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**CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN TEACHING CHILDREN WITH  
LEARNING DISABILITIES IN THE NEW NORMAL**

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**ABSTRACT**

The general purpose of this study is to determine the challenges and strategies of selected teachers in teaching children with learning disabilities in the in the New Normal Education. The teachers were served as the respondents of this study using purposive sampling technique. Teacher questionnaire was utilized to determine the challenges and strategies of selected teachers in teaching children with learning disabilities. Most teachers teaching children with learning disabilities did not receive any special needs education training from the school, they feel that they are not qualified to teach the children with learning disability much more with the effect brought by limited face to face interaction because of this pandemic. Moreover, teachers assigned in classes with children with learning disabilities also lack of strategies in dealing with varied learners. This study revealed that the classrooms and resources for children with learning disabilities even before the pandemic in Division of Batangas at large have poor learning environment to support the Special Education provision such as lack of budget, curriculum guide, Instructional Materials (IMs) and even school facilities. It could be concluded that placement of learners with special needs in an inclusive classroom with ordinary learners is not enough with no proper support.

Learners with disability did not receive all the necessary support and services for accessing the curriculum facilities; and stakeholders' supports is very minimal to support the needs of the students enrolled in special classes. On the other hand, challenges were solved technically to

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sustain the positive working environment among school heads, teachers and stakeholders. The Department of Education Training and Development in collaboration with regional in service officers should organize continuous professional development opportunities on inclusion strategies of learners with learning disabilities. The implementers of the inclusion programs shall strictly adhere to the policies, and the strong support of the stakeholders shall be encouraged by formulating active organization spearheaded by the school head.

### Context and Rationale

Education of learners with learning disabilities has come an extensive and lengthy way; it can be in a method from special education to integrated education and it as process from integrated education to inclusive education. Despite the prop-up by a number of guidelines, policies and programs from time to time to speed up the bound of all the efforts made in this direction the regular schools with inclusive orientation face many barriers, roadblocks, impediments and challenges. However, even before the pandemic Special Education is already a topical subject that is widely discussed and deliberated upon in the field of education, Philippines included. It has invariably been referred to as part of the global education for all agenda as a new education paradigm and as an educational reform goals to make our societies inclusive. The same is accepted in Philippines; however, the aspect of education for all is not effectively implemented despite of having policies and legal framework that advocate education for all specially in the implementation of classes with children with learning disabilities.

The Philippine constitution mandates that every child must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning. It's therefore, societal obligations to make education accessible to all learning opportunities according to the nature of their individual needs and capacity.

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Supporting the idea of Education for all, in the Philippines, every child with special needs has the basic right for education, rehabilitation, support services, work training and employment opportunities, community participation and independent living.

However, educating children with special needs at present reveals a difficult challenge. With the effect brought by pandemic, it is the responsibility of the school to provide appropriate special education provision anchored on the philosophy that all children and youth with special needs must receive an appropriate education and everything within the system. Helping children with special needs including physically handicapped, learning disabled, visually impaired, hearing impaired, emotional disturbances, speech/language impairment, mentally retarded, children with down syndrome, learners with autism, and cerebral palsy to have the right to education, equality of opportunities and participation in society is a great privilege yet present a difficult challenge for teachers in the new normal.

The effort of the government and Department of Education in the new normal environment to meet the demand of education for all is also beset by financial constraints. The hope to provide accessible services for children with learning disabilities is hampered by other crucial problems and challenges such that empowering educational services for children with special needs is not at the top of educator's preferences. Lack of learning resources both for the teachers and pupils, lack of appropriate methodologies to cater for individual differences and insufficient supplies of textbooks and manuals are some of the challenges encountered by special education teachers in the Philippines in the new normal.

Similarly, great pressures are on Department of Education and government expenditures to identify the need to effectuate significant and positive changes in community attitudes towards disability and the need to provide educational services, care and competencies of children with special needs. Lack of funding resources to support educational services and maximize pupil's potential is foremost barrier in teaching special education classes.

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On the other hand, educators as key figures in the successful implementation of Special Education policies, their competencies in this field are of utmost importance and play a vital role in the implementation of Special education classes. But inability to assess the pupil's strengths and weaknesses with limited face-to-face interaction and lack of expertise in handling varied behaviors and strategies minimize and lessen the achievement level among pupils.

In absence of face-to-face interaction and inability to trace and gather information among teachers from many sources of background information on a child such as school records, observation, parent intakes, and teacher reports and understanding of patterns in a child's educational, social, developmental, environmental, medical, and emotional history are very crucial in the implementation of different programs in the educational system.

Professional Development, Coaching, and Support can go a long way in increasing teacher confidence in their ability to address challenges in the new normal and make them more effective at doing so. Ensuring that special education teachers have access to high-quality professional development in evidence-based strategies for addressing challenging behavior can increase confidence and competency and free up time for teachers to spend more time teaching and less time disciplining.

This study also encourages sustainable and effective partnerships between the school, including teachers and children with learning disabilities. This is intended for school systems, schools, school leaders and other people working together to create better programs opportunities and learning for children with learning disabilities most especially in determining and modifying appropriate teaching strategies under the new normal. This addresses the understanding that the education system and the difficulties schools face are a valuable source of support which schools cannot afford to underestimate even before the pandemic.

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## Proposed Innovation, Intervention and Strategy

### A. Idea

This presents that challenges encountered and strategies used by teachers has a significant effect on educational achievement and does positive difference to pupil's performance in school in the New Normal Education.

So far, as determined by the Department of Education Order No. 72, s. 2009 the practice of Special Education in Philippine basic education is largely an outdated directive which does not specify a stable, clear, and definite process of including children with special needs in the general education setting.

On the other hand, Luistro (2012) observed that Philippines is not ready for inclusive education because of the number of barriers among which are lack of trained personnel to manage it, classrooms, and lack of funds, and instructional materials.

From the above discussion, one may conclude that the teachers' lack of competency in managing their inclusive classrooms is a serious problem as it makes them feel stressed and less confident. Others have highlighted that it is not practically possible to make specialists of all educators on all the diverse needs in overcoming barriers to learning, but there may be a way of assisting all learners to benefit from inclusive classes, that is, by empowering teachers with basic skills so that they may become competent inclusive teachers.

The Department of Education declared that all children in the country should be admitted to the nearest community schools to access education regardless of ability or disability. This appeared to be a major challenge to schools. It was doubtful that the teachers were prepared to accommodate children with challenges in the mainstream schools.

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As cited by DepEd (2000), in the Philippines every child has the basic right for inclusion to education, rehabilitation, support services, work training and employment opportunities, community participation and independent living. Inclusive education's provision is anchored on the philosophy that all children and youth with special needs must receive an appropriate education and everything within the system. All kinds of children have the freedom and guarantee to get education along with other children regardless of human differences.

Despite many efforts being put forth for the successful implementation of inclusive education in primary schools there are still numerous challenges teachers face in the implementation of the program. Many teachers find it difficult to implement inclusive education because of various reasons. Inclusive education is an effort to provide special services for exceptional children in the least restrictive environment (Ainscow and Ceasar, 2006). This suggests that the exceptional child will be placed with normal peers and will receive special services while enrolled in regular classes, not special classes (Kirk, Gallagher, Anastasiow, and Coleman, 2006). This is a provision that should help the child interact as much as possible with his or her normal peers.

There are many factors that have led to the move of mainstreaming exceptional children. Some of these include the observation that many children were misclassified as mentally challenged when they were not, that many special classes showed few beneficial results and that those classes tended to be understood as classes for problem children instead of remedial centers (Kirk et al, 2006). According to Landsberg (2011), inclusion is about developing inclusive community and education systems. It is based on the value systems that invite and celebrate differences and diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language, socio economic background, cultural origin and level of academic achievement and disability.

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## B. Problem

The proposed intervention intends to address the following concerns:

1. Provide quality education and services for children with learning disabilities;
2. Readiness of teachers in assisting and handling the delivery of instruction under inclusive education in the new normal;
3. Alleviate the challenges of teachers in performing their duties and responsibilities in the new normal setting;
4. Attainment of essential skills and enabling qualities required under inclusive education; and
5. Opportunities and feedbacks in the instruction and application of Inclusive Education under new normal education.

## C. Procedure/System

The proposed intervention will be mainly following the three principles of educational management, namely, planning, implementing and evaluating. The first part, planning, includes the assessment on the challenges of teachers and their level of preparedness in assisting instruction relative to learning content, utilization of learning materials, instructional delivery, and assessment for learning under inclusive education. The data that will be obtained from this assessment will be utilized in designing a capacity-building training for teachers. Such training and interventions will equip them with essential skills and enabling qualities required of being a teacher.

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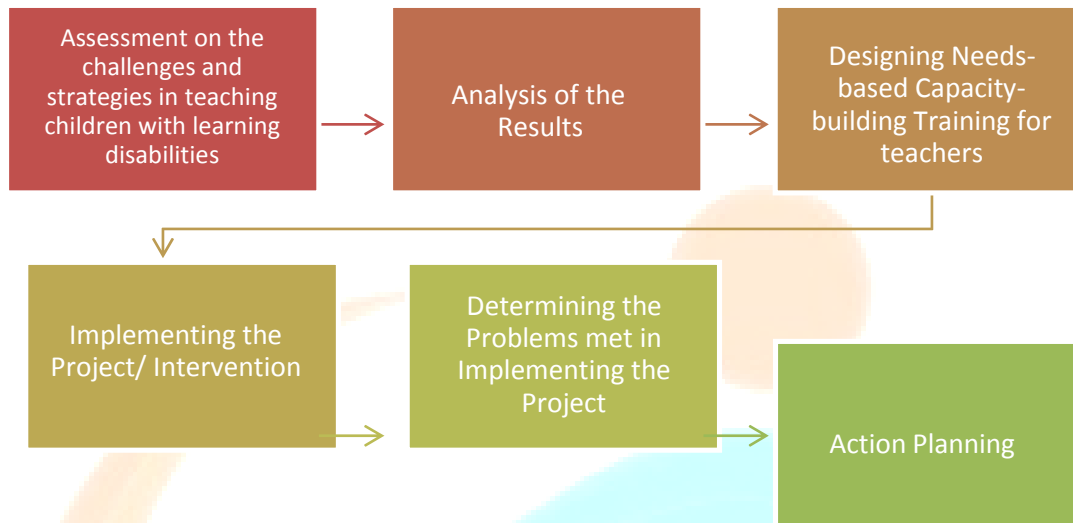
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Figure 1 shows the process flow of the proposed intervention.



**Figure 1.** *Process Flow of Assessing the Challenges and Strategies in Teaching Children with Learning Disabilities in the New Normal*

The said assessment was conducted remotely thru online and other available means to ensure that minimum health standards set by DOH and IATF will be practiced. Moreover, this phase also entails online consultative meetings to ensure that teachers are aware of the nature and intention of this intervention.

The implementation phase includes the actual capacity-building training for teachers that will be likewise conducted remotely. The actual assisting of instructional delivery and implementation of intervention is also at this phase. To ensure smooth flow of the intervention, close coordination and constant communication among teachers will also be established. Immediate assistance and help will also be provided when such need rises.

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Lastly, the evaluation phase deals with the identification of the challenges and/or problems met in the implementation of the intervention. The inputs from the evaluation will be used in action planning and in implementing another similar project. This part is also vital because it will provide immediate feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention.

### Action Research Questions

This study sought to assess and identify the challenges and strategies in teaching children with Learning Disabilities in the New Normal.

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the challenges encountered by the teachers in the following areas:
  - 1.1 Curriculum content
  - 1.2 Pupil's disability
  - 1.3 Teaching strategies?
2. What are the teaching strategies used by the teacher in teaching children with learning disabilities?
3. To what extent is the level of learning achievement of children with learning disabilities in the areas of:
  - 3.1 Activities of daily living
  - 3.2 social
  - 3.3 cognitive
  - 3.4 Communication?
4. Is there a significant difference on the challenges encountered by the respondents when grouped according to profile?
5. What is the relationship between the challenges encountered by the teachers and the student's achievement?

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6. What recommendation/ action plan can be proposed based on the results of the study?

## Action Research Methods

### A. Participants and/or other Sources of Data and Information

- Who will participate in the research?

The respondents of this study were 30 teachers encountering challenges in the implementation of Inclusive Education in the Division of Batangas Province.

- Number of People

The study utilized Thirty (30) teachers from the said locale.

- Characteristics of the Participants/Sample

The teachers are the school personnel serving the institution for at least a year.

- Sampling Procedure

This study used the descriptive survey method which was directed toward ascertaining the prevailing conditions. An approach to problem solving, it also sought to answer questions as to the real facts relating to existing conditions. The data for this research were collected using a survey questionnaire. The survey was created using suitable questions modified from related research and individual questions formed by the researcher. The survey consisted of questions,

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which were related to the participant's perception regarding the challenges and teaching strategies used by Teachers dealing with learning disabilities. With validated questionnaires, these were distributed to the 30 teachers in the Division of Batangas. The researcher assured confidentiality of their survey sheets since the identities are not important. The researchers also understood that people's consciousness may also affect their honesty and effectiveness in answering the survey, and so, the researchers gave people the option of being anonymous. Participants were given time to respond and then the researchers collected the surveys the next day. There were no incentives offered for participating in the research.

## B. Data Gathering Methods

- **Various Instruments**

The researcher used teacher-made survey questionnaires, these questionnaires were used to measure the level of teachers' preparedness and the challenges in assessing and providing Special Educational Services for children with learning disabilities under the New Normal Education.

The researcher utilized sets of questionnaires to address the stated action research questions. Due to the minimum health standards set by DOH and IATF, the researchers will utilize Google Forms and other modalities such as phone call and text messaging. All data obtained will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Specifically, the first set of questionnaires will be composed of two parts. Part 1 included the assessment on the challenges of teachers and school level in assisting instruction relative to learning content, utilization of learning materials, instructional delivery, and assessment for learning. Part 2 focused on the assessment of the level of teacher's strategies. The data were

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obtained from the first set of questionnaire will be used in designing a capacity-building training for teachers. On the other hand, the researcher conducted mediated interview to substantiate the experiences of teachers and school administrator. It will also be used to elicit useful and detailed information about personal feelings, perceptions, and opinions of the interviewees concerned. To ensure a smooth flow of the data gathering process, an interview guide was prepared by the researcher.

- Procedures for Data Collection

The researcher sought permission to the authorities through a formal letter prior to the conduct of the study. After acquiring the approval and endorsement, the researcher informed and oriented the participants about the nature of the study. The researcher also highlighted that the study will consider the guidelines stipulated in Data Privacy Act and will treat the data and results of the study with utmost confidentiality. The researcher also subjected the research instruments for validation to check their reliability and consistency. Upon establishing and considering ethical matters in conducting the study, the researcher started in gathering the data needed through questionnaires and interview. Minimum health standards and protocols were practiced in gathering the data needed in this study.

### C. Data Analysis Plan

#### How will the data be analyzed and reported?

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS. Standard Deviation, Weighted Mean, and Composite Mean will be utilized to analyze and interpret the results. Prior to statistical analysis, the researchers will conduct data cleaning to ensure that the generated

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findings will be accurate. Tables and graphs will also be used to present clearly the obtained data.

- Qualitative and/or Quantitative Methods Used in Analyzing the Data

The data were analyzed and interpreted with the use of mean, frequency count, percentage with reference to the majority criterion, and Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation (Guilford & Frutcher, 2000). To measure the achievement of the students, the mean was used. The mean is considered the most reliable or accurate measure of the central location because it ordinarily fluctuates less widely than the mode and the median. (Guilford and Frutcher, 2002). The achievement was categorized according to the school's grading system.

In order to find answers to the different problems conceived in the statement of the problem, the following statistical tools will be used.

1. **Weighted Mean.** This will be used to determine the average of the level of teaching strategies and learning outcomes among children with learning disabilities.

The formula is:

$$WM = \frac{x_1f_1 + x_2f_2 + x_3f_3...}{N}$$

**Where:**

- WM = Weighted Mean
- x = number of respondents
- f = weight given to the response
- N = number of case

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1. **Frequency Percentage Rank.** This will be used to determine the average of the level of stress, level of self-actualization and extent on how teachers utilized coping mechanisms.

The formula is:

$$WM = \frac{x_1f_1 + x_2f_2 + x_3f_3...}{N}$$

N

**Where:**

WM = Weighted Mean

x = number of respondents

f = weight given to the response

N = number of case

2. **Pearson R.** This will be used to measure measures the strength between variables and relationships.

### Action Research Work Plan and Timeliness

ACTIVITIES	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
Consultative meeting with teachers and school head via online means	Oct 2020					

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Securing enrolment records and other preliminary data	<b>Oct 2020</b>					
Selecting the research participants/ respondents	<b>Oct 2020</b>					
Designing the Interview Guide and Questionnaire	<b>Oct 2020</b>					
Validating the instruments						
Orienting the teacher-participants using online means	<b>Oct 2020</b>					
Administering the first set of questionnaires using Google Forms and other available modalities						

## Plans for Dissemination and Utilization

Retrieving the questionnaires	<b>Oct 2020</b>					
Analyzing and Interpreting the Obtained Data						
Designing the Capacity- building training for teachers						
Conducting the Needs-based Capacity-building training for teachers	<b>Oct 2020</b>					
Implementing the intervention		<b>Nov 2020</b>	<b>Dec 2020</b>	<b>Jan 2021</b>	<b>Feb 2021</b>	<b>Mar 2021</b>

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Administering the second set of questionnaires using Google Forms and other available modalities							<b>Mar 2021</b>
Analyzing the results of the survey							
Drawing conclusions							<b>Mar 2021</b>
Formulating recommendations							
<b>DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Month 1</b>	<b>Month 2</b>	<b>Month 3</b>	<b>Month 4</b>	<b>Month 5</b>	<b>Month 6</b>	
1. Present the results to the School Head, Teachers, Students and Parents through LAC Sessions and INSET	<b>Mar 2021</b>						
2. Draft an action plan based from the results of the action research	<b>Mar 2021</b>						
3. Implement the action plan, inclusion in school's SIP	<b>Mar 2021</b>	<b>April 2021</b>	<b>May 2021</b>				
4. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the new strategies/interventions crafted from the results	<b>Mar 2021</b>	<b>April 2021</b>	<b>May 2021</b>				
5. Recalibrate the action plan based on the result of the monitoring and evaluation			<b>May 2021</b>	<b>Jun 2021</b>			
6. Draw recommendations based from the results of monitoring and evaluation				<b>Jun 2021</b>			
7. Program Implementation Review and Strategic Planning					<b>Jul 2021</b>	<b>Aug 2021</b>	

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## PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This part manifested data gathered from the survey through questionnaires given to the respondents. They were presented in tabular form, analyzed, interpreted and complemented with inferences, implications and theoretical bases. The figures and interpretation presented represents only the data from where the researcher conducted his study.

### I. PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Tables 1.1 to 1.5 display the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

#### 1.1 Number of years teaching

Table 1.1 displays the number of years the teacher respondents are teaching based on the result, about 67% of the respondents or a frequency of 20 have been teaching within 6-10 years now while about 17% or 5 respondents have been teaching within 1-5 years. Meanwhile, no teachers are teaching for more than 21 years and above

**Table 1.1**

**Number of Years in Teaching**

<b>RANGE (years)</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>	<b>RANK</b>
1-5	5	17%	2
6-10	20	67%	1
11-15	4	13%	3
16-20	1	3%	4
21and above	0	0%	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	

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It is noticeable that the quantity of teachers between 6 to 10 years is great in number. This is primarily due to fact that educational reforms and changes which specifically aim o provide learning to every child regardless of their differences and disabilities. As a beneficial effect of imposed laws and programs in line with raising the right of children with disabilities to be literate, special education was formed.

As a matter of fact, an individualized educational system for the aforementioned population group has only been founded recently. It started approximately 10 to 15 years ago. Consequently, courses related to special education were offered only in exclusive schools such as Philippine Normal University. Other instructors prefer being engaged in this area because it is newly established. Furthermore, recognizing this one-of-a-kind specialty gears towards realizing the status and capacity of every affected individual in being enrolled to a learning facility. Therefore, the main reason why most educators are involved in teaching for 6 to 10 years is because special education in the Philippines is only recent.

## 1.2 Gender

Based on the results presented in table 1.2, it is interesting to note that the profession of teaching the children with learning disabilities was dominated by females with a frequency of 23 (77%) compared to male teachers with a frequency of 7 (23%).

It is irrefutably certain that female educators outnumber their male counterparts probably due to the notion that is associated with stereotyping teaching as a job for women. Nonetheless, in this modern society, men, who are taking up educational courses, start to increase in number as well. Despite this, women teachers are still incomparable to their opposite gender because like mothers, these instructors can also provide maternal quality of guidance and care to their students.

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Female teachers are good when handling nursery, primary and children with special needs where tolerance is mostly the key. Women have taken on roles which are more nurturing, which are in line with their unique talents as mothers. This does not mean men are unable to carry out these roles, and it should not be seen as a stereotype for everyone, it only means that women are the nurturers and men gravitate more towards the provider roles.

According to Carger, 2000, gender is the matter of characteristics referring to, and differentiating between masculinity and femininity. Gender is determined socially; it is the societal meaning assigned to male and female. This is why, the gender roles of teachers may also influence their way of education including their roles in society.

**Table 1.2**  
**Gender Profile of the Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>	<b>RANK</b>
Male	7	23%	2
Female	23	77%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>	

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### 1.3 Age

Table 1.3 presents the age profile of the teacher respondents. Based on the table, most of the teacher respondents are within the age range of 26-30 (60%), followed by teachers who belong to the age range of 20-25 (20%). However, there are no teachers of children with special needs who are above 40.

**Table 1.3**

**Age Profile of the Student-Respondents**

<b>RANGE (in years)</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>	<b>RANK</b>
20-25	6	20%	2
26-30	18	60%	1
31-35	4	13%	3
36-40	2	7%	4
Above 40	0	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Since most of the teachers of children with learning disabilities have been teaching within the range of 6-10 years, it is expected that teachers within the range of 26-30 are dominating the number of respondents. It implies that this group was mainly above 5 years of teaching in the field.

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Because special education in the Philippines was recently established, most of the teachers are novices and beginners in this field. Some of them already taught for several years in various institutions; however, when they discovered that there were many job vacancies in this area, they decided to obtain units for sped. The ages of these professionals range from 26 to 30.

### 1.4 Units in Special Education

Based on the table presented in 1.4, about 53% of the respondents have obtained a minimum of 36 units in special education while 13 of the respondents (43%) have obtained 27 units in special **Table 1.3**

**Units Taken in Special Education**

No. of Units	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	RANK
None	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
18	1	3%	3
27	13	43%	2
36 or more	16	53%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>	

The Special Education program is offered to bachelor degree holders / units earner and is designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of students on the needs of special children in school and at home. The Special Education program prepares graduates for jobs as educators in

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special education schools and SPED centers. Students who would like to practice as licensed SPED teachers need to take up additional 18 units of Professional Education subjects and take the Licensure examination for Teachers (LET). Subjects included in the Diploma in Special Education program : Preparation of Instructional Materials for students with Disabilities in Early Childhood, Middle Childhood & Late Childhood, Methods & Strategies for teaching children with Special Needs , Nature, Concepts & Theories of Learning Disabilities, Assessment of Children & youth with Special Needs, Psychology and Guidance of Exceptional Children, Classroom Management for Special Education , Curriculum Development and Introduction to SPED.

### 1.5 School Location

Table 1.5 presents the location of the school where the respondents are teaching. Most of the respondents are teaching in special schools located in urban areas (93%) while there are about 7% who are teaching in special schools in rural areas.

**Table 1.5**

**Location of the School where the Respondents Teach**

Type of Location	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	RANK
Rural	2	7%	2
Urban	28	93%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	

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There are numerous causes of higher numbers of recipients of SpEd in urban areas rather than in rural ones. First, rapid population growth in the former regions accounts for the increased chance of disability of the juvenile group. Second, easy accessibility of education is mostly observed in these locations. Thus, causing early detection of such cases with completely possible programs and services which leads to medical advice to enroll pupils with disabilities to SpEd. Third, there are more opportunities in cities. Lastly, provision of services are faster and easily received by children with special needs.

## 2. CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY THE TEACHERS IN TEACHING THE SPECIAL CHILDREN

Tables 2.1 to 2.3 present the challenges encountered by the teachers in teaching children with learning disabilities.

### 2.1 Curriculum Content

As reflected in table 2.1, respondents perceived that they are *Sometimes* encounter challenges in the curriculum content of the special education as attested by a grand mean of 3.38. Their biggest challenge is the insufficient supplies of textbooks and manuals both for teachers and learners for SpEd (3.63). On the other hand, they perceived that the challenge is least observed is the lack of methods and activities to cater for individual differences.

**Table 2.1**

### **Challenges Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Special Children**

#### ***Curriculum Content***

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Item	Teachers		
	WM	VI	R
1.1 Lack of learning and teaching resources requiring special equipment and facilities to support both teachers and learners	3.25	F	3
1.2 Lack of methods and activities to cater for individual differences	3.13	S	4
1.3 Insufficient supplies of textbooks and manuals both for teachers and learners for SpEd	3.63	F	1
1.4 School's capacity to provide accurate and appropriate assessment on pupil's progress and teaching –learning process	3.50	F	2
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.38</b>	<b>S</b>	

Legend: WM – Weighted Mean VI –Verbal Interpretation  
R – Rank

Range:

4.20 – 5.00 Always (A) 1.80 – 2.59 Rarely (R)  
3.40 – 4.19 frequently (F) 1.00 – 1.79 never (N)  
2.60 – 3.39 Sometimes (S)

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In every aspect of education, insufficiency of equipment is highly noticeable. Quality of education will greatly improve through these indispensable tools and state-of-the-art facilities. Teaching-learning resources like textbooks and manuals both for teachers and learners help to achieve curriculum and learning achievement level among children. When children use textbooks and other materials that illustrate their *own* lives in their community, they can easily associate what they are learning with what they have already known. Insufficient supplies of these resources affect the performance of pupils inside the classroom.

## 2.2 Pupils' Disability

Displayed in table 2.2 is the perceived assessment of the respondents in pupils' disability as one of the challenges in teaching Special Children. Results revealed that teachers sometimes experience challenges with pupils' disability as attested by a weighted mean of 3.25. They attested that the biggest challenge is the lack of funding resources to support and maximize the pupils' learning. On the other hand, they are also challenged with the teacher's lack of background about the pupil's condition, inappropriate activities and special services given and rendered to learners and lack of teacher's expertise in handling varied behaviours (stereotypic, work and aggressive behaviour).

**Table 2.2**

**Challenges Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Special Children**  
***Pupils' Disability***

Item	Teachers		
	WM	VI	R
2.1 Lack of funding resources to support and maximize the pupil's potential	3.63	F	1

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2.2 Lack of teacher's background about the pupil's condition	3.38	S	2
2.3 Inappropriate activities and special services given and rendered to learners	3.0	S	3.5
2.4 Lack of teacher's expertise in handling varied behaviors(stereotypic, work and aggressive behaviour)	3.0	S	3.5
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>S</b>	

**Legend: WM – Weighted Mean VI –Verbal Interpretation**

**R – Rank**

**Range:**

**4.20 – 5.00 Always (A) 1.80 – 2.59 Rarely (R)**

**3.40 – 4.19 Frequently (F) 1.00 – 1.79 never (N)**

**2.60 – 3.39 Sometimes (S)**

Learning is easily achieved through visual and tactile stimuli, usually when children can touch, read or see teaching aids. Moreover, for educators, it is very difficult to help their pupils understand their lessons without books or manuals which serve as their guide. On the other hand, because most teachers have a background in SpEd and have taken courses and units associated with it, effective planning and implementation of methods and activities that can aid in providing information to their pupils are easier. Policy makers, educators, and others involved in education are seeking ways to utilize limited resources efficiently and effectively in order to identify and solve problems in the education sector and to provide quality education for children. Their efforts have contributed to realizing the significance and benefits of equipment in education, and have recognized sustainable aids and materials are some of the strategies to improve educational

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access and quality. For instance, Williams (1994) stresses that until the middle of the last century, responsibility for educating children rested with the funding and allocation on the resources such as learning and instructional materials to ensure better learning among pupils.

Increasing amounts of research on this topic have been conducted since the late 1980s, and there are more and more resources becoming available. In preparing and implementing any efforts to promote accessible learning in education, it is important to understand the whole picture of funding resources in support the services to be given to pupils with special needs : how it works; what forms are used; what benefits it can yield; and what we should expect in the process of carrying out the efforts

A deeper understanding of this issue is important since the link between funding resources and educational access and quality is not simple and involves various forms.

To achieve optimum development among students, funding resources to support educational services should be provided with suitable assistance and guidance in accordance with their abilities and learning needs, so that they can develop their potential to the full.

### 2.3 Teaching Strategies

Table 2.3 discusses the assessment of the teacher on teaching strategies as one of the challenges in teaching special children. Teachers agreed that teaching strategies are sometimes a challenge for them as manifested by a grand mean of 3.29. Their challenges are manifested specifically on lack of teacher's expertise in the delivery of teaching strategies in SpEd session (rank 1.5), lack of teaching materials and aid for SpEd learners (rank 1.5), available training to enhance teaching strategies (rank 3) and limited strategies suitable to the achievement level of learners (rank 4).

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**Table 2.3**

**Challenges Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Special Children**

***Teaching Strategies***

Item	Teachers		
	WM	VI	R
3.1 Limited strategies suitable to the achievement level of learners	3.13	S	4
3.2 Lack of teacher's expertise in the delivery of teaching strategies in SpEd session	3.38	S	1.5
3.3 Lack of teaching materials and aid for SpEd learners	3.38	S	1.5
3.4 Available training to enhance teaching strategies	3.25	S	3
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>S</b>	

**Legend:** WM – Weighted Mean VI – Verbal Interpretation  
R – Rank

**Range:**

4.20 – 5.00	Always (A)	1.80 – 2.59	Rarely (R)
3.40 – 4.19	Frequently (F)	1.00 – 1.79	never (N)
2.60 – 3.39	Sometimes (S)		

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Appropriate teaching materials and teacher's expertise support the idea that each student is a unique individual, different in cognitive and affective development, social maturity, ability, motivation, aspiration, learning styles, needs, interests and potential.

### 3.0 Teaching Strategies Utilized by Teachers in Teaching Children with Learning Disabilities

Table 3.0 displays the assessment of the teachers on the extent of utilization of teaching strategies in teaching the special children. Teachers assessed that they are frequently using the teaching strategies in teaching the special children as affirmed by a grand mean of 3.66. The most utilized teaching strategy is the Direct Teaching/ Social skills lessons while the least used strategy is the Provide calming tools (stress balls, music/ipod).

Guiding principles of Direct Instruction include that every child can learn if we teach him/her carefully and all teachers can be successful when given effective programs and instructional delivery techniques. Thus, ultimately it is the teacher who is responsible for student learning; students are not blamed for their failure to learn. One often hears the statement, "If the learner hasn't learned, the teacher has not taught" in reference to Direct teaching programs and instructional delivery (see Tarver, 1999 for further details).

Direct teaching is appropriate for students with diverse learning needs, language backgrounds, "learning styles" (given that instruction includes a multi-modality approach, including auditory, visual, and tactile/kinesthetic elements), and ages. Thus, it is a misnomer that Direct teaching programs are only appropriate for students with disabilities. Direct teaching programs are used successfully with preschoolers to adults including gifted students, average learners, and those who struggle academically.

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Table 3.0

### Teaching Strategies Utilized by Teachers in Teaching the Special Children

Item	Teachers		
	WM	VI	R
Direct Teaching/ Social skills lessons	4.50	HU	1
Individualized Instruction	4.25	HU	2.5
Collaboration with the in-school support team	3.25	SU	22
Visuals	4.13	FU	4.5
Repeated instruction	4.00	FU	6.5
Peer relation skills	3.88	FU	8
Field trips	3.63	FU	1.5
Chalk board	3.75	FU	10.5
Written Examination	3.25	SU	22
Modeling	3.75	FE	10.5
Provide calming tools (stress balls, music/ipod)	2.38	RU	25
Computer-assisted instruction	3.25	SU	22
Individualized Instruction	4.13	FU	4.5
Using real objects	4.25	HU	2.5
Exhibits	3.50	FU	17
Cooperative Learning	3.50	FU	17
Reward system	3.50	<b>FU</b>	17
Small group discussion	3.75	FU	10.5
Self monitoring	3.50	FU	17
Lecture Discussion	3.38	SU	20

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Remedial instruction	3.63	FU	4.5
Co-Teaching	3.50	FU	17
Speech Therapy	3.75	FU	10.5
Activities of daily living Enhancement skills	3.00	SU	24
Arts and craft	4.00	FU	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>FU</b>	

**Legend: WM – Weighted Mean VI –Verbal Interpretation**

**R – Rank**

**Range: 4.20 – 5.00 Heavily used (HU) 1.80 – 2.59 Rarely used (RU)**

**3.40 – 4.19 Frequently used(FU) 1.00 – 1.79 Not used (NU)**

**2.60 – 3.39 Sometimes used(SU)**

## 4.0 Level of Learning Achievement of children with learning disabilities

Tables 4.1 to 4.4 describe the level of learning achievement of children with disabilities.

### 4.1 Activities of Daily Living

It can be gleaned that children with learning disabilities can perform tasks independently with adaptations in activities of daily living as attested by a grand mean of 3.65. Learners' achievement is displayed most in grooming with a weighted mean of 4.00. On the other hand, learners' achievement is least displayed in care of others with a weighted mean of 3.13.

**Table 4.1**

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**Level of Learning Achievement of Children with Learning Disabilities**

***Activities of Daily Living***

Item	Teachers		
	WM	VI	R
Grooming	4.00	Performs task independently with adaptations	1
Oral Hygiene	3.75	Performs task independently with adaptations	6
Bathing	3.63	Performs task independently with adaptations	10.5
Toilet Hygiene	3.63	Performs task independently with adaptations	10.5
Dressing	3.63	Performs task independently with adaptations	10.5
Feeding and eating	3.50	Performs task independently with adaptations	14
Medication routine	3.75	Performs task independently with adaptations	6
Socialization	3.63	Performs task independently with adaptations	10.5
Functional Communication	3.50	Performs task independently with adaptations	14
Functional Mobility	3.88	Performs task independently with adaptations	3
Home management	3.88	Performs task independently with adaptations	3
Care of others	3.13	Partially performs task, or requires assistance to complete	17
Educational Activities	3.25	Performs task independently with adaptations	16

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Vocational Activities	3.50	Performs task independently with adaptations	14
Play or Leisure Exploration	3.88	Performs task independently with adaptations	3
Play or leisure Performance	3.75	Performs task independently with adaptations	6
Grooming	3.70	Performs task independently with adaptations	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.65</b>	Performs task independently with adaptations	

**Legend: WM – Weighted Mean VI – Verbal Interpretation**

**R – Rank**

**Range:**

**4.20 – 5.00** Performs task independently

**3.40 – 4.19** Performs task independently with adaptations

**2.60 – 3.39** Partially performs task, or requires assistance to complete

**1.80 – 2.59** Performs isolated components of task incomplete even with assistance

**1.00 – 1.79** Unable to perform task

Grooming can be one of the most challenging areas to work on, yet one of the most critical to social integration. Appropriate bathing, shaving, dressing, and feminine hygiene are a foundation that must be there in order to be able to work on other areas. Good hygiene and grooming skills are necessary for socialization, employment, and accessing community resources. Early training in proper grooming at home helps them to be independent and responsible in all their tasks.

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## 4.2 Social Skills

In terms of social skills, learners with special needs perform tasks independently with adaptations as manifested by a weighted mean of 3.82. Learners with special needs exhibit their highest learning achievement level in leading conversation and play appropriately in large or small groups (4.38) and least in participating in conversation or play with others (2.38).

**Table 4.2**

### Level of Learning Achievement of Children with Learning Disabilities

#### Social Skills

**Legend: WM – Weighted Mean VI – Verbal Interpretation**

**R – Rank**

**Range:**

- 4.20 – 5.00** Performs task independently
- 3.40 – 4.19** Performs task independently with adaptations
- 2.60 – 3.39** Partially performs task, or requires assistance to complete
- 1.80 – 2.59** Performs isolated components of task incomplete even with assistance
- 1.00 – 1.79** Unable to perform task

Item	Teachers		
	WM	VI	R
Does not Participate in conversation or play with others	2.38	Performs isolated components of task incomplete even with assistance	4

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In small group (3 to 4), child participates in some conversation	4.25	Performs task independently	2.5
Child imitates some conversation and play in small group	4.25	Performs task independently	2.5
Child leads conversation and play appropriately in large or small groups	4.38	Performs task independently	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.82</b>	Performs task independently with adaptations	

Social and behavior skills are essential for lifelong success, but children with special needs often struggle with these skills. For example, some kids with special needs have difficulty greeting others properly, a skill deficit that could later translate into occupational challenges. Other children have trouble interpreting and using facial expressions and gestures, which interferes with communication. The first step in addressing social and behavioral deficits is to identify them. It's critical for parents and educators to collaborate to assess the child's current level of functioning and determine areas that could use some extra help. For best results, corrective strategies should remain consistent from the school to the home. If the child has not yet entered preschool, parents can strive to collaborate with day care providers and other caregivers to ensure consistent responses to behaviors.

### 4.3 Cognitive Skills

Table 4.3 displays the assessment of the teachers on the learning achievement of children with learning disabilities in cognitive skills. Based on their assessment, the children with special learning needs are partially performing tasks and they require assistance as affirmed by a grand mean of 3.06. Their achievement in cognitive skills is exhibited most in orientation (3.14) and least in problem solving (2.75)

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**Table 4.3**

**Level of Learning Achievement of Children with Learning Disabilities**

***Cognitive Skills***

Item	Teachers		
	WM	VI	R
Orientation	3.14	can follow 2 step commands and repeated command	1
Recognition	3.13	can follow 2 step commands and repeated command	4
Orientation			
a. Short term	3.13	can follow 2 step commands and repeated command	4
b. Long term	3.13	can follow 2 step commands and repeated command	4
Sequencing	3.13	can follow 2 step commands and repeated command	4
Categorization	3.00	can follow 2 step commands and repeated command	6.5
Concept formation	3.13	can follow 2 step commands and repeated command	4
Intellectual Operation in space	3.00	can follow 2 step commands and repeated command	6.5
Problem solving	2.75	can follow 2 step commands and repeated command	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.06</b>	can follow 2 step commands and repeated command	

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**Legend:**        **WM – Weighted Mean**                                **VI –Verbal Interpretation**  
**R – Rank**

**Range:**

- 4.20 – 5.00**    can follow complex verbal instruction
- 3.40 – 4.19**    can follow most verbal instructions but need repetition
- 2.60 – 3.39**    can follow 2 step commands and repeated command
- 1.80 – 2.59**    Can follow simple and direct verbal command
- 1.00 – 1.79**    unable to do the task

Orientation skills worked with children also assist children with visual impairments to attain the skills they need to live successful lives. The orientation and mobility specialist's responsibilities center mainly on skills such as independent travel and daily living skills. In addition to the typical orientation and mobility sequence, orientation and mobility specialists working with children help children learn fundamental skills that support independence such as gross and fine motor skills, auditory skills, concept development, exploration and curiosity, problem solving and environmental experiential activities.

#### 4.4 Communication Skills

Table 4.4 displays the assessment of the teachers on the level of learning achievement of the children with learning disabilities in terms of communication skills. Teachers perceived that children with learning disabilities are partially performing task, or requiring assistance to complete in developing their communication skills as manifested by a grand mean of 2.88. They exhibit their learning best in repetition of vocalizations made by another person/ Echolalia (3.00) and least in talking rapidly and continuously in incomprehensibly way / babbling (2.88).

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Table 4.4

### Level of Learning Achievement of Children with Learning Disabilities

#### Communication Skills

Item	Teachers		
	WM	VI	R
Ability to receive and understand information	2.88	Moderately observed	2.5
Ability to express ideas and thoughts	2.63	Moderately observed	5
Talk rapidly and continuously in incomprehensively way / Babbling	2.75	Moderately observed	4
Repetition of vocalizations made by another person/ Echolalia	3.00	Moderately observed	1
Produces words or expressions that are difficult to understand	2.88	Moderately observed	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.83</b>	Moderately observed	

Legend: WM – Weighted Mean VI – Verbal Interpretation R – Rank

Range:

- 3.25- 4.00 Maximally Observed
- 2.50 – 3.24 Moderately observed
- 1.75 – 2.49 Minimally Observed
- 1.00 – 1.74 Not Observed

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Echolalia occurs in normal language development, yet decreases as the typically developing child gains more spontaneous generative language. In children with Autism, Echolalia occurs with greater frequency and lasts for a longer period of time as the child with Autism typically experiences significant difficulty developing spontaneous, generative language skills. Echolalia is reflective of how the child processes information. The child with Autism processes information as a whole "chunk" without processing the individual words that comprise the utterance. In processing these unanalyzed "chunks" of verbal information, many children with Autism also process part of the context in which these words were stated, including sensory and emotional details. Some common element from this original situation is then triggered in the current situation which elicits the child's echolalic utterance.

#### **4.0 Test of Significant Difference on the Perception of Challenges of Teaching Children with Special Needs grouped according to Profile**

Table 4. 0 reflects the difference of assessment of the respondents on the challenges encountered in teaching children with special needs. Results revealed that there is a high significant difference on the assessment of the respondent on pupil's disability and teaching strategies based on their gender as attested by a p-value less than 0.01.

This difference is attributed to the nature of female and male teachers. It has been noted that a female teacher has the ability to meet the challenges of the environment . Female teachers are considered effective and positive change maker. Moreover, due to the fact that children can easily relate to the female teachers as compared to males.

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**Table 4.0 Teaching Children with Special Needs grouped according to Profile**

Profile	Challenges					
	Curriculum Content		Pupils' Disability		Teacning Strategies	
	F	p-value	F	p-value	F	p-value
Age	1.52	.10	2.33	.12	.06	.82
Numer of Years in Teaching	.67	.58	1.19	.08	1.12	.33
Gender	2.08	.56	14.33* *	.000	7.16**	.000
Location	.80	.72	1.56	.09	1.12	.13
Age	.75	.86	2.04	.08	2.34	.09

## 5.0 Test of Significant Relationship between the Challenges Encountered by the Teachers and the Student's Achievement

Results revealed by table 5.0 indicates a high significant relationship between the challenges encountered by teachers in curriculum content, pupils' disability and teaching strategies to have a highly significant relationship to the performance of the children in cognitive and communication skills. It was attested by the p-value that are less than 0.01. The result simply shows that the performances of the children in cognitive and communication skills are affected by the challenges of curriculum, pupils' disability and teaching strategies.

**Table 5.0**

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## Test of Significant Relationship between the Challenges Encountered by the Teachers and the Student's Achievement

Challenges Encountered	Performance of the Children with Special Needs							
	ADL		Social		Cognitive		Communication	
	r	p-value	r	p-value	r	p-value	r	p-value
Curriculum Content	.200	.080	.254	.067	.543**	.000	.553**	.000
Pupils' Disability	.178	.010	.118	.123	.481**	.000	.315**	.002
Teaching Strategies	.236	.110	.241	.090	.356**	.000	.411**	.000

\*\* Significant t 0.01

### DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the data gathered, analyzed and interpreted.

The main focus of this study is appropriately embodied on the challenges encountered by teachers and their strategies in teaching children with learning disabilities in the New Normal. To attain this purpose, the researcher employed a combination of descriptive and correlation methods of research with the validated questionnaire as the primary data gathering instrument.

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The data gathered from the validation procedure and from the actual survey were analyzed and interpreted through the use of Weighted Mean, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

From the summarized findings, these conclusions were drawn:

1. It can be concluded that teachers generally encountered challenges and problems in handling children with learning disabilities inside the classroom and in the New Normal Education like lack of expertise in instructional supervision, lack of funding resources to support teaching-learning process and insufficient supplies of textbooks and manuals as they attempted to include students with disabilities into classes. The importance of the study gives a vivid picture of how the implementation process of inclusive education is processed. There is no progress if there are challenges encountered by educators. These problems lead to negative attitude of the teachers towards the program.
2. Direct Instruction programs show clear evidence of their efficacy with students with learning disabilities. A characteristic of the Direct Instruction research that educators may find particularly appealing is the rapid learning gains evidenced in studies. It seems that students with more severe disabilities can learn at high levels when provided with systematic, research-validated programs such as Direct Instruction. Direct Instruction and special education have been demonstrated as an effective combination. Direct Instruction programs are designed with the needs of individual students in mind and have strong research support validating them for instruction of students with disabilities.
3. Despite these challenges and shortcomings along with the teaching strategies ,it exemplifies the pupils' performance on their achievement level in activities of daily living, social, cognitive and communication skills. Understanding the makeup of the special education population helps us understand what we can expect them to achieve.

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4. Significant difference exists between the extent of challenges and teaching strategies and student's performance
5. Significant relationship exists between the extent of challenges and teaching strategies and student's performance
6. A behavior modification intervention can be given to children with learning disabilities to cater their special needs.

## Recommendations

In the light of the drawn conclusions, the following recommendations are hereby forwarded:

1. The Department of Education has to put in place a clear educator skills development plan that would address the problem of skills shortage on the part of educators who are already serving in mainstream schools. Short in-service training courses must be offered to all educators. At least one course on Inclusive Education must be included in all future education studies that are undertaken by prospective teachers in all different tertiary institutions. The in-service staff development should be run over a period of time, with each teacher being required to attend several sessions of it. Lastly, research needs to be conducted to find out the relationship between knowledge and confidence of teachers teaching learners with disabilities in an inclusive classroom.
2. Success for the student with learning disabilities requires a focus on individual achievement, individual progress, and individual learning to be rendered by the teacher. This requires specific, directed, individualized, intensive remedial instruction for students who are struggling. Whether the student is in the general education classroom or learning in a special class setting, focus the activities on assessing individual students to monitor their progress through the curriculum.

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3. Students who have not mastered the foundational component skills require instruction targeted to their skill level and practice in amounts substantial enough to produce high levels of competence in the component skills. Individualized Interventions must be given that directly target specific learning difficulties in the context of instruction resulting in better literacy and life skills outcomes for children with disabilities.

4. Intervention must include direct instruction/ teaching to support generalization and transfer of learning, with abundant and varied opportunities for practice.

Interventions should be differentiated to meet the particular needs of adults, including those with disabilities. Research is needed to test whether and when subgroups of adult learners might benefit from different types of instruction.

5. A behavior modification program must be given to pupils to develop pupil's potential and enhance achievement skills.

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