planning.

The Chi-square Test of Independence. This determines whether or not the teachers' perceived level of preparedness and their profile as well as with the grouped disability type of their students are connected.

ANOVA. This determines the significant difference between the respondents perceived level of preparedness in handling students with special educational needs when grouped by its preferences and its disability type of students.

TEST OF SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP
Summary on the Test of Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and Their Perceived Level of Preparedness in Handling Students with Special Educational Needs

Test of Significant Relationship Between	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Computed x² Value (Average)	Critical x² Value	Decision	Results
Ages and	3	15389.40	3.29		
Perceived Level of Preparedness	5	17.34	2.90	Reject Ho	Significant
Gender and	1	15664.8	6.61		
Perceived Level of Preparedness	5	4.49	5.05	Reject Ho	Significant
Civil Status and	2	15467.17	4.10		
Perceived Level of Preparedness	5	4.38	3.33	Reject Ho	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment and	5	3.32	2.60		
Perceived Level of Preparedness	5	15710.86	2.60	Reject Ho	Significant
Years in Teaching and	2	10583.9	4.10		
Perceived Level of Preparedness	5	18.33	3.33	Reject Ho	Significant
Type of Classroom and	1	15720.4	6.61		
Perceived Level of Preparedness	5	1.05	5.05	Reject Ho	Significant
Number of Years with Students with Special Needs Mainstreamed in Class and	2	17942.03	4.10		
Perceived Level of Preparedness	5	10.61	3.33	Reject Ho	Significant
Relevant Trainings and	3	16396.44	3.29		
Perceived Level of Preparedness	5	2.93	2.90	Reject Ho	Significant

Table A shows that rejection of the null hypothesis and that there is a significant relationship between the teachers' profile and their perceived level of preparedness in handling students with special educational needs. The teachers' replies revealed that they needed more knowledge and abilities in a variety of areas, including writing IEPs, assessing their students' development, and adapting and altering the curriculum to fit their students' requirements, as previously reported by Ruppar et. al. (2016). The study of Aldabas (2020) revealed fresh information regarding the socio-demographic features of teachers and their perceptions about their readiness to teach children with special needs in inclusive settings. Shorter working experience teachers were found to have lower confidence in their preparedness, whilst those with the most experience were found to have better confidence in their ability to teach children with special needs in inclusive education. Teachers with advance degrees, as well as those who worked with younger pupils (preschool and elementary school) and even those who taught in inclusive classrooms, had lower confidence in their preparedness. Finally, when compared to those who taught students with mild disorders, teachers who dealt with children with severe disorders felt more prepared for teaching such students in inclusive education.

Further, in the socio-demographic aspects and disparities amongst instructors have clearly indicated that certain characteristics should be considered when establishing trainings to assist teachers in meeting new and challenging problems in their work within inclusive education

program. To teach learners with special needs in inclusive education, well-prepared teachers must be able to plan, fully control, and facilitate classroom interaction while always considering the appropriateness of planned activities as well as the diverse needs and abilities of their students (Rabi & Zulkefli, 2018). In addition, previous research has shown that SETs with greater experience teaching students with impairments had more confidence in teaching in inclusive classrooms says Bannister-Tyrrell et. al. (2018), which is consistent with the findings of this research. Rakap et. al. (2017), demonstrates that when educating and practicing, SETs get greater information and skills. Given that giving instructors with real-life experiences has been shown to positively influence their attitudes toward inclusion, teachers with little or no experience should be given a tool to help them expand their theoretical and practical knowledge. This may be accomplished through the creation and delivery of various courses in which teachers might learn new pedagogical strategies and procedures for assisting all students in their learning according to the results of the studies of Alquraini & Rao, (2017) and Ballard & Dymond (2017).Due to a lack of understanding by their school principals and general education teachers, or even physical segregation of their classrooms or desks, students with disabilities commonly feel isolated, as do their teachers (Ruppar et. al.,2018).

Summary on the Test of Significant Difference Between the Types of Students Taught by the Respondents and Their Perceived Level of Preparedness in Handling Students with Special Educational Needs

Test of Significant Relationship Between	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Computed x^2 Value (Average)	Critical x^2 Value	Decision	Result
Types of Students Taught	5	16.14	3.29	Reject Ho	Significant
Perceived Level of Preparedness	3	15463.33	2.90		

As can be interpreted in Table B, the computed F Ratios for the disability type of the students taught by the teachers and their preferences are at 16.14 and 15463.33, respectively. The computed Critical Values are 3.29 and 2.90. When the computed F Ratios are greater than the Critical Values, the null hypothesis is to be rejected otherwise it is to be accepted. In this case the two computed F Ratios are greater than the two computed Critical Values, hence leading for the null hypothesis to be rejected. Hence, there is a significant difference between the teachers' perceived level of readiness in handling students with special educational needs and the disability type of the students.

Teachers' assessments of their preparedness to educate children with additional needs in inclusive education after working with other forms of impairments. When compared to others, those who had taught students with special needs felt more confident in their ability to teach students in inclusive education because of their responses on all subscales.

As a result, it shows the significant disparities in teachers' perceptions of their preparedness to educate students with special needs in inclusive education depending on the disability type of children they teach. Certain disabilities require certain means of handling them.

Today, more than ever, the requirement for teachers who are both knowledgeable and capable of teaching special-education learner is vital. According to Mader (2017), students with disabilities now spend the bulk of their days in general-education classrooms rather than in separate special-education groups, thanks to a national campaign to get them out of isolation. This implies that more students with disabilities are being taught by general-education instructors. With different type of disabilities of the learners call different ways of handling them. There is no such thing as one size fits all in handling these learners. For instance, according to TeacherVision Staff (2020) teaching children with learning disabilities can confront you with some unique obstacles. These students will require not just more of your time and patience, but also unique teaching tactics delivered in an organized setting that supports and maximizes their learning potential. It's vital to

remember that learning challenged pupils aren't incapable of learning; rather, they require differentiated education that is suited to their unique learning capacities.

If there's one thing talented children have in common, it's that they're always asking questions (and full of answers). They also have an inquisitiveness about them. Providing for their educational requirements is a difficult endeavor that will push you to the boundaries of your own imagination and ingenuity. Teachers face a unique problem when dealing with high-ability children, sometimes known as gifted students. They are frequently the first to finish a task or the ones that request more imaginative and exciting work on a regular basis. They want stimulating activities and projects that provide a creative curriculum within the confines of the traditional classroom program.

Students who require the use of a wheelchair, canes, walkers, braces, crutches, or other physical assistance to get around are considered physically challenged. These children's exceptionalities, like other disabilities, can range from severe to minor and be caused by one or many sources. The fact that these pupils are no different academically from the more mobile students in your classroom is critical and, Students with emotional problems exhibit an inability to form or maintain satisfying interpersonal relationships, have physical signs or fears connected with personal or school problems, shows mood of unhappiness even when normal circumstances, or engage in inappropriate behaviors under normal circumstances. Although you will not be expected to solve all of your students' emotional problems, you must recognize that you can and will have a beneficial influence on their capacity to seek answers and collaborate with those who are attempting to assist them (Teacher Vision Staff ,2020).

Despite these difficulties encountered relating to the types of disabilities, it is but imperative for teachers to put to mind that these learners, like any other school children, are bestowed the right to education. As what Matkota (2018) claimed in its study, that in a number of international normative agreements drafted by the United Nations have extensively acknowledged and developed the right to education, demonstrating that education is not a privilege. It is a fundamental human right. It is critical to assist kids with impairments in receiving an education with the assistance of instructors. This is backed by the fact that the state must defend and promote all citizens' right to quality education at all levels, as well as take reasonable efforts to make such education available to everyone (Article XIV, Section 1).

RESULTS SUMMARY, FINDINGS and CONCLUSION

This research determined the level of preparedness of the receiving teachers in Talisay City National High School in handling the students with special educational needs primarily as basis for capacity building that will boost their readiness and capabilities in providing these types of learning that is quality, inclusive, meaningful, and transformative. This study aimed to answer the profile of these teachers like their age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, years in teaching, performance rating, type of classroom, number of years with students with special needs mainstreamed in class, disability type of students taught, and relevant trainings, seminars, or workshops attended. Further, the teachers' perception of their level of readiness pertaining to collaboration and teaming skills, use of effective instructional methods, implementation of inclusion, skills for planning and implementation of behavioral interventions, access to general education curriculum, and skills for transition planning were tackled as well.

The gathered data were treated using simple frequency and percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, Chi-square test, and ANOVA.

FINDINGS

The following are the key findings, which are detailed below, in relation to the study's unique concerns. The findings revealed that the teachers are still in their prime ages, mostly females, majority are married, still eager to pursue their post graduate studies, tenured, obtained very good to outstanding ratings in their performance, and are teaching in general education

classrooms. Further, a great majority of them have just handled learners with special needs in their classes, with varying disability of learners, and attended very few trainings / workshops / seminars relevant to teaching learners requiring special needs.

Based on the results, the teachers' perceived level of preparedness to be **Moderately Prepared** in majority of the aspects in collaboration and teaming skills, use of effective instructional methods, implementation of inclusion, skills for planning and implementation of behavioral interventions, access to general education curriculum, and skills for transition planning. However, they expressed the perception of   **Not Sure** specially in abilities to encourage family involvement in the development and implementation of the IEP, train and give best practices in SD education to school employees, discuss and analyze pupils' progress on their IEPs, teach and train students in communication skills in a variety of settings using augmentative and alternative communication approach, create behavioral intervention plans to control pupils' difficult behaviors, teach students skills that will assist them in participating in non-educational activities on a regular basis, address post-school transitioning goals with kids directly (if possible), in addition to the IEP team, and plan long-term and set long-term goals using suitable assessment and measurement instruments.

Moreover, per results from the test of significant relationship and difference, it was found out that there is a significant relationship between the profile of the of the respondents and the latter's preparedness in handling these students. This means that teachers who are more tenured, frequently sent to trainings, and with great performance ratings are inclined to be more effective in handling the abovementioned learners. And, there is found to be a difference on the teachers' perceived level of preparedness in handling the SPED learners with the different disability types of the learners. Hence, there is seen a need for capacity building to make most, if not all, of these receiving teachers better equipped with handling the learners requiring additional educational needs.

CONCLUSION

Based on the respondents' candid responses to the statements involving their collaboration and teaming skills, use of effective instructional methods, skills for planning and implementation of behavioral interventions, access to general education curriculum, and skills for transition planning there is shown a significant relationship between their profile and their level of preparedness in handling these learners with special educational needs as well as a significant difference between their perceived level of preparedness in handling the aforementioned students when grouped by its disabilities type of students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is suggested that, based on the facts and conclusions reached in this study, there is a need for further capacity building to enhance the changes of them successfully handling these special learners and implementing the inclusion program. This capacity building will provide background material and general knowledge regarding inclusive education and disability issues are taught to the teachers, get familiar with all major forms of disabilities so that they may support teachers in schools where a range of disabilities are present, and develop them to successfully, and get coaching training so that they can effectively help and advise classroom instructors.

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