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## Research Article

### Practices of Teachers and Parents of Learners with Special Educational Needs During Pandemic

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#### ABSTRACT

The research focused on the practices of teachers and parents of learners with special educational needs during pandemic employing descriptive-correlational research design. It specifically sought the demographic profile of the teachers and parent-respondents. Using purposive sampling, the respondents of the study consisted of 22 teachers and 26 parents from Academia De Santiago of Tarlac, and Angel Beats Play and Development Center, Manila, Philippines. The frequency count, percentage weighted mean, and correlation analysis were used to treat the data gathered from the survey-questionnaire. Results revealed that that the teacher-respondents “greatly encountered” behavioral problems and “encountered” cognitive development problems in handling LSENs; parent-respondents “encountered” both behavioral and cognitive development problems. There was a “great extent” of practices of teachers while “little extent” in parents’ practices. There was a significant relationship between the demographic profile of the teacher-respondents and the extent of teachers’ practices. Based from the significant findings drawn, this study recommends to upskill teachers’ competencies in handling learners with special education needs. Finally, implementation of the action plan is hereby recommended to improve the behavioral and cognitive aspects of the learners and to further improve practices of teachers and parents of the home-schooled learners with special educational needs during a pandemic and its aftermath.

**Keywords:** *Descriptive-Correlational Method, Learners with Special Educational Needs, Manila, Philippines, Practices of Teachers and Parents, Special Education, Tarlac*

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## Background

Being a parent has never been an easy task. Rearing a child from birth until the child enters schooling has different phases of challenges. Parenting a child with special educational needs is even more challenging. The new normal set-up of Distance Learning Delivery Modalities (DLDM) has even made the situation with deeper degrees of difficulties in dealing not only with Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSENS) but to the parent as well. In this time of COVID 19 pandemic and its emerging contagious variants, teachers have to collaborate with parents who provide the child with added learning, extra attention, social-emotional or behavioral needs in a home-schooled environment.

Parents have no choice but to accept and deal with the challenges in the new normal set-up of Distance Learning Delivery Modalities (Tallada, 2021). Parents must ensure that their home-schooled learners receive a quality education in home-based schooling. However, now that the educational system turned into its new normal way, parents face even more complex problems with limited or sometimes no clear solutions at all (Shade and Ware, 2020). This claim was supported by Kuo and Coleman (2020) who asserted that appointments, learning therapies, school routines had significantly been affected to minimize the transmission of the Covid virus.

## Literature Review

The Theory of Behaviorism noticed the importance of three (3) main assumptions. This theory states that learning is an outcome of an improved behavior; the environment or the situation determines the behavior; including time and reinforcement are two crucial factors in the learning process (K12 Academics, 2021).

The theory of emotional development is another theory anchored to this research. This theory is a combination of the idea of functionalist and the theory of dynamical systems. The approach to emotional development emphasized that a child's environment can provide multiple interconnected activities. These components are all subjected to change as the child's emotions mature and respond more

appropriately to varied situations (Saarni, 2011).

McLeod (2016) asserted that the social learning theory proposed by Albert Bandura had proved the vital role of observing, modeling by example, mirroring actions, attributes, and emotional responses influence a person's learning behaviors. Thus, social learning theory focused on the environmental and cognitive factors as agents of a person's behavior in learning.

Moreover, McLeod (2020) also looked into Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. This learning theory views that interacting with knowledgeable individuals can be a source to acquire cultural values, beliefs, and problem-solving strategies. Concepts such as culture, specific tools, private speech, and the Zone of Proximal Development are the composition of Vygotsky's theory. Thus, learning comes before development.

Piaget's theory of cognitive development focused on learners' capabilities and the realization of such skills. In the cognitive approach, the behavior looks into the connection between psychological structures and behavioral patterns that led children in interpreting information. This theory further explains the improvement in the reasoning capacity of a child after acquiring new skills.

In addition, DepEd Order No. 032 s. 2020 strongly supports RA 9155 as it emphasized that parents, guardians, and other household partners play a complementary and broader role in supporting learners at home. However, most parents do not have enough money to send their children for check-ups and for individual interventions, therefore incapable to manage the behavior of their children.

## Methods

This study is descriptive-correlational in nature. It specifically described the demographic profile of the teacher-respondents. In addition, the study also described the problems encountered by the teachers and parents of the home-schooled learners with special educational needs in the DLDM and how serious they are as to behavioral, and cognitive development. Further, the respondents' extent of practices during a pandemic are among the interests of the study.

**Respondents**

The respondents of this research were the teachers and parents of the LSENs from Academia De Santiago of Tarlac, and Angel Beats Play and Development Center, Manila, Philippines during the school year 2020-2021. Purposive sampling was employed in selecting the respondents. Further total enumeration was used.

**Instrument**

Transmittal letters and survey questionnaire were used to gauge the degree of the identified problems encountered by the teachers and parents as to behavioral and cognitive development; as well as the extent of the practices of teachers and parents of the home-schooled learners with special educational needs during a pandemic.

**Data Gathering Procedures**

In the conduct of the study, the researcher observed the gathering and quantification of data through preliminary preparation, sampling, administration/distribution, and retrieval of the questionnaires, data processing, and scoring procedures.

**Treatment of Data**

The researcher employed the 4-point Likert scale with parametric scaling. The responses to each question were recorded with the aid of a statistician. To arrive at reliable results, frequency and percentage, average weighted mean, correlation analysis as statistical tools were employed.

**Results and Discussion**

Table 1. Learners' Category of Special Educational Needs Handled by Teachers

Type of Learners with Special Educational Needs	Total Number of Respondents	
	Total Teachers	Percentage of the Total No. of Teacher-Respondents
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	4	18.18
Emotional and Behavioral Disorder (EBD)	4	18.18
Speech Delay	6	27.27
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	3	13.64
Intellectual Disability	2	9.09
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	1	4.55
Others	2	9.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100%</b>

It can be easily gleaned in the findings that majority 6 or 27.27% of the teacher-respondents handle learners with speech delay followed by ADHD 4 or 18.18% and EBD with the same frequency of 4 and percentage of

18.18%. This implies that SPED teachers must be equip with latest pedagogical approaches in attaining educational goals using DLDMs amidst COVID-19 pandemic to address the special needs of these learners.

Table 2. Learners' Category of Special Educational Needs Handled by Parents

Type of Learners with Special Educational Needs	Total Number of Respondents	
	Total Parents	Percentage to the total no. of Parent - Respondents
ADHD	6	23.1
EBD	6	23.1
Speech Delay	6	23.1
ASD	3	11.5
Intellectual Disability	2	7.7
Others	2	7.7
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	1	3.8

It can be easily gleaned in the findings that majority 6 or 27.27% of the teacher-respondents handle learners with speech delay followed by ADHD 4 or 18.18% and EBD with

the same frequency of 4 and percentage of 18.18%. This implies that SPED teachers must be equip with latest pedagogical approaches.

Table 3. Summary Table on the Problems Encountered by Teachers and Parents

Problems Encountered	Teachers		Parents	
	Mean	Verbal Description	Mean	Verbal Description
Behavioral	2.63	Greatly Encountered	2.40	Encountered
Cognitive Development	2.28	Encountered	2.19	Encountered
Total	2.50	Encountered	2.30	Encountered

The findings show that the teacher-respondents collated a verbal description of "greatly encountered" problems in the behavioral aspects of the LENS learners with a noted mean of 2.63 while "encountered" problems in their cognitive development with a recorded 2.28 mean score. This data implies that LENS teachers are experiencing difficulties in dealing with the actions and manners as well in the delivery of learning for the differently-abled children.

Parents must ensure that their home-schooled children receive a high-quality education. However, now that the school system has settled distance learning, parents face even more complex situations with almost no clear solutions (Shade and Ware, 2020). This concept highlighted that cognitions, emotions, and moods are far too subjective as observable behaviors (Cherry, 2021).

Table 4. Extent of Teachers' Practices

The teacher provides the child assistance by...	Mean	Verbal Description
1. coordinating with other adults in the family in assuring consistent involvement in student's learning routine.	3.50	Very Great Extent
2. coordinating learning progress and needs of the learner.	3.50	Very Great Extent
3. involving the learner in setting expectations and educational goals.	3.36	Very Great Extent
4. examining the significance of social influences in providing meaningful learning experience.	3.36	Very Great Extent

5.	communicating learners' specific needs to the parent/guardian and other adults of the family.	3.32	Very Great Extent
6.	educating one's self by reading related literature and studies relevant to the learner's individualized needs.	3.27	Very Great Extent
7.	setting limits of play and giving time to school-related tasks.	3.23	Great Extent
8.	providing additional information and manipulative tasks.	3.23	Great Extent
9.	collaborates with other SPED teacher and other specialists in handling untoward behaviors of the learners.	3.23	Great Extent
10.	volunteering and participating in school activities like online meetings, conferences, and learning at home.	3.23	Great Extent
11.	actively participates on academic discussion with other SPED teachers on learner's progress, possible intervention, and other related activities.	3.23	Great Extent
12.	giving quality time for parental involvement.	3.18	Great Extent
13.	seeking expert's assessment and evaluation for learner's special educational needs.	3.18	Great Extent
14.	providing journal of the child's day-to-day record of behavior, emotion, experiences and learning progress.	3.14	Great Extent
15.	buying/creating manipulative learning materials as added support in providing the child's specific needs.	3.05	Great Extent
<b>Total Weighted Mean</b>		<b>3.27</b>	<b>Great Extent</b>

Generally, the data indicates that generally, teacher-respondents have been practicing thoroughly that develop to a **"great extent"** experience and learning, thus acquiring the skills in handling the home-schooled learners with special educational needs during a pandemic.

Table 5. Extent of Parent Practices

The parent/guardian provides the child assistance by...	Mean	Verbal Description
1. giving quality time for parental involvement	2.58	Great Extent
2. involving the learner in setting expectations and educational goals	2.50	Little Extent
3. providing additional information and manipulative tasks	2.46	Little Extent
4. buying/creating manipulative learning materials as added support in providing the child's specific needs	2.46	Little Extent
5. involving other adults in the family in assuring consistent learning routine	2.42	Little Extent
6. setting limits of play and giving time to school-related tasks	2.38	Little Extent
7. seeking the expertise of the SPED teacher and other specialists in handling untoward behaviors of the learners	2.35	Little Extent
8. communicating learners' specific needs to the SPED teacher and other school authorities	2.27	Little Extent

9. coordinating learning progress and needs of the learner	2.27	Little Extent
10. examining the significance of social influences in providing meaningful learning experience	2.23	Little Extent
11. actively participates on a discussion with the SPED teacher and the principal on learner's progress, possible intervention, and other related activities	2.23	Little Extent
12. providing journal of the child's day-to-day record of behavior, emotion, experiences and learning progress	2.19	Little Extent
13. volunteering and participating in school activities like online meetings, conferences, and learning at home	2.15	Little Extent
14. educating one's self by reading related literature and studies relevant to the learner's individualized needs	2.15	Little Extent
15. seeking expert's assessment and evaluation for learner's special educational needs	2.08	Little Extent
<b>Total Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.31</b>	<b>Little Extent</b>

A close inspection of the data presented in Table 5 reveals that majority of the indicators noted a verbal description of **"little extent"** with a recorded total weighted mean of **2.31**.

Thus, the extent of practices of parents of the home-schooled learners with special educational needs during a pandemic is generally described as with **"little extent"**.

Table 6. Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Extent of Teacher Practices

Practices	B	Exp (B)	Prob.	Sig.	Decision
1. coordinating with other adults in the family in assuring consistent involvement in student's learning routine.	0.000	0.000	100.000	0.000	Sig.
2. coordinating learning progress and needs of the learner.	0.000	0.000	100.000	0.000	Sig.
3. involving the learner in setting expectations and educational goals.	0.000	0.000	100.000	0.000	Sig.
4. examining the significance of social influences in providing meaningful learning experience.	1.224	3.400	96.600	0.016	Sig.
5. communicating learners' specific needs to the parent/guardian and other adults of the family.	1.224	3.400	96.600	0.016	Sig.
6. educating one's self by reading related literature and studies relevant to the learner's individualized needs.	1.504	4.500	95.500	0.007	Sig.
7. setting limits of play and giving time to school-related tasks.	1.504	4.500	95.500	0.007	Sig.
8. providing additional information and manipulative tasks.	1.504	4.500	95.500	0.007	Sig.
9. collaborates with other SPED teacher and other specialists in handling untoward behaviors of the learners.	1.846	6.333	93.667	0.003	Sig.

10. volunteering and participating in school activities like online meetings, conferences, and learning at home.	1.846	6.333	93.667	0.003	Sig.
11. actively participates on academic discussion with other SPED teachers on learner's progress, possible intervention, and other related activities.	1.846	6.333	93.667	0.003	Sig.
12. giving quality time for parental involvement.	2.303	10.000	90.000	0.002	Sig.
13. seeking expert's assessment and evaluation for learner's special educational needs.	3.045	21.000	79.000	0.003	Sig.
14. providing journal of the child's day-to-day record of behavior, emotion, experiences and learning progress.	3.045	21.000	79.000	0.003	Sig.
15. buying/creating manipulative learning materials as added support in providing the child's specific needs.	3.045	21.000	79.000	0.003	Sig.
<b>Overall</b>	<b>1.846</b>	<b>6.333</b>	<b>93.667</b>	<b>0.003</b>	<b>Sig.</b>

The computed overall value of probability (93.667) with a p-value (0.003) that is less than the alpha level 0.05 suggests that the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant

relationship between the profile of the respondents and the extent of teachers' practices is rejected.

Table 7. Relationship Between Profile of the Respondents and the Extent of Parent Practices

	B	Exp (B)	Prob.	Sig.	Decision
1. giving quality time for parental involvement	-0.999	36.800	63.200	0.024	Sig.
2. involving the learner in setting expectations and educational goals	-0.811	44.444	55.556	0.056	Not Sig.
3. providing additional information and manipulative tasks	-0.811	44.444	55.556	0.056	Not Sig.
4. buying/creating manipulative learning materials as added support in providing the child's specific needs	-0.811	44.444	55.556	0.056	Not Sig.
5. involving other adults in the family in assuring consistent learning routine	-0.636	52.900	47.100	0.123	Not Sig.
6. setting limits of play and giving time to school-related tasks	-0.636	52.900	47.100	0.123	Not Sig.
7. seeking the expertise of the SPED teacher and other specialists in handling untoward behaviors of the learners	-0.636	52.900	47.100	0.123	Not Sig.
8. communicating learners' specific needs to the SPED teacher and other school authorities	-0.470	62.500	37.500	0.224	Not Sig.
9. coordinating learning progress and needs of the learner	-0.470	62.500	37.500	0.224	Not Sig.
10. examining the significance of social influences in providing meaningful learning experience	-0.470	62.500	37.500	0.224	Not Sig.

11. actively participates on a discussion with the SPED teacher and the principal on learner's progress, possible intervention, and other related activities	-0.470	62.500	37.500	0.224	Not Sig.
12. providing journal of the child's day-to-day record of behavior, emotion, experiences and learning progress	-0.310	73.33	26.670	0.435	Not Sig.
13. volunteering and participating in school activities like online meetings, conferences, and learning at home	-0.310	73.33	26.670	0.435	Not Sig.
14. educating one's self by reading related literature and studies relevant to the learner's individualized needs	-0.154	85.700	14.300	0.695	Not Sig.
15. seeking expert's assessment and evaluation for learner's special educational needs	-0.154	85.700	14.300	0.695	Not Sig.
<b>Overall</b>	<b>-0.811</b>	<b>44.444</b>	<b>55.556</b>	<b>0.056</b>	<b>Not Sig.</b>

The computed overall value of probability (55.556) with a p-value (0.056) that is greater than the alpha level 0.05 suggests that the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the extent of parents' practices is accepted. This means that there is no enough evidence to claim that there is a significant relationship between the profile of the parent-respondents and the extent of parents' practices.

### Conclusion

Based from the summary and findings of the study conducted, it is concluded that both teacher-respondents and parent-respondents are struggling in dealing with the identified and encountered behavioral and cognitive development problems of the home-schooled LSEs in the DLDMs. However, the degree of the encountered problems is more concentrated on the part of the teachers. Furthermore, it can also be concluded that the teacher-respondents' demographic profile was significant factor to the extent of teachers' practices. On the other hand, parent-respondents' demographic profile was not a significant factor to the extent of parents' practices among home-schooled learners with special educational during a pandemic.

### Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, it is hereby recommended to upskill and retool

teachers' competencies in handling learners with special education needs in the delivery of online teaching-learning and in the formulation of LASs as added supplementary materials; capacitate teachers in offering Special Education Services focusing on IEPs through training-workshops; schools may also find ways and means on how they can provide assistance to teachers in terms of providing facilities which are necessary in the implementation of DLDMs. Finally, implementation of the action plan is hereby recommended to improve the behavioral and cognitive aspects of the learners and to further improve practices of teachers and parents of the home-schooled learners with special educational needs during a pandemic and its aftermath.

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