

Article

## **Promoting Quality Education for Learners with Special Educational Needs During Limited Face-To-Face Learning**

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### **Abstract:**

This study investigated the perceptions of parents and teachers regarding the quality of education for learners with special educational needs (LSENs) during limited face-to-face learning. Data was collected from a sample of 50 parents and 5 teachers through a structured survey. The demographic profiles of the respondents were also recorded. Results indicated high satisfaction levels from both parents and teachers with regard to the quality of education provided to LSENs during limited face-to-face learning. Notably, no significant difference was found between the perceptions of these two groups, suggesting a shared understanding and agreement on the education process. However, areas for improvement were identified, such as enhancing modular distance learning, and focusing on learners' academic growth and socio-emotional well-being. The study concludes by highlighting the importance of continued efforts to improve educational strategies and the need for collaborative relationships between parents and teachers to enhance educational outcomes for LSENs.

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**Keywords:** Limited Face to Face Learners with Special Educational Needs, Teachers-Parental Perceptions



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### **Introduction**

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted the educational system. This has affected every aspect of every person's existence and all educational institutions were ordered to close around the globe (Verma & Prakash, 2020). According to Kaden (2020) the

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population and environment have been safeguarded through the implementation of safety protocols. The COVID-19 pandemic poses a hazard to all members of society, as stated by the United Nations (2020). Nonetheless, individuals with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by institutional, environmental, and mental barriers replicated in the COVID-19 response (Samaila et al., 2020; Kamalakannan et al., 2021). During this crisis, many individuals with disabilities may become increasingly isolated and unable to survive confinement procedures (Stawicki et al., 2020). In addition, continue to encounter discrimination and difficulties in gaining access to means of subsistence and income support, participation in new forms of education, and protection from violence (Sengupta & Jha, 2020).

In order to continue their education globally, many students have adapted to new learning modalities (distance learning, blended learning, and online learning) (Singh et al., 2021). Education has been maintained, with a focus on enhancing the quality of education, particularly for students with special needs, despite the fact that the pandemic has been defeated (Neuwirth et al., 2021). COVID-19 has evolved into a global health emergency. As of the 6th of October, 2020, nearly 36 million people have been infected and over one million have perished. This translates to nearly 325,000 infections and 6,000 fatalities in the Philippines (World meter). Most governments have chosen to employ quarantine protocols and temporarily close their educational institutions in an effort to halt the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, over a billion students have been affected globally. More than 28 million Filipino students at all academic levels must remain at home and comply with quarantine measures imposed by the Philippine government (UNESCO, 2020).

Secretary Leonor Briones of the Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) remarked, "Education must continue even in times of crisis, be it a calamity, disaster, emergency, or quarantine" (Department of Education, 2020). As the number of cases increased, modular distance learning was implemented to continue education. In nearly two years, the frequency of incidents decreased. The Department of Education adopted the limited face-to-face class expansion phase. The DepEd-DOH Joint Memorandum Circular 001, Section 2021 requires all regional directors to initiate and conduct face-to-face classes for public and private schools in accordance with the primary protocols and standards outlined in the circular.

During the concurrent classes, instructors, parents, and students, particularly those with special educational needs, faced a variety of obstacles. The learners encountered these obstacles, such as limited time allotted for specific tasks, necessitating additional assistance with the competencies they ought to acquire and their participation in school activities. Concerning classroom readiness, LSEs tend to be apprehensive about separation from their parents or guardians. Staying at home for two years during the pandemic

impacted their preparedness, particularly their literacy and numeracy abilities. Teachers have limited teaching and learning resources, assessment strategies, additional workloads, and limited time to address students' concerns, and their voices must be audible to the students despite donning face masks. The perceptions of parents and teachers regarding the quality of education for LSENs during face-to-face learning must be assessed in order to determine whether the current setting is adequate or requires refinement. Thus, regardless of the situation, parents and teachers can devise effective interventions and strategies to improve the quality of education. In conclusion, these obstacles have significantly impacted the teaching-learning process.

While there has been increasing research on the quality of education for students with special needs, there is a research gap in understanding the perceptions of parents and teachers specifically regarding the quality of education during limited face-to-face learning. This study aims to determine the perceptions of parents and teachers regarding the quality of education for students with special needs during limited face-to-face learning, and to develop a proposed action plan to help stakeholders achieve their educational goals for these students. Addressing these research gaps, future studies can contribute to a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities in providing quality education for students with special needs during limited face-to-face learning. In addition, this research can inform the development of evidence-based interventions, policies, and practices to support the educational needs and goals of these students, ultimately promoting their overall well-being and success.

## **Methodology**

This study utilizes a quantitative research design in gathering the needed data on promoting quality education for learners with special educational needs during limited face-to-face learning. According to Aliaga and Gunderson (2000) Quantitative research is “Explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics). Creswell (2002) noted that quantitative research is the process of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing the results of a study. The sampling technique that the researcher will use in this study is universal sampling. According to (Richard & Margaret, 1990: 125) Universal sampling refers to the selection of sample where not all the people in the population have the same probability of being included in the sample and each one of them, the probability of being selected is unknown. The researchers preferred to use universal sampling technique to select respondents from parents and teachers because they were the ones to provide essential information to test the hypothesis of the research. The

instrument of the study is adapted from the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) (2018), Designing face-to-face Survey and Face-to-face Surveys- Worcester Polytechnic Institute. There are two sets of questionnaires, one for the parents and the other for the teachers. The respondents have to fill-up the first part which is about their demographic profile

## Results and Discussion

Table 1. Age and Gender of the Parent-Respondents

Age (in years)	Female		Male		Total	
	F	%	F	%	f	%
60 and above	3	6.00	0	0.00	3	6.00
50-59	6	12.00	0	0.00	6	12.00
40-49	12	24.00	0	0.00	12	24.00
30-39	22	44.00	1	2.00	23	46.00
20-29	6	12.00	0	0.00	6	12.00
Total	49	98.00	1	2.00	50	100.00

The table provides information about the distribution of parent-respondents according to their age and gender. From the total of 50 parent-respondents, 49 are females, constituting 98% of the respondents, and 1 is male, making up 2% of the respondents. Looking at the age distribution, the majority of the female respondents (44%) fall into the age bracket of 30-39 years. The remaining respondents are divided as follows: 24% are aged 40-49, 12% are aged 50-59, 12% are aged 20-29, and 6% are 60 years and above. The sole male respondent falls into the 30-39 years age category.

Table 2. Highest Educational Attainment of the Parent-Respondents

Educational Attainment	F	%
With Master's Units	2	4.00
College Graduate	5	10.00
College Level	4	8.00
High School Graduate	19	38.00
High School Level	8	16.00
Elementary Graduate	5	10.00
Elementary Level	7	14.00
Total	50	100.00

Table 2 presents the data in terms of highest educational attainment. The largest group, comprising 38% of the respondents, are high school graduates, followed by those who have some high school education (16%) and those who have only elementary school education (14%). Only a minority have higher education, with 10% being college

graduates, 8% having some college education, and 4% having pursued master's degree units. These figures suggest that the perspectives gathered from this research may be biased towards parents with a high school level of education. Therefore, findings might not fully encapsulate the experiences or views of parents with different educational backgrounds, particularly those with higher educational attainment. For future research and practical applications, a balanced representation across different educational levels may be beneficial to better understand and serve diverse parent populations. Therefore, organizations and professionals using these findings should tailor their policies or strategies considering this skew in educational attainment.

Table 3. Parent-Respondents' Number of Children

Number of Children	F	%
5 and up	11	22.00
3-4	24	48.00
1-2	15	30.00
Total	50	100.00

Table 3 presents the data in terms of Parent-Respondents' Number of Children. Data showed that a majority, constituting 48% of the respondents, have between 3-4 children. The rest are divided with 30% having 1-2 children, and 22% having 5 or more children. These findings suggest that the perspectives gathered from the survey may be predominantly reflective of parents with larger families (3 or more children).

Table 4. Parent-Respondents' Combined Family Monthly Income

Monthly Income (In pesos)	F	%
Above 30,000	3	6.00
25,001-30,000	0	0.00
20,001-25,000	1	2.00
15,001-20,000	5	10.00
10,001-15,000	2	4.00
10,000 and below	39	78.00
Total	50	100.00

Table 4 presents the data in terms of Parent-Respondents' Combined Family Monthly Income. Data showed that a significant majority of the respondents, constituting 78%, earn 10,000 pesos and below per month. A smaller percentage, 10%, earns between 15,001-20,000 pesos, and even fewer respondents fall into the other income brackets. Only 6% earn above 30,000 pesos, and 4% earn between 10,001-15,000 pesos. Notably, none of the respondent's report earning between 25,001-30,000 pesos. This data suggests that a large portion of the respondents come from lower-income households. Consequently, the views and

experiences collected in this study are likely to reflect the realities and perspectives of parents from lower-income families. Future research aiming for a wider representation of income levels might strive to include more participants from middle- and higher-income brackets. Similarly, organizations and professionals should consider this skew towards lower-income families when interpreting the findings and designing policies or strategies. Any interventions or solutions based on these findings might be most effective for, or need adjustment for applicability to, families with different income levels.

**Table 5. Age and Gender of the Teacher-Respondents**

Age (in years)	Female		Male		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
50-59	1	20.00	0	0.00	1	20.00
40-49	1	20.00	0	0.00	1	20.00
30-39	2	40.00	1	20.00	3	60.00
20-29	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Total	4	80.00	1	20.00	5	100.00

Table 5 presents the data in terms of Age and Gender of the Teacher-Respondents. Data showed that 80% (or 4 respondents) are females, and 20% (or 1 respondent) is male. Age-wise, 40% of the respondents (2 female) fall within the age range of 30-39. Additionally, 20% are in the 40-49 range (1 female), and another 20% are in the 50-59 range (1 female). Notably, there are no respondents in the 20-29 age range.

**Table 6. Teacher-Respondents' Highest Educational Attainment**

Educational Attainment	F	%
Master's Graduate	2	40.00
With Master's Units	3	60.00
Total	5	100.00

Table 6 presents the data in terms of Teacher-Respondents' Highest Educational Attainment. Data showed that 60% of the respondents (or 3 teachers) have some units of a master's degree, and 40% (or 2 teachers) have completed a master's degree. This suggests that all the respondents have a high level of educational attainment, which could potentially indicate a higher degree of subject matter knowledge or teaching proficiency.

**Table 7. Length of Service of Teacher-Respondents**

Length of Service (In years)	F	%
16 and above	1	20.00
11-15	2	40.00
6-10	1	20.00
1-5	1	20.00
Total	5	100.00



Table 7 presents the data in terms of Length of Service of Teacher-Respondents. Data showed that 40% (or 2 teachers) have 11-15 years of service, 20% (or 1 teacher) have 16 or more years of service, another 20% have 6-10 years of service, and the remaining 20% have 1-5 years of service.

Table 8. Parents' Perception on the Level of Quality Education for Learners with Special Educational Needs during the Limited Face-to-face Learning

S/ N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	I am satisfied with the way learning is structured at my child's school right now.	3.76	Excellent
2	I am confident with my ability to support my child's education during face-to-face learning.	3.68	Excellent
3	My child should spend more time learning in person at school right now.	3.76	Excellent
4	Face-to-face learning is working well with my child's education that I would like to continue.	3.82	Excellent
5	Modular distance learning with my child's education needs to be improved.	3.44	Excellent
6	The school provides enough COVID-related safety measures and protocols to keep the learners healthy.	3.72	Excellent
7	I am confident that child's academic growth right now will improve.	3.80	Excellent
8	There will be an improvement on your child's social-emotional well-being right now with face-to-face learning.	3.76	Excellent
9	With face-to-face learning, my child's peer relationships will be nurtured.	3.76	Excellent
10	The school communication with my child has been helpful for this school year.	3.76	Excellent
11	There is a clear communication from the school about COVID-related safety measures and protocols.	3.78	Excellent
12	I am able to manage my daily schedule with my child's current school schedule.	3.70	Excellent
13	I am confident that the school takes care of my child.	3.80	Excellent
14	I can contact my child's teacher easily.	3.84	Excellent
15	I feel comfortable communicating with my child's school.	3.78	Excellent
16	I feel that the school values my opinions.	3.78	Excellent
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.75	Excellent

Table 8 provides a detailed overview of parents' perceptions regarding the quality of education for learners with special educational needs during limited face-to-face learning. Each item on the list received a weighted mean score ranging from 3.44 to 3.84, all falling under the "Excellent" verbal description category. The aggregate weighted mean of the responses is 3.75, also classifying as "Excellent". These results suggest that the parents are highly satisfied with various aspects of their children's education during face-to-face learning, including the structure of learning, their ability to support their child's education, safety measures in place, and communication with the school. This could indicate that the current strategies used for limited face-to-face learning are well received by parents and could be continued or used as a model. Secondly, despite the high levels of satisfaction, there are still areas for improvement, as seen in the indicator relating to modular distance learning (which received the lowest score of 3.44). Therefore, efforts to enhance this aspect could further improve parental satisfaction and, potentially, student outcomes. It's important for educators and policymakers to consider these perceptions as they plan future educational strategies, particularly for learners with special educational needs. These findings have several important implications. First, the overall high satisfaction reported by parents suggests that the current approach to limited face-to-face learning for students with special educational needs is working effectively in the surveyed context. This high level of satisfaction, particularly in areas such as learning structure, parental support capabilities, safety measures, and communication, indicates that these practices are well-aligned with parental expectations and should be maintained or even used as a model for other educational contexts. Second, despite the general satisfaction, the relatively lower score received by modular distance learning implies that improvements could be made in this area. As distance learning likely continues to be a part of education due to ongoing global circumstances, it's crucial to enhance its effectiveness and align it with the quality observed in face-to-face settings. This could involve reassessing and revising the current distance learning modules, offering more support for parents and students in navigating these modules, or incorporating more interactive elements to engage students better. Lastly, it's important for schools and educational policymakers to keep an open line of communication with parents and continually seek their feedback, as their perceptions play a vital role in shaping educational strategies. This will ensure that policies and strategies remain responsive to the needs and concerns of parents,



thereby improving the educational experience of learners with special educational needs.

Table 9. Teachers' Perception on the Level of Quality Education LSENs during the Limited Face-to-face Learning

S/ N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	I am ready for limited face-to-face classes.	4.00	Excellent
2	I am satisfied with the current learning model at your school.	3.80	Excellent
3	The current learning model has positive effects on my socio-emotional well-being.	3.60	Excellent
4	I have effective educational assessment in evaluating my learners during limited face-to-face classes.	3.80	Excellent
5	I am confident that I can provide effective instruction in the current learning model.	3.80	Excellent
6	I am able to implement the COVID-related safety measures and protocols in my building.	3.80	Excellent
7	I can improve the learners' academic growth right now.	3.60	Excellent
8	I can help improve learners' social-emotional well-being right now.	3.80	Excellent
9	In face-to-face classes, it is easy to form relationships with my students.	4.00	Excellent
10	I am positive about my professional development so far this year.	4.00	Excellent
11	The leadership in our school has been helpful in resolving challenges so far this year.	3.80	Excellent
12	I am satisfied with the frequency of communication from school leadership.	3.80	Excellent
13	There is a clear communication from school leadership about the school's learning model.	4.00	Excellent
14	I am able to cope up with the challenges in promoting quality education to all learners during limited face-to-face classes.	4.00	Excellent
15	I can provide quality education to learners with special needs during limited face-to-face classes.	4.00	Excellent
16	I am aware that I need to equally promote quality education to learners with special needs during face-to-face classes.	4.00	Excellent
Aggregate Weighted Mean		3.86	Excellent

Table 9 provides an overview of the teachers' perceptions of the quality of education for learners with special educational needs (LSENs)

during limited face-to-face learning. All the weighted mean scores fall within the "Excellent" verbal description range, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.86. This suggests that teachers feel well-prepared and confident in their ability to deliver effective instruction and manage the current learning model, even amidst the challenges posed by limited face-to-face classes. They also express a high degree of satisfaction with the communication and leadership at their schools. The high degree of teacher confidence and satisfaction suggests that current policies and training measures are generally effective. It implies that teachers feel equipped and supported to handle the demands of limited face-to-face instruction with LSENs. However, while teachers express confidence in promoting learners' academic growth and socio-emotional well-being, these items received slightly lower scores (3.60). It could indicate room for enhancing professional development opportunities or resources related to these areas. Furthermore, it underlines the importance of ongoing support and clear communication from school leadership in ensuring that teachers can effectively adapt to changing teaching conditions.

However, the areas related to promoting learners' academic growth and socio-emotional well-being, despite falling within the "Excellent" range, received slightly lower scores (3.60). This could imply a need for further investment in resources, training, or support mechanisms specifically tailored to these aspects. Enhancing these areas could bolster teacher effectiveness, particularly in the context of learners with special educational needs. Furthermore, the positive feedback about communication and leadership within the schools underscores the importance of these factors in facilitating effective instruction during limited face-to-face classes. School leaders should continue to prioritize clear and regular communication with their teachers, particularly concerning any changes or updates to the school's learning model.

Finally, the high level of teacher confidence in providing quality education to learners with special needs suggests that teachers are aware of the importance of inclusive education and feel prepared to deliver it. However, it is essential to sustain this confidence through continuous professional development opportunities, ensuring that teachers can stay updated on the latest best practices and strategies in this field. In conclusion, while the existing strategies seem to be successful, it's vital to keep an eye on potential areas of improvement, especially focusing on learners' academic growth and socio-emotional well-being, and continue fostering an environment of support, clear communication, and ongoing professional development for teachers.

**Table 10.** Test of Significant Difference between the Parents and Teachers' perception on the Quality Education for LSENs during the Limited Face-to-face Learning

Source of Difference	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	Computed t-value	p-value	Decision	Result
Parents	59.9	8.11	-1.86	-0.506	0.615	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant
Teachers	61.8	3.03					

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Table 10 presents a statistical comparison between the perceptions of parents and teachers regarding the quality of education for learners with special educational needs (LSENs) during limited face-to-face learning. The computed t-value is -0.506, and the p-value is 0.615, which is greater than the 0.05 significance level. This leads to a decision not to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of parents and teachers in this context. The implication of these findings is that both parents and teachers, despite having different roles and perspectives in the education process, have similar evaluations of the quality of education provided to LSENs during limited face-to-face learning. This mutual understanding and agreement can serve as a strong foundation for collaboration between parents and teachers, enhancing the effectiveness of educational strategies and support mechanisms for LSENs. Nevertheless, the fact that no significant difference exists does not necessarily mean that the current state of education is optimal. Continuous efforts to improve the quality of education, based on feedback from both parents and teachers, are crucial to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for LSENs. The similar perception levels could also suggest that both groups might benefit from shared forums or channels to discuss their experiences, feedback, and suggestions for further improvement.

### Conclusion

Based on the results of the survey data, several conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, it is clear that a large majority of parents involved are in the age bracket of 30-39 years and are predominantly female. With respect to educational attainment, high school graduates constitute the largest group among the parents. The data shows that these parents

have varying family sizes and income levels, the latter being predominantly below 10,000 pesos per month. Regarding the teachers, there is an even distribution across different age brackets and most of them have either completed a Master's degree or have pursued Master's units. They have a diverse range of service years, indicating a mix of both experienced and less experienced teachers in the system.

In the context of limited face-to-face learning for learners with special educational needs (LSENs), both parents and teachers have expressed a high degree of satisfaction, indicative of effective strategies being employed. Parents and teachers share similar perceptions of the quality of education provided to LSENs during this period. This congruity presents a solid foundation for parent-teacher collaboration aimed at improving the educational experience for LSENs. Despite the overall high satisfaction, certain areas for improvement were identified, such as enhancing modular distance learning, and focusing on learners' academic growth and socio-emotional well-being. In summary, the survey results highlight the need for continuous improvement in education strategies and underscore the importance of a collaborative relationship between parents and teachers to enhance the educational outcomes for LSENs.

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