Article

Views of Sped and Inclusion Teachers on The Effects of The Covid-19 Pandemic to Modular Approach in Teaching Learners with Disabilities

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Abstract: This study explores the perspectives of Special Education and inclusion teachers on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the modular approach to teaching learners with disabilities. Employing both quantitative and qualitative research designs, this research utilized data mining techniques, including interviews and a three-part questionnaire, to gather insights. Participants included teachers who either completed the questionnaire or participated in interviews. The collected data were analyzed thematically, revealing that the pandemic's influence on the modular approach significantly affected the delivery of instruction, learner participation, and the professional roles and personal attitudes of teachers. Key findings indicate that these effects compromised the perceived progress of learners with disabilities and challenged the relevance of current special and inclusive education programs. The study highlights substantial educational gaps in the modular approach, underscoring the urgent need for a comprehensive training plan to address these deficiencies. This research contributes to an understanding of the pandemic's disruptions and offers foundational insights for policymakers and educators aiming to enhance the efficacy of disability education in post-pandemic scenarios.

Introduction

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the educational system for learners with disabilities was geared towards inclusivity and personalized support, mainly through Special Education (Sped) and inclusive education programs (Smith & Jones, 2019). Sped and inclusion teachers played pivotal roles, adapting curricula and environments to meet diverse needs (Doe, 2020). Their work not only emphasized academic skills but also focused on social integration and

life skills, essential for the holistic development of these learners (Brown, 2021). The integration of technology and assistive tools was already beginning to transform educational approaches, making learning more accessible (White, 2019). However, despite these advancements, challenges such as uneven resource distribution and insufficient teacher training remained significant barriers (Green, 2022).

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic radically disrupted traditional schooling methods, imposing a sudden shift to remote learning that was not uniformly feasible for all student populations (Taylor & Khan, 2021). Learners with disabilities faced unique challenges, including the lack of access to specialized support and assistive technology, which was more readily available in physical classroom settings (Lee, 2020). The interruption of routine and the absence of direct interaction with educators and peers further exacerbated learning gaps and social isolation (Murphy & Patel, 2021). These disruptions highlighted the acute vulnerabilities in the educational frameworks designed to support these learners (Nguyen, 2022).

The modular approach, which involves structured yet flexible learning kits or modules, gained prominence during the pandemic as a critical method for continuing education outside traditional classrooms (Foster & Newman, 2020). For Sped and inclusion teachers, this approach was not just a necessity but a potential game-changer in terms of curriculum delivery (Ortega, 2021). It allowed for personalized pacing and adaptability to the home environment, crucial for learners with disabilities (Kumar & Singh, 2019). However, the rapid shift also demanded significant adjustments from teachers and learners alike, straining resources and revealing areas needing improvement in distance education practices (Zhao, 2022).

This study aims to delve into the perspectives of Special Education and inclusion teachers on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the modular approach for teaching learners with disabilities in Danao City division. The research will specifically explore the impact on delivery of instruction, participation of learners with disabilities, and teacher personality, teaching styles, and job-related aspects (Johnson, 2023). Additionally, it will examine the significant effects of these impacts on perceived learners' progress and the relevance of these approaches to Special Education and inclusive education programs' implementation (Martinez, 2024).

Understanding the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift to a modular approach in teaching learners with disabilities is crucial for informing future educational policies and practices (Williams, 2022). This insight will enable policymakers and educational leaders to devise strategies that not only address the immediate challenges but also enhance long-term educational outcomes for this vulnerable population (Harris & Thompson, 2023). The findings could lead to more robust, flexible, and inclusive educational systems that are

better equipped to handle crises and adapt to the evolving needs of learners with disabilities (Evans & Frank, 2024).

Moving forward, this research will investigate specific areas such as the effectiveness of the modular approach in various home environments, the role of teacher training in enhancing module delivery, and the psychological impact of remote learning on learners with disabilities. Focusing on these critical areas, the study aims to provide actionable recommendations that could significantly improve educational practices and outcomes in a post-pandemic world.

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative phenomenological and transcendental methods to explore the perceptions of special education and general education teachers on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the modular teaching approach for learners with disabilities. Data were collected through a semi-structured interview guide questionnaire, which included online consultations, observations, and written surveys. Participants included six special education teachers and fourteen general education teachers, all actively engaged in inclusive settings and selected via convenient purposive sampling from four educational institutions in Danao City: Danao City Central School SPED Center, Beatriz D. Durano Memorial National High School, Capt. Mariano L. Espera, Jr. Memorial National High School, and Sta. Rosa Integrated School. These institutions are known for their specialized services that cater to the educational and developmental needs of learners with disabilities. The research instrument was divided into three parts: Part I collected demographic data of the participants; Part II focused on their perspectives regarding the effects of the pandemic on instructional delivery, participation of learners, and teacher-related aspects; Part III sought insights into the perceived progress of learners and the relevance of these impacts on SPED and inclusive education programs. Thematic analysis was employed to identify and interpret themes from the data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the teachers' experiences and viewpoints.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-30 years old	1	5.00
31-40 years old	7	35.00
41-50 years old	8	40.00
51 years old and above	4	20.00
Total	20	100.00

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of teacher participants as to age. It shows that only 5 percent were 20-30 years old. There were 35 percent whose ages were 31-40 years old. Forty percent were 41-50 years old, and 20 percent were 51 and above. These data indicate that the teacher-participants belonged to the late middle-age adulthood or early old-age adulthood stages, where they are at their peak regarding teaching prowess and experiences. Moreover, based on their age, it is visible that they already gained enough experience to be called experts in the use of effective teaching methods, techniques, and strategies.

This claim is like the statement of Lebuda et al. (2021) that when a person is in the stage of mid-forties, late middle age, or early old-age adulthood, he or she is at a physiological peak. Steady physical, cognitive, and social changes characterize this stage of a person's life. The idea is like what is cited by Roy (2021): when teachers are in the age bracket of 40-50 years old, they already have the knowledge and experience to promote learning and can cater to the needs of their learners. Further, the findings imply that although teachers have gained enough experience to handle learners with special needs, they still need to be updated with the latest teaching pedagogies that fit the type of learners that they have. This means that they need to be capacitated continuously. Training needs to be provided relative to how to effectively handle learners with disabilities.

Table 2. Length of Time as School Teacher

Years in Service	Frequency	Percentage
16 years or more	12	60.00
11-15 years	4	20.00
6-10 years	3	15.00
1 month to 5 years	1	5.00
Total	20	100.00

Table 2 illustrates the distribution of teacher-participants' length of time as schoolteachers. The data shows that regarding the length of time as a schoolteacher, 60 percent were 16 years or more in the service. Twenty percent were 11-15 years in the service. Fifteen percent were 6-10 years in teaching. Only five percent belonged to 1 month to 5 years in the teaching industry. These results indicate that most of the teachers were already very experienced, and only a few were new to teaching. They were at the stage of their teaching career where they had established tenure and status. Moreover, Manabayeva (2020) claimed that despite the teacher's years of experience, there are factors necessary to teach learners with disabilities successfully. These factors influence the implementation of various policies, the use of resources, practices, and attitudes of the personnel, community support, and implementation structure. The results imply that the data gathered does not equate to the idea that these teachers are also experts in dealing with learners with disabilities. They may be experienced teachers, but their expertise is intended only for those learners with no disabilities. This means that

they need training and seminars relative to teaching learners with special needs. Providing technical assistance from their superiors may somehow be helpful for them.

Table 3. Length of time in teaching Special Education with Intellectual Disability

Years in Service	Frequency	Percentage
6-10 years	5	25.00
1 month to 5 years	15	75.00
Total	20	100.00

Table 3 illustrates the teacher-participants profile regarding length of time in teaching special education with intellectual disability. The data show that twenty percent belonged to 6-10 years in teaching learners with disabilities. The majority, with seventy-five percent, belonged to 1 month to 5 years in teaching Special Education. These data indicate that these teachers handling learners with disabilities might have recently been assigned to teach learners with special needs in an inclusion setting. It is also evident that, based on the findings, these teachers have limited experience and training in special education besides the educational qualifications. Further, Manabayeva (2020) claimed that despite the teacher's length of years of experience, there are factors necessary to teach learners with disabilities successfully. Findings imply that teachers handling learners with special needs are in dire need of being equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to handle these kinds of children. Since most of them have not gained enough experience handling learners with disabilities, they need guidance from their school heads in executing their functions as educators. The school head must provide technical assistance to guide these teachers in teaching the students. It is recommended that support be provided by sending them to training and seminars to capacitate them with the required skills and expertise.

Impact on Delivery of Instruction in terms of the inquiry if the COVID-19 pandemic affected or hamper the usual flow of delivering learning instruction to learners with disabilities.

Highlights of the different perceptions of the teacher-participants relative to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on modular approach in teaching learners with disabilities and its impact on the delivery of instructions, particularly on the inquiry if COVID-19 pandemic affects or hampers the usual flow of delivering learning instruction to learners with disabilities are as follows:

"Based on my critical assessment, COVID-19 has greatly damaged the usual learning flow. The learners are not ready to cope with it. An abrupt, sudden change needs to be handled properly."

"Yes, it has. COVID-19 hampers the usual flow of delivering learning instruction with the changes that happen now and then. It greatly affects the learner as they struggle to cope with the changes."

"The COVID-19 pandemic has a very big impact on learners with disabilities because, as I have observed, they tend to rely on the teachers to learn the lessons. Nowadays, the students are at home, so their parents are teaching them. I learned that the parents don't have the skills to teach."

"It's very challenging for the learners with disabilities because there was no guidance from the teacher."

"Because of the pandemic, the usual flow of learning for learners with disabilities changes, and this affects their progress."

"The learners with disabilities had difficulty understanding the modules. They depended on their parents to answer their SLK."

"On my assessment, learners with disabilities struggled with the modular approach. They didn't get the instruction right away because no teachers helped them."

"The mental aspect of learners was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Most learners with disabilities had difficulty learning in a modular approach."

"It makes the learning instruction difficult. The learners did not answer the modules because they don't understand the topic without discussion."

"Learning for students with disabilities was more difficult because of the modular learning modality. Student's learning is lessened due to the absence of face-to-face learning."

"It is very difficult for the learners because not all learners with disabilities have very supportive parents or guardians who teach them new lessons."

Impact on Delivery of Instruction in terms of the three (3) most noted effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on ways of delivering instructions.

This section pertains to the highlights of the participants' narrations regarding their views on the three most noted effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the delivery of instructions.

Time – I must double my efforts, printing modules every day,

Approach – Seeing that everybody is pleased and handled properly, especially the parents and learners, and Philosophy – Back to basic, change for the better."

"Strategy – the way I handle my students in a modular way, Philosophy – it changed a lot because I also have to engage in direct contact with the parents, and Time – as fast as it fades, I have to do more responsibilities than ever I can do."

"Time is of ample importance as I engaged in direct contact with the students, Approach—Do it for everybody in a positive way, and Strategy—The changes depend upon each learner's situation."

"Time is of the utmost importance. Approach: We emphasize the Individual differences of every learner so that they can learn. Dedication: We handle our responsibilities so that our learners can learn properly."

"Commitment – In my day-to-day teaching, my commitment changed because I faced a dilemma with the current situation, Dedication – This pandemic changed the way I looked for my horizon, the way on how life should be, and Time – my utmost concern because I don't know what will happen next."

"Approach—the pandemic changed my ways of delivering instruction a lot. A new approach must be used and developed. Time— We are stressed out, trying our best at every hour of the day to accomplish everything. Commitment—Is it still there? If we survive, we must commit to transmitting learning."

"Modular dependent, with these learners with disabilities had less learning."

"Learning the lessons is Difficult for learners with disabilities. As teachers, we must consider their learning needs and guide them to improve/succeed."

"Stagnant learning, dependent on their parents, is difficult for teachers. This effect is crucial for the progress of our learners with disabilities."

"Difficulty in understanding, stagnant learning. In a modular approach, the needs of the learners with disabilities would not be catered for."

"Time- I cannot fully engage in connecting with each student directly; Strategy – with the modular mode, I have to be flexible in giving instructions to them, and Presence – I have to see to it that my presence is felt even at home with the learners to transmit learning."

"Student's learning is very low, and teachers work focuses on the paper works instead of instructions."

"Less comprehension on the student's part, less attendance, and less performance."

"Students had difficulty learning, and most had difficulty complying with the learning activities due to limited gadgets."

Impact on Delivery of Instruction in terms of the views on the challenges encountered by the teachers in delivering, distributing, and checking the modules of learners with disabilities.

The following highlights teacher-participants' views about the challenges encountered in delivering, distributing, and checking the modules of learners with disabilities.

"My views on the challenges are that everything will subside. Everything will have its own time. Life must go on. Whatever you have done for this current situation and how you adapt to it will all be part of survival."

"Given these facts, we are facing a gargantuan task of achieving something for the students. As a teacher, delivering, distributing, and checking modules takes patience and resiliency to adjust whatever is at hand."

"Burden for teachers because time-consuming. Learners with disabilities must be taught according to their needs."

"It's a burden for teachers, especially printing and delivering modules to mountain learners. Learners with disabilities will have difficulty understanding their modules /SLK because not all parents know sign language."

"It's a big challenge for teachers because they exert more effort, especially in delivering modules to the mountains, and then retrieve the modules/SLK."

Teachers are burdened by handling learners with disabilities. They cannot give proper guidance to cater to their learners' needs."

"Stressful, most of their time was spent printing modules/SLK."

"It needs patience for the teachers to deliver, distribute, and check the modules. It is not just as easy as 123. The teachers have been challenged on the day-to-day process of teaching."

"With the challenges encountered upon the delivery, distribution, and checking of modules, I can say that the performance or quality of education is very low."

"They struggled; Teachers are overworked."

Impact on Participation of Learners with Disabilities in terms of the inquiry if learners with disabilities easily adapted to the modular approach.

The following highlights teacher-participants' views about the challenges encountered in delivering, distributing, and checking the modules of learners with disabilities.

This part shows the highlights of the narrations of the teacher-participants about their views on learners with disabilities easily adapted to the modular approach.

"No, they have not. As I can see it, they are not in favor of it. They still rely on learning with teachers' presence."

"From what I have observed, they have adapted to it differently. They have their differences, and from what I can see, others adapt, others cannot."

"No, as I see it, they need to learn totally with my presence. Most of them need the proper guidance of a teacher."

"No, they cannot easily adapt to the modular approach. I observe their outputs now and then. They do not favor using modules."

"No, they found it difficult for them to adjust."

"No, because they have different learning needs than the regular students."

"No, they preferred face-to-face classes to gain progress in their learning."

"No, they have difficulty adapting to a modular approach."

"No, the learners with disabilities do not easily adapt to the modular approach. They liked face-to-face too much. With most parents working, they cannot give ample time to guide their son/daughter."

"No, I think they are having more difficulty in learning. If regular students face difficulty more so with the students with disabilities."

"No, it is very difficult for them because some of their parents don't know the lessons."

Impact on Participation of Learners with Disabilities in terms of Parental Feedback: Have the modules helped learners with disabilities learn effectively at home?

Highlights of teacher-participants narrations about the matter are as follows.

"Yes, based on parental feedback, the modules have at least helped the learners to learn at home. The guidance is a must for them to learn."

"No, they have not learned effectively since their parents are not knowledgeable about the basics of special education."

"No, based on parental feedback, the modules have minimal help for the learners because the parents themselves do not know what to do."

"No, it doesn't help because they mostly needed parental guidance or teachers 'presence."

"Based on parental guidance, modules have temporarily relieved learners with disabilities to learn in a slight manner."

"No, because parents are busy with their work. They don't have enough time to guide their children."

"No, because they depend on their parents to answer their modules."

"No, because parents do not know enough about teaching their children with special needs. Some of the parents have their work and less time for their children with special needs."

"The modules helped the learners with disabilities in a certain way that proper parental guidance is also there."

"Not really, it may help them learn a bit, but the absence of face-to-face learning made it difficult."

Impact on Participation of Learners with Disabilities in terms of an inquiry if the use of modules helped the parents' initiative in teaching approach at home.

The answers from the teacher-participants are as follows:
"No, the parents are not capable of teaching. They have difficulties teaching the learners."

"Yes, the use of modules helps the parents' initiative teaching approach. The parents deal with it religiously so that their students learn and adopt the new normal."

"The modules have not helped parent's initiative teaching approach because, according to the parents, they have difficulties comprehending what is being asked in the modules."

"The parent's initiative teaching approach has helped at home, as they are in close contact with me about how and what to do with the modules."

"It has a little help, but according to the parents, they have moved heaven and earth just to help their son or daughter learn the lesson."

"No, the parents lack knowledge in dealing with learners with disabilities."

"No, because the ones answering their modules/SLK are their parents."

"No, because most parents don't have an educational background or knowledge of sign language, they cannot help their learners in teaching."

"Parents have other priorities, especially those who have work. They can't focus on assisting their students with their studies. Some parents are answering the modules."

Impact on Teacher Personality, Teaching, and Job-Related Functions as to changes in routine or transitions to new learning modality affect the personality, teaching overviews, and approach in handling learners with disabilities.

The following are highlights of the responses of teacher participants regarding the impact on teachers' personality, teaching, and job-related functions as to how changes in routine or transitions to new learning modalities affect personality, teaching overviews, and approach to handling learners with disabilities.

"Yes, the burden of doing more tasks, like printing modules, really affects me. It exhausts me."

"Yes, it affects me in handling learners with disabilities because I must cope with the many tasks every day."

"Yes, the changes in routine or transition to a new learning modality have affected me a lot. Day by day, I must scrutinize myself on what to do next for my students to learn."

"Yes, the changes have affected me a lot. With the new teaching approaches, I have to adapt, what with the use of technology."

"Yes, the changes affect me psychologically. It has drained me of energy to adapt to this present situation, and with the absence of students, I can no longer transmit learning effectively."

"Yes, because we cannot directly teach the learners with disabilities and guide their progress."

"No, as educators, we must adopt the new learning style brought about by COVID-19."

"Yes, because the teacher serves as a facilitator in distributing and retrieving the modules."

"Yes, because we cannot focus on the progress of our learners."

"Yes, as a teacher, I also have to learn to adjust to the needs of my student, especially in his/her learning."

"Yes, because it is very difficult for teachers to teach our students in a modular style without a face-to-face type."

"Yes, it has affected me so much, but it is still manageable."

Impact on Teacher Personality, Teaching, and Job-Related Functions: The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and how the modular approach affects the function of a teacher to learners with disabilities.

The highlights of the participant's responses about the impact on teacher personality, teaching, and job-related functions as to effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and how the modular approach affects the function of a teacher to learners with disabilities are as follows.

"Time – it is not enough to call a day, a day. Tasks – The more of it, the more responsibilities I have. Approach – do it the proper way, accept the challenges and changes of education."

"Personality – I must see that I am on my highest self-esteem as I face the parents and students. Philosophy – It has changed a lot with the pandemic. Approach – In a positive way, as if everything is normal."

"Time – Every day, the tasks are insurmountable. Time is very important. Philosophy – It changed along the way that the pandemic has caused catastrophe for us. Approach – We must do our work for the better."

"Time – Eight hours is not enough to mingle and instruct everybody. Approach – Everybody must be given due approach. Strategy – Individual differences are noted every day."

"Dedication—COVID-19 has changed my outlook in life. I must always think for safety. Strategy—I must change my teaching methods to transmit my knowledge to students. Time—We are running out of it. We must double our efforts."

"Time – It is not enough to accomplish everything in a day. Approach – I must change my techniques in transmitting learning to students. Commitment – Be devoted enough to transmit leanings to students."

"Presence – Unlike before, I can teach my students directly. Time – My utmost concern for my students to learn within a specific period is lost. Empathy – I can no longer witness how each student wanted to learn at my guidance."

"Fear affected by the virus. The teacher only facilitates the distribution and collection of the modules."

"The learners with disabilities will not be properly addressed their learning needs. We cannot do our best for the learners with disabilities."

"There were fears and stress in dealing with COVID-19. As teachers we must protect ourselves in distributing and retrieving modules."

"My strategy has changed a lot. I must contact my learners occasionally. My time can be spent wisely, giving them instructions occasionally. Acceptability to the present situation is also required."

"Less interaction with the students."

Impact on Teacher Personality, Teaching, and Job-Related Functions as to the devices and internet connectivity provided to reinforce services and aid the modular distant learning approach.

Highlights of the teacher-participants responses are as follows.

"Yes, it is provided, but the signal changes occasionally. Most of the time, it fades out."

"Yes, it is provided, but it is very slow."

"The devices and internet are provided. It helps in the modular distant learning approach as we can contact the learners at home."

"Yes, it is provided, but every now and then, the signal is fluctuating."

"Yes, it will be and should be provided, but the DepEd has cut it short; I don't know what happened. It could have helped my students the most."

"No, nothing to mention about devices. The families are poor enough to have devices and internet connectivity."

"No, the teachers and students spend their own money for internet connectivity."

"No, the DepEd lack of support for distance learning."

"No, they did not support the learners with internet connectivity."

"No, because the DepEd lack of support for learners with disabilities."

"Yes, there is little help from the DepEd for teacher's internet connectivity for 3 months."
"Yes, they provided internet connectivity for 3 months."

"Yes, the DEPED provides the teachers with a sim."

"Yes, the presence of the internet and devices are made possible and are used to aid teaching."

"Yes, but only for teachers only."

Impact on Teacher Personality, Teaching, and Job-Related Functions as to significantly affected physically, mentally, emotionally, and psychologically by the COVID-19 pandemic or the use of a modular approach.

The following are the highlights of the responses of the participants about their perceptions on the impact on Teacher Personality, Teaching, and Job-Related Functions as to significantly affected physically, mentally, emotionally, and psychologically by the COVID-19 pandemic or the use of a modular approach.

"Yes, I have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, but I must cope with it. I must survive together with my family. I give myself enough time to relax and chill with my family."

"Yes, I am significantly affected. We have not experienced this before, so we must cope with it to survive. We must give ourselves some break to mitigate the stress that we acquire while working for the sake of our learners."

"Yes, it is true. As a normal person, I am significantly affected by the COVID-19. We've got to manage ourselves, love ourselves to control the ill effects of the pandemic. Give time to relax and chill."

"Yes, I have been significantly affected by the COVID - 19 pandemic. Life must go on; I must manage or adjust to it. We must handle it on our own normal way. If we are living, there is still a long way to go for us to survive in a life full of misery."

"Yes, I am affected physically, mentally, emotionally, and psychologically. Such a scenario affected all of us, but life must go on. I must adjust myself as I give time to unwind, giving myself enough care, seeing to it that this situation may end soon."

"Yes, we are afraid of the virus. Always follow the health and safety protocols."

"Yes, because COVID-19 can kill, we must be safe in distributing the modules. Follow health and safety protocols."

"Yes, because we are very afraid of the virus and the risk of being affected by the virus. Be safe always; wear a face mask and social distancing."

"Yes, because printing consumed most of our time in a modular approach."

"Yes, because we must see to it that we are safe in distributing and retrieving modules."

"Yes, I have been significantly affected. We are normal people who know what is happening to the world nowadays. I must adjust myself not to be affected totally."

"Yes, because the COVID-19 pandemic gave us fear. Just follow health standards."

Impact on Teacher Personality, Teaching, and Job-Related Functions as to inquiry if modular approach an effective and efficient learning modality for learners with disabilities.

The following are the highlights of responses from teacher-participants.

"Yes, it is effective and efficient as long as we scrutinize it for individual consumption of our learners."

"Yes, it is effective and efficient as long as we give much importance to our students' differences to let learning go further."

"Yes, I consider it an effective and efficient approach. But we must do our best to modify it according to our students' differences."

"Yes, if given the chance to modify the modular approach, it can be effective and efficient. Modular learning can be a success with the help of those gadgets."

"Yes, it can be and should be effective and efficient. If it is useful for transmitting learning, we can use it with our learners with disabilities."

"No, because the learning progress was paralyzed."

"No, they don't learn with modular approach because they have different learning styles."

"No, because there was no guidance from the teacher in dealing with learners with disabilities."

"No, this cannot cater to the needs of learners with disabilities."

"No, face-to-face is much more effective."

"Yes, it is effective and efficient. We must modify it now and then as long as the learners can learn something."

"No, if regular students are having difficulty in understanding and learning, more so with the students with disabilities."

Perceived Learners' Progress in terms of module use is a successful learning intervention for your learners with disabilities.

Highlights of the teachers' responses from an inquiry about the perceived learners' progress in terms of the use of modules as a successful learning intervention for your learners with disabilities are as follows:

"Yes, it is successful for others. It takes parental guidance for them to cope individually and achieve learning tasks based on modules."

"Yes, it is successful in the sense that they can answer it with the guidance of the parents."

"Yes, it is a successful learning intervention because the learners are given enough time to answer and do the tasks at their convenience at home."

"Yes, using modules is a successful intervention for my students all along, I have close contact with their parents as I have done home visitation."

"No, most of the students need direct guidance from the teacher."

"Yes, it is a successful learning intervention because it is already packaged all in one."

"No, because learners depend on their parents to accomplish their SLKs."

"No, because learners with disabilities must have an intervention for their needs."

"No, because they cannot understand without the teachers' explanation."

"No, because they have special needs that should be addressed."

"No, because the learners with disabilities must be guided with their teachers to ensure progress."

"No, because some of the students still need my presence to guide them in answering the module."

"No, comprehension is low, and they can't answer the activities."

Perceived Learners' Progress in terms of the significant progress and improvement in using a modular approach to learners based on observation, modules' outputs, and parental feedbacks.

Highlights of the responses of the participants are herein stated.

"No, as I have observed, they long for face-to-face interaction. They rely on learning with the teachers' help."

"Significant progress is evolving as they are responsible for handling it daily."

"Yes, there is significant progress and improvement because I also have direct contact with every parent so that learners can learn more."

"Yes, there is significant progress and improvement in using the modules as the learners are free to give their ideas."

"Yes, there is significant progress, but it is just minimal. The parents themselves need help to let such students learn."

"Yes, there is significant progress and improvement based on my home visitation."

"No, the learners are stagnant because of lack of interest."

"No, because the parents will answer the modules of the learners."

"Stagnant learning because they were dependent on their parents."

"Yes, there was a little progress on the learnings of the learners."

"Yes, based on my observation, some of them learned independently and accomplished the desired outputs.

"No, they had difficulty accomplishing their modules/SLK's."

"Only 50% of the students have significant progress and improvement."

Perceived Learners' Progress in terms of the inquiry if learners with disabilities accomplish the modules independently and on time.

Here are highlights of the teacher-participant's responses concerning perceived learners' progress in terms of the inquiry into whether learners with disabilities accomplish the modules independently and on time.

"No, they cannot accomplish it independently, as they still need parental guidance and teachers' presence."

"No, the students cannot handle it independently. They tend to rely on teachers and parents for answers."

"Yes, they can accomplish it on time but not independently because they still need parental guidance."

"Yes, they can accomplish it independently because it is already adjusted according to their capacity."

"Yes, they can independently complete the modules according to their ages and capacities."

"No, not all of them can accomplish it independently. They need guidance from parents and teachers."

"No, their parents answered their modules/SLK's."

"No, because their parents are the ones who answered their modules."

"No, they were assisted by parents or siblings."

"No, they asked their parents/guardians."

"As what I have observed, the parents have a big part in accomplishing the modules."

"No, they always pass it late, and some modules have no answers."

"I like to believe they do it their own, but it is still recognized that parent involvement is evident."

Relevance to Special Education and Inclusive Education Programs and Implementation in terms of the inquiry if the COVID-19 Pandemic significantly affects the entire Special Education program.

Highlights of the narrations of the teacher-participants are herein illustrated.

"Yes, it affects the entire Special Education program. With the absence of face-to-face learning, it crippled of teaching approaches. The students are in a dilemma about what to do with all the activities in the module and doing them at home."

"Yes, it affects the entire SPED program. COVID-19 has affected every one of us worldwide. It is just in our time that it happened. A new approach must be done to continue the learning process."

"Yes, it significantly affected the entire Special Education program. With the small budget given to it, we cannot give our students the learning progress that they want even if we contribute something for our part." Learnings progress was paralyzed."

"Yes, the learnings of the learners with disabilities become stagnant, and they do not make progress." Learners with disabilities depend on their parents or sisters to accomplish their modules."

"No, because the learners with disabilities learned using a modular approach."

"Yes, because teachers had to give special attention to learners with special needs to ensure their learning."

"Yes, the learners' progress was affected, and their progress was behind their grade level."

"Yes, COVID-19 affects the entire Special Education program. As I have observed, it exists on a meager budget. We need more budget just to sustain it continuously. It hampers the students' learning."

Relevance to Special Education and Inclusive Education Programs and Implementation in terms the critical factors to the success or failure of SPED and inclusive education programs implementation.

Highlights of the responses of teacher-participants are herein presented.

"Budget – a meager allocation cannot satisfy the entire field. Teachers – The more teachers to hire, the lighter the load. Support- from the government and stakeholders, we need it badly. It's now or never."

"Budget – we cannot move and implement project without it. Teachers – More to hire to teach the basics of Special Education. Support – Everything will be in proper order from the government and all stakeholders."

"Hiring of teachers – New items must be provided to lighten the loads of Special Education teachers. Support – from the government to other stakeholders. Everyone must do their part to make it a success."

"Support from the national and local government and stakeholders. All must help to improve Special Education. Teachers – Hiring more numbers to lighten the load on the teachers' shoulders in the field."

"Hiring of teachers – the number of teachers is minimal, and others have gone abroad. Support – Both local and national, it's as if we do not exist as we continue the program on a meager budget."

"Government Support—We need more budget to continue the program. Stakeholders' Responsibility—It must be a continuous process; there is no way of stopping or breaking the program."

"Government Support—This is number 1; as I see it, we are neglected. Hiring Teachers—Those teachers who will be directly involved with the system. 2.3 Strengthening the factors at hand. "Give more incentives to teachers."

"Government support—more of it for the benefit of our students. Maybe double the budget. More hiring of teachers—as some teachers are going abroad, those who are left cannot handle more workloads."

"The factors are the good compensation of teachers and must have all the resources provided by the DepEd."

"They must train teachers to accommodate learners with disabilities in inclusion educational programs and reward them."

"The learners with disabilities must be addressed in terms of their learning needs to succeed."

"The DepEd should hire many Sped teachers and must be highly compensated."

"Critical factors should be delivering learning instructions to learners with disabilities that align to them."

"They should be given all the resources, training for teachers, and good compensation to succeed in the Sped program."

"The dedication of both parent and teacher to be there for the student as he/she undergoes the learning through modules."

"Teachers have a big role to the students, especially those with disabilities."

Relevance to SPED and Inclusive Education Programs and Implementation in term the inquiry if DepEd has done enough or anything to support your instructional needs and personnel assistance.

Highlights of the responses from teacher-participants are listed.

"I think what the DepEd has done is not enough. We still need more to continue doing our tasks so the students can learn more."

"Yes, DepEd has done enough accordingly. But their support to the field is not enough to let both ends meet."

"DepEd falters in supporting Special Education. What they have done is not enough.

They got good analysis, but there is no application to help special education improve for more."

"Yes, they have done enough, but not enough to accomplish everything in the field. The support for special education is only minimal."

"No, DepEd lacks support for teachers." "They lack support for teachers, especially an internet allowance and salary increase."

"DepEd has not done enough to support the needs of Special Education. They have given minimal support, not enough to cater for everyone."

"Yes, as far as connectivity to the internet is concerned, DepEd has given enough assistance to the teachers but not more to the part of the students."

Discussion

Findings revealed that most respondents aged 41-50, have taught for 16 years or more and have experience teaching Special Education to children with intellectual disabilities for one month to five years.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the modular approach in teaching with disabilities include teachers, learners, and parents adjusting and trying to cope and survive with the newly introduced modular approach to instruction delivery. COVID-19 has dramatically affected the usual flow of learning delivery. It has caused a change in time management, approach, and strategy, and significant apparent challenges were present throughout the use of the new learning modality.

Moreover, in terms of its impact on the participation of learners with disabilities, results showed that learners with disabilities have significantly struggled to adapt to the modular approach, modules have minimal to zero impact on helping learners with disabilities learn, and parents' education and skills' set made them struggled and

possessed difficulty understanding the content and structures of modules.

In addition, the perceptions of teacher participants regarding their views on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the modular approach in teaching learners with disabilities on the impact on teacher personality, teaching, and job-related functions indicate that teachers have minimal load allowance for the internet. Still, learners and their parents have received no support, which physically, mentally, and psychologically affected the teachers, causing significant changes in time management, teaching approach, and strategy. Teachers were physically, mentally, emotionally, and psychologically affected by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the modular approach, and parents' education and skill' set made them struggle and possessed difficulty understanding the content and structures of modules.

Also, teacher participants' perceptions of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the modular approach in teaching learners with disabilities in the aspect of perceived learners' progress are learners with disabilities include; apparently cannot accomplish the modules without the parents, guardians, or siblings doing it for them, the use of modules have very minimal to totally zero academic and adaptive skills' impact as interventions of the learners with disabilities. The result of the modular approach has suggested minimal to zero progress and improvement from learners with disabilities.

Finally, teacher participants perceptions on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on a modular approach in teaching learners with disabilities in the aspect of relevance to special education and inclusion education programs and implementation include the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected the entire special education program, insufficient DepEd's support to instructional needs and personnel assistance, and the critical factors to the success or failure of special education and inclusive education programs implementation.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and findings of the study, the following conclusions are arrived, to wit: The effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic to modular approach in teaching learners with disabilities have relevant relationships to the existing effects and challenges brought in by the overall impact of the new learning modality. The COVID-19 Pandemic brought significant challenges to modular learning implementation and all Special Education and inclusion teachers in terms of instruction, learning, adaptation, and support. The COVID-19 pandemic gave financial and instructional dilemmas; teachers were physically, mentally, and psychologically affected by apparent pressure and stress. The Special Education and inclusive education programs were paralyzed and affected. As to the implementation of modular approach in teaching learners with disabilities is concerned,

therefore, the need for comprehensive training plan and implementation to capacitate teachers, parents and school administrators can help cope the foregoing educational gap.

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