



THE IMPACT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON STUDENTS' LEARNING IN CONTEMPORARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the impact of special education programs on students' learning and education in today's schools in Thailand during the School Year 2024-2025. The study included kindergarten teachers and parents of learners with disabilities as the respondents of the study. The results revealed that on the factors that indicate the participation of the learners with special needs in a special education program according to the teacher-respondents' assessment, most of the learners with special needs are catered in the mainstream classes inclusion as type of special education program, the learners with special needs are attending two to three times a week but most of them attend every day in the specified special education program having a maximum duration of participation of six months to full school year in the specified special education program. The results also reveals that most of the learners with special needs are receiving academic interventions as support services but shows small regarding speech and occupational therapies. Lastly, most of the learners with special needs have mild to moderate severity of disability attending in the specified special education program and few in numbers with severe disability. Moreover, all the indicators on the level of perceived effectiveness of special education to the learners' progress in terms of quality of instruction, relevance of individual learning plan, availability of support services, teachers' competence, parent's collaboration, and availability of learning resources are verbally interpreted as "Moderately Effective". Likewise, all the indicators on the impact of special education programs on the development of learners with special needs in terms of academic improvement, positive behavior, communication skills, functional life skills (WM=2.98), and learning engagement are verbally interpreted as "High Impact". To add, there are significant differences in the perceived level of effectiveness of a special program between teachers and parent-respondents when grouped according to factors that indicate the participation of the learners with special needs in a special education program when grouped according to type of special program, frequency of service, support services received, and severity of disability but there is no significant difference when grouped according to duration of participation as factor that indicate the participation of the learners with special needs in a special education program. Meanwhile, there is a significant positive relationship between the perceived effectiveness of the special education program and its impact on the development of learners with special needs.

KEYWORDS: Special Education Programs, Learners with Disabilities, Parental Involvement, Academic Improvement, Individual Learning Plan, Positive Behavior, Functional Life Skills

I. INTRODUCTION

The demand for diversified and equitable educational settings has surged, highlighting the importance of special education programs that cater to students with diverse learning difficulties. These programs aim to eliminate barriers to learning and foster active engagement among all students. However, challenges persist, including the lack of clear definitions, standards, and objectives for inclusion, as well as limited empirical research on the effectiveness of inclusion practices (Francisco et al., 2020). The mere presence of students in general education settings is insufficient; their active participation in meaningful learning experiences is crucial. To enhance educational outcomes for students with special needs, special education must be further developed and integrated into all educational practices, alongside inclusive education methodologies (Kauffman & Hornby, 2020). This requires building support structures and innovative practices, continuous teacher training, and effective policy implementation to address the diverse learning challenges in modern classrooms. Ultimately, a commitment to special

education fosters inclusivity, empathy, and academic success, promoting equity within the educational system.

In Thailand, the Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities Act (EPDA) guarantees the right to free education for individuals with disabilities from birth, along with tailored support and the ability to choose educational services based on their needs. While inclusive and special education are common practices, special education often occurs in isolated settings, limiting children's social skills and learning opportunities. Despite ongoing development and training for educators, challenges such as resource limitations, inadequate teacher preparation, and societal stigma hinder the full implementation of inclusive education. However, there is a growing recognition of the rights of children with disabilities, indicating progress in the educational landscape. This research will explore the role of special education programs in supporting all learners, addressing existing gaps and challenges (Limmanee, 2023).

The research draws on Luhmann's System Theory as discussed by Siswantara and Susilo (2024), emphasizing that the



education system comprises sub-systems operating under social standards. While inclusive education aims to integrate all students and celebrate diversity, challenges of exclusion persist, particularly for groups needing specialized instruction. Luhmann's theory suggests that while inclusion is a goal, exclusion is an inherent aspect of social structures, which define boundaries for inclusion and exclusion. Thus, inclusive education is intertwined with exclusion, as it seeks to address discriminatory practices. Effective inclusion requires not only access but also meaningful participation and support for all students, especially those with special needs. The theory advocates for educational systems to adapt to the diverse needs of individuals rather than forcing conformity to existing norms. It highlights the inadequacy of merely placing learners with special needs in mainstream classes without providing tailored support and engagement opportunities. The research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of special education programs and promote advocacy for the rights of all students, ensuring they receive quality education with appropriate accommodations.

This study uses the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model to analyze the impact of special education programs in schools. It focuses on factors affecting learners with special needs, perceived effectiveness, and development. The process includes questionnaire development, reliability testing, validation, data collection, interpretation, and analysis. The output shows the implementation of special education programs through the intervention program.

The study analyzed the impact of special education programs on students' learning and educational outcomes in Thailand during the 2024-2025 academic year. It assessed the effectiveness, accessibility, and opportunities for improvement in special education services. Key stakeholders, including parents and teachers, provided data on the involvement of students with special needs in the programs. The study found that the quality of instruction, individualized learning plans, support services, teachers' competence, parental collaboration, and learning resource accessibility influenced the effectiveness of special education. The findings paved the way for an intervention program to improve special education implementation.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

1. What is the composite mean on the factors that indicate the participation of the learners with special needs in a special education program in terms of Type of Special Program, Frequency of Service, Duration of Participation, Support Services Received, Severity of Disability?
2. What is the composite mean on level of perceived effectiveness of special education on the learners' progress in terms of Quality of Instruction, Relevance of Individual Learning Plan, Teachers' Competence, Parents' Collaboration, and Availability of Learning Resources?
3. What is the composite mean on the impact of special education programs on the development of learners with special needs in terms of Academic Improvement, Positive Behavior, Communication Skills, Functional Life Skills, and Learning Engagement?
4. Is there a significant difference in the perceived level of effectiveness of a special program between teachers and

parent-respondents when grouped according to factors that indicate the participation of learners with special needs in a special education program?

5. Is there a significant relationship between the perceived effectiveness of the special education program and its impact on the development of learners with special needs?
6. Based on the findings of the study. What intervention program may be developed?

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The necessity for high-quality training for learners with special needs. Pocaan (2022) identified the primary hurdles as the reading and discussion techniques, monopolization of decisions, and the additional costs associated with altering instructional materials. Furthermore, personalized instructions, robust motivation, and classroom regulations, as well as the adaptation of educational materials, constituted primary methods. A comprehensive, context-driven program for special education teaching methodologies is necessary, emphasizing faculty management, student support, and administrative support initiatives. Faculty development programs help educators stay current, so advocating for investment in teachers' professional development is recommended.

Strunk et al. (2022) regarding the significance of the Individualized Education Program (IEP), which is fundamental to delivering special education services to children with disabilities. The paper is intricate and is intended to encompass multiple essential components. Administrators must be informed on student involvement in state and district-mandated exams and the methods to guarantee that students receive necessary accessibility supports, including accommodations. Similarly, Akçin (2022) outlined issues encountered during the production of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) related to teachers, classrooms, materials, parents, students, and personnel, as well as the characteristics of IEP planning, performance measurement, and drafting by educators.

The importance of varied support services required by learners with disabilities, as Sturm et al. (2021) emphasized the disparities in the distribution of special education services for students with autism relative to those with other primary learning disabilities (e.g., intellectual disability (ID), specific learning disability (SLD)), as well as the differential influence of sociodemographic factors on the receipt of special education services. The study sought to evaluate the distribution of services (i.e., amount and types) among students eligible for special education services due to autism, specific learning disabilities (SLD), and intellectual disabilities (ID), as well as to uncover variations in sociodemographic factors (e.g., race, neighborhood income) influencing service allocation. The findings indicated that autistic kids, on average, received a greater number of services than students with specific learning disabilities (SLD). Students eligible for autism and specific learning disabilities got services that were more aligned with their needs (e.g., language, occupational therapy) compared to those eligible for intellectual disabilities. The socioeconomic position of students, as indicated by free and reduced lunch eligibility, was a stronger predictor of the quantity of special education services received than the income level of the neighborhood surrounding the school attended by the student.



The most pronounced racial differences in service distribution were noted among students classified under autism eligibility. The study illustrates the significant influence of economic resources on the volume and variety of services obtained, as well as the preference for public schooling among affluent families who are likely well-equipped to access special education programs.

Hester et al. (2020), who found that increasing attrition rates and the scarcity of highly trained special education instructors have an adverse impact on students and school systems. This study examines the open-ended questions within a broader mixed-method analysis to reveal the perspectives of current special education instructors ($n = 366$) throughout the United States. Teachers articulate work-related pressures and explain their motivations for leaving the field of special education. Generally, findings suggest that educators perceived a lack of support from their administrators, and that their career negatively impacted their overall quality of life, thereby exacerbating feelings of burnout.

Bartolome et al. (2020), who suggest that parental involvement encompasses family engagement in the educational and comprehensive development of children, both at home and in school, as perceived by teachers, and is a component of a broader study. The perspective of teachers is crucial in establishing a framework for parental involvement provided by the school, emphasizing effective home-school communication, collaborative engagement within the school, structured support for learning at home, and enhancing teachers' capabilities.

Guzman (2021), highlighted the challenges in providing sufficient learning materials for pupils with special educational needs in the Philippines. The obstacles encountered by special education teachers and students in obtaining and utilizing suitable learning resources include insufficient funding, restricted access to specialized materials, and the need for curriculum modifications to accommodate diverse learning needs. The study highlights the importance of addressing these issues to improve the quality of special education programs and ensure inclusive learning environments for students with special needs.

Allam and Martin (2021) in highlighting the issues and challenges faced by special education (SPED) teachers in teaching children with learning disabilities, including choosing appropriate strategies and motivation, identifying individual needs, challenging yet fulfilling tasks, acceptance and patience, and respecting one's rights. Most teachers teaching children with learning disabilities did not receive any special needs education training from the school, and they feel that they are not qualified to teach children with learning disability. Moreover, teachers assigned to SPED classes lack strategies for dealing with learners with disabilities. This study revealed that the classrooms for children with learning disabilities in the Division of Ilagan at large have a poor learning environment that does not support SPED, characterized by a lack of budget, curriculum guides, Instructional Materials (IMs), and even adequate school facilities. The placement of learners with special needs in an inclusive classroom alongside ordinary

learners is insufficient without proper support. Learners with disability did not receive all the necessary support and services for accessing the curriculum facilities, and stakeholders' support is very minimal to support the needs of the students enrolled in SPED classes. The implementers of the SPED programs shall strictly adhere to the policies, and the strong support of stakeholders shall be encouraged by formulating an active organization spearheaded by the school head.

The entitlement of every kid to receive an excellent education for their academic and comprehensive development. Limmanee (2023) states that in Thailand, as per EPDA, individuals with disabilities are entitled to (1) free education from birth or upon the onset of their disability, with necessary support provided, and (2) the autonomy to select services, environments, and educational modalities according to their abilities, interests, and specific requirements. Quality education with appropriate accommodations, including curricular modifications, diverse instructional mediums, and varied assessment methods, as well as Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students with special needs. In the context of educational systems, inclusive and special education are the most prevalent practices in Thailand. Inclusive education prioritizes the comprehensive participation and integration of all demographics. Students from varied backgrounds engage together in an inclusive environment. This approach teaches youngsters to coexist with others and appreciate diversity. Children with impairments can reside with their families in communities. Nonetheless, disadvantages exist, including inaccessible courses, a lack of transportation, and financial limitations for families. Special education is predominantly delivered in isolated settings, which restricts children's learning opportunities by removing them from their families and communities. Children residing in institutions often lack social skills. Despite the predominance of disadvantages over advantages, special education continues to be implemented, and children with disabilities retain restricted access to educational choices.

Drigas et al. (2021), in a period of rapid change, special education seeks to enhance standards through various intervention options that ensure optimal outcomes for parents, teachers, and learners. Automatic thoughts, negative beliefs, and implicit biases can undermine motivation, disrupt student behavior, and diminish the quality of learning outcomes. Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) is a psychological methodology that utilizes specific approaches to help individuals address their maladaptive thought patterns and schemas. This review's findings support the notion that neuro-linguistic programming offers techniques to effectively engage children with special educational needs in mental states that mitigate implicit bias and foster positive behaviors and academic success. Research indicates that virtual reality aligns with natural language processing methodologies, aiding in the reduction of unintended biases, enhancing users' capacity for flexible perspective-taking, fostering optimism about the future, and promoting a more realistic self-perception, which is associated with a decrease in depressive symptoms. This study adopts a novel pedagogical approach in Special Education that amalgamates neurolinguistic programming, positive psychology, and social psychology, acknowledging their



contributions to brain rewiring and subconscious training strategies, even in virtual environments.

Lyskova et al. (2023), who suggest that educators in inclusive classrooms must develop communication strategies to facilitate the engagement of children with special educational needs (SEN) alongside their typically developing peers by enhancing their communication abilities. The experiment's results reveal substantial and diverse alterations in the communicative skills of schoolchildren, highlighting the necessity to incorporate collaborative games and other joint activities for students in inclusive classes into the educational curriculum. This integration promotes the harmonization of their relationships, fosters individual development, enhances partnership dynamics, and improves both performance and satisfaction within educational interactions. The objective of the study is to advance an integrative approach, enhancing the system of resources and conditions that facilitate the cultivation of communicative qualities, actions, and speech skills—specifically, the overall communicative competencies of students. Additionally, it aims to develop a set of recommendations that enable both prospective and current educators to elevate their aspirations and proficiency in fostering the communicative skills of schoolchildren.

The divergent perspectives of educators and parents regarding the development of functional life skills in learners with disabilities. Alodat et al. (2020) emphasized the significance of functional skills for students with intellectual disabilities, as perceived by their special education teachers, who were influenced by their experience, academic qualifications, and gender. This indicated the substantial importance of functional skills across the overall score and all dimensions of the scale. Padillo et al. (2021) assessed the functional skills of learners with special educational needs (LSEs) in life skills, social skills, and community-based learning abilities, revealing that parents perceive LSEs as possessing intermediate functional skills. Parents face obstacles such as insufficient training, inadequate knowledge of childcare, and a scarcity of time.

The methods to improve engagement among learners with disabilities, as Campado et al. (2023) investigated the incorporation of assistive technology (AT) in educating learners with special educational needs (LSEs) to identify the assistive technologies employed in teaching special education (SPED) students. The study's findings indicated that accessible assistive technologies comprise both interactive multimedia and traditional technologies. Educational applications and advanced technological instruments are utilized, albeit in limited quantities. SPED teachers instructing LSEs utilize AT as a reinforcement for learning, enhancing teaching pleasure and exerting a motivational influence on learners. Nevertheless, this inadvertently results in learners becoming fixated on technology. The stated concerns faced by SPED teachers include resource inadequacy, student disobedience during instruction, technical issues, and insufficient skill development.

Llanos et al. (2025) and underscore the need for improved teacher training, increased funding, more robust policy enforcement, and enhanced community involvement. Employ evidence-based ways to tackle these obstacles and enhance the

accessibility and efficacy of inclusive education. By fortifying the implementation of special education programs, policymakers and educators can cultivate a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all children.

The differences in the effects of special education programs, as Schwartz et al. (2021) indicate that the academic performance of kids with disabilities remains alarmingly inferior to that of their general education counterparts. These disparities partially indicate enduring underlying problems, but they may also signify inadequate assistance. This article addresses the predominant disability category, pupils with learning impairments (LDs), utilizing comprehensive data from New York City public schools. As most learning disabilities (LDs) are identified post-enrollment, we analyze outcomes both prior to and following categorization, enabling us to assess the impacts using within-student pre-post comparisons (student fixed effects) and an intent-to-treat framework. Academic achievements for students with learning disabilities improve following their classification for special education, with the most significant effects observed for those entering special education at earlier grade levels. Attendance, however, exhibits minimal variation post-classification. The results remain consistent across several specifications, and falsification tests enhance confidence in a causal interpretation. Variations in effects based on gender, race/ethnicity, academic classification grade, and context reveal potential underlying processes.

Participation in special education programs significantly enhances learners' progress, as evidenced by Hurwitz et al. (2020), who investigated the impact of such participation on the academic outcomes of students with disabilities. Students from a substantial metropolitan school district were monitored longitudinally during their transition from general to special education to assess whether the receipt of special education services correlated with enhancements in their academic trajectories. Employing student fixed effects models to analyze within-person changes over time, this study assessed individuals' performance on standardized tests before, during, and after special education placement. Results demonstrate that the test results of kids with impairments improved following their enrollment in special education. Moreover, pupils transitioning out of special education demonstrated a consistent pattern of academic advancement, suggesting that involvement in special education within this district was associated with sustained improvements over time.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research utilized a descriptive quantitative design to analyze specific variables and their relationships, allowing for the examination of trends and patterns (Vale, 2023). This approach revealed that causal explanations for variations in thoughts, emotions, and objectives were more complex than initially thought. To enhance description, prediction, and explanation, the study advocated for three-dimensional models beyond the 'Big Five' framework, integrating subjective trait assessments with alternative data sources (Möttus et al., 2020). A self-developed and validated survey questionnaire was employed to quantify attitudes and characteristics, enabling



generalizations from a broader sample (Mohajan, 2020). The research aimed to assess the impact of special education programs on student progress, collecting quantitative data on the involvement and effectiveness of these programs. The findings informed the development of an intervention program to improve special education initiatives and promote inclusivity in education (Ghanad, 2023).

Population and Sampling

The general population of this study consisted of teachers who worked with learners with disabilities in elementary schools in Thailand. To determine the sample respondents, the study employed non-probability sampling, utilizing the purposive sampling technique to select the participants.

Respondents of the Study

The study involved two groups of respondents: 50 special education teachers from elementary schools in Thailand and 50 parents of learners with special needs enrolled in the Ministry of Education's special education program. The teachers provided insights based on their experiences with program planning, implementation, and outcomes, while the parents shared their perspectives on the impact of special education services on their children's education and development, focusing on accessibility and effectiveness.

Research Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-designed questionnaire to gather quantitative data on parents' and teachers' perceptions of special education programs in schools. The findings informed the creation of an enhancement program aimed at improving these programs at the primary level. The questionnaire comprised three sections: the first assessed factors influencing learner participation in special education, the second evaluated perceived effectiveness in terms of learner progress, and the third examined the impact of these programs on various developmental aspects of learners with special needs. A Likert scale was employed to rate the indicators in the questionnaire and analyze the data collected.

Data Gathering Procedure

A letter requesting permission to conduct a study was sent to the Ministry of Education, detailing the distribution of a validated questionnaire to respondents. After receiving approval, the researcher informed school heads of selected

public elementary schools to help distribute consent letters to special education teachers and parents of learners with special needs. Once consent was confirmed, questionnaires were distributed, allowing respondents one to two weeks for completion. The researcher then collected and analyzed the data using SPSS, finalizing results to draw conclusions and develop a proposed intervention program for special education aligned with the findings.

Statistical Treatment

The data analysis employed various statistical treatments, including frequency and percentage distributions to assess learner participation in special education programs based on factors such as program type, service frequency, duration, support services, and disability severity. A weighted mean was used to evaluate the perceived effectiveness of special education on learner progress, focusing on instruction quality, individual learning plans, support services, teacher competence, parent collaboration, and resource availability. Additionally, the weighted mean assessed the impact of special education on learners' development in areas like academic improvement and communication skills. A paired t-test analyzed differences in perceived program effectiveness between teachers and parents, while Pearson's r examined the relationship between perceived effectiveness and developmental impact on learners with special needs.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher followed ethical research practices by obtaining necessary permissions and approvals, including a request letter to the Principal's office in Thailand. Clear information and consent letters were provided to respondents, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality. The researcher addressed potential biases and ethical issues objectively and properly cited all concepts and related papers, adhering to the institution's referencing format

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Composite Mean on the Factors that Indicate the Participation of the Learners with Special Needs in a Special Education Program in Terms of Type of Special Program, Frequency of Service, Duration of Participation, Support Services Received, and Severity of Disability.

Table 1 Factors that Indicate the Participation of the Learners with Special Needs in a Special Education Program in Terms of Type of Special Program

	Frequency	Percent
Pull Out from General Classes	4	8.0
Mainstream Classes Inclusion	34	68.0
Self-Contained Classes	12	24.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 1 presents the factors that indicate the participation of learners with special needs in a special education program, categorized by the type of special program. The data show that the highest percentage is 68.0%, with 34 respondents indicating

that most of their learners with special needs are in mainstream classes, followed by 24.0%, or 12 respondents, for self-contained classes, while 8.0%, or four respondents, are pulled out from general classes, as the lowest percentage. The results



show that most learners with special needs are accommodated in mainstream classes as a form of special education.

The majority of learners with exceptional needs are being integrated into general classrooms through inclusion, a positive sign of inclusive education. Inclusion emphasizes the importance of integrating learners with special needs into general education environments alongside their peers without disabilities, providing them with learning opportunities and

promoting social integration, peer relationships, and access to the general curriculum. This approach can result in academic and social-emotional growth. Schools are more likely to adopt inclusive practices, and ongoing assistance is needed to help learners with special needs and their peers grow together. Teachers must be trained to meet diverse learning styles, and mainstream classrooms should be equipped with support services.

Table 2 Factors that Indicate the Participation of the Learners with Special Needs in a Special Education Program in Terms of Frequency of Service

	Frequency	Percent
Once a Week	7	14.0
Two to Two-Three Times a Week	19	38.0
Every Day	24	48.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 2 presents the factors that indicate the participation of learners with special needs in a special education program in terms of frequency of service. The data show that the highest percentage is 48.0%, with 24 respondents indicating that learners with special needs attend the special program every day. This is followed by 38.0%, with 19 respondents attending two to three times a week, and 14.0%, with seven respondents attending once a week, as the lowest percentage. The results show that more learners with special needs are attending two to three times a week, every day, but most of them attend every day in the specified special education program.

Most special needs students attend special education classes daily, indicating regular participation and access to specialized

resources. This attendance leads to significant improvement in academic achievement, behavior management, communication, and life skills. It also facilitates more interactions among learners, support staff, and teachers, allowing for individualized attention and timely adjustments. Schools must prioritize regular attendance by eliminating barriers like transportation, scheduling conflicts, or health complications. Consistent attendance also helps teachers and support staff develop positive relationships with learners, accurately evaluate progress, and adjust instruction accordingly. This ensures the maximum benefit of special education services and better results for learners with disabilities.

Table 3 Factors that Indicate the Participation of the Learners with Special Needs in a Special Education Program in Terms of Duration of Participation

	Frequency	Percent
One Month	10	20.0
Two to Five Months	6	12.0
Six Months	20	40.0
Full School Year	14	28.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 3 presents the factors that indicate the participation of learners with special needs in a special education program, specifically in terms of the duration of participation. The data show that the highest percentage is 40.0% or 20 respondents answered that most of the learners with special needs attended a special program for a maximum of six months followed by 28.0% or 14 attending for a full school year, 20.0% or 10 for attending maximum of one month, and the lowest percentage is 12.0% or 6 for attending within one month only. The results show that the maximum duration of participation for most

learners with special needs in the specified special education program is six months to a whole school year.

Most learners with special needs attend special education programs for six months to a school year, providing medium-to long-term intervention. This period allows for academic and developmental growth, allowing teachers to track and adjust interventions. Schools should ensure that attendance corresponds to individual learner needs, with some requiring longer assistance for lasting results, while others show progress within a shorter timeframe. Flexibility and regular assessments



are crucial, and plans should be in place to transition learners back into regular classrooms or to the next step in their education.

Table 4 Factors that Indicate the Participation of the Learners with Special Needs in a Special Education Program in Terms of Support Services Received

	Frequency	Percent
Speech Therapy	10	20.0
Occupational Therapy	9	18.0
Academic Interventions	31	62.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 4 presents the factors that indicate the participation of learners with special needs in a special education program, categorized by the type of support services they receive. The data show that the highest percentage is 62.0%, with 31 respondents indicating that learners with special needs received academic interventions as part of the support services provided in the special education program, followed by 20.0%, or 10 respondents, who received speech therapy. In comparison, the percentage of individuals receiving occupational therapy is 18.0%, or 9, which is the lowest. The results show that most learners with special needs receive academic interventions as support services in special education programs; however, the number is small for speech and occupational therapies.

Most special needs students receive academic interventions, which are crucial for academic success. However, a small percentage of students undergo speech and occupational therapies, which may be limited due to gaps in availability or accessibility. These therapies are essential for remediating communication disorders, fine motor skills, and sensory processing issues. Limited access to these therapies could undermine the overall development of special needs students. To maximize the benefit of special education programs, schools should allocate more resources, increase specialized staff, or contract with outside service providers to offer a more comprehensive range of supportive services.

Table 5 Factors that Indicate the Participation of the Learners with Special Needs in a Special Education Program in Terms of Severity of Disability

	Frequency	Percent
Mild	24	48.0
Moderate	19	38.0
Severe	7	14.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5 presents the factors that indicate the participation of learners with special needs in a special education program, categorized by the severity of their disability. The data show that the highest percentage is 48.0%, with 24 respondents indicating that most learners with special needs have a mild severity of disability, followed by 38.0% or 19 respondents with moderate severity of disability, and 14.0% or seven respondents with severe disability. The results show that most of the learners with special needs have mild to moderate severity of disability attending the specified special education program, but few have severe disability.

The special education program primarily caters to learners with mild to moderate disabilities, with some having severe disabilities. The program provides individualized support to these learners, promoting their academic and developmental achievements. However, the brain drain of learners with more disabling conditions raises questions about service availability and access. The focus on mild to moderately disabling conditions raises the demand for ongoing support. The decreased percentage of students with severe disabilities necessitates a thorough study on how to enhance services for these learners. Schools could integrate special services like one-on-one interventions or specialized equipment to create an inclusive environment for all learners.



Composite Mean on the Level of Perceived Effectiveness of Special Education to the Learners' Progress in Terms of Quality of Instruction, Relevance of Individual Learning Plan, Availability of Support Services, Teachers' Competence, Parents' Collaboration, and Availability of Learning Resources

Table 6 Composite Mean on the Level of Perceived Effectiveness of Special Education to the Learners' Progress in Terms of Quality of Instruction, Relevance of Individual Learning Plan, Availability of Support Services, Teachers' Competence, Parents' Collaboration, and Availability of Learning Resources

	Teacher		Parent		Composite	
	Mean	VI	Mean	VI	Mean	VI
Quality of Instruction	3.01	Moderately Effective	2.90	Moderately Effective	2.95	Moderately Effective
Relevance of Individual Learning Plan	3.00	Moderately Effective	2.92	Moderately Effective	2.96	Moderately Effective
Availability of Support Services	2.98	Moderately Effective	2.95	Moderately Effective	2.96	Moderately Effective
Teachers' Competence	2.94	Moderately Effective	2.93	Moderately Effective	2.93	Moderately Effective
Parent's Collaboration	2.88	Moderately Effective	2.98	Moderately Effective	2.93	Moderately Effective
Availability of Learning Resources	3.00	Moderately Effective	2.93	Moderately Effective	2.97	Moderately Effective
EFFECTIVENESS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TO THE LEARNERS' PROGRESS	2.97	Moderately Effective	2.93	Moderately Effective	2.95	Moderately Effective

Legend: 4 3.50 - 4.00 Highly Effective 3 2.50 - 3.49 Moderately Effective
 2 1.50 - 2.49 Slightly Effective 1 1.00 - 1.49 Not Effective

Table 6 presents a composite table on the level of perceived effectiveness of special education about learners' progress, considering the quality of instruction, the relevance of individual learning plans, the availability of support services, teachers' competence, parents' collaboration, and the availability of learning resources.

The table shows that the level of perceived effectiveness of special education to the learners' progress in terms of quality of instruction (WM=2.95), relevance of individual learning plan (WM=2.96), availability of support services (WM=2.96), teachers' competence (WM=2.93), parent's collaboration (WM=2.93), and availability of learning resources (WM=2.97) are verbally interpreted as "Moderately Effective". With an overall mean of 2.95, the results indicate that special education programs have a moderate effectiveness on learners' progress in terms of the quality of instruction, relevance of individual learning plans, availability of support services, teachers' competence, parents' collaboration, and availability of learning resources.

Special education programs have a moderate impact on various aspects such as instruction quality, individualized learning plans, support services, teachers' qualifications, parents' involvement, and learning materials. However, there are still critical areas that need improvement. The findings serve as a benchmark for identifying areas for targeted improvement and emphasize the importance of comprehensive, learner-centered

approaches. Schools and education communities should invest in professional development, individualize student learning plans, provide standardized support services, enhance home-school relationships, and facilitate effective use of instructional resources. A well-planned improvement plan can fill gaps and improve special education programs, leading to more meaningful academic and developmental achievements for students with special needs.

The findings highlight the critical need for high-quality training for learners with special needs, as identified by Pocaan (2022), who noted challenges such as reading and discussion techniques, decision-making monopolization, and costs of modifying instructional materials. Effective strategies include personalized instruction, motivation, classroom regulations, and adapting educational materials. A comprehensive program for special education teaching methodologies is essential, focusing on faculty management, student support, and administrative initiatives, with an emphasis on professional development for educators. Strunk et al. (2022) reinforce the importance of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) in providing services to children with disabilities, stressing the need for administrators to ensure student participation in assessments and necessary accessibility supports. Additionally, Akçin (2022) discussed challenges in IEP production related to various stakeholders and the complexities of planning and performance measurement.



The research by Sturm et al. (2021) highlights the disparities in special education services for students with autism compared to those with other disabilities, revealing that autistic students typically receive more services tailored to their needs. The study also found that socioeconomic factors, particularly free and reduced lunch eligibility, significantly influence the quantity of services received, with notable racial differences in service distribution among autistic students. Additionally, Hester et al. (2020) emphasize the challenges faced by special education instructors, including high attrition rates and insufficient administrative support, which contribute to educator burnout and negatively affect students and school systems.

The findings support Bartolome et al. (2020), who argue that parental involvement is essential for children's educational and developmental success, emphasizing the role of teachers in fostering effective home-school communication and collaboration. Additionally, Guzman (2021) identifies

significant challenges in providing adequate learning materials for students with special educational needs in the Philippines, including funding shortages and the necessity for curriculum adaptations. Addressing these challenges is crucial for enhancing the quality of special education and promoting inclusive learning environments.

The study aligns with the findings of Allam and Martin (2021), emphasizing the challenges faced by special education (SPED) teachers in addressing the needs of children with learning disabilities. Key issues include the lack of training for teachers, inadequate strategies for teaching, and a poor learning environment in the Division of Ilagan, characterized by insufficient resources and support. Teachers often feel unqualified, and the integration of learners with disabilities into inclusive classrooms is ineffective without proper support. The study calls for adherence to SPED policies and increased stakeholder involvement to enhance support for these students.

Composite Mean on the Impact of Special Education Programs on the Development of Learners with Special Needs in terms of Academic Improvement, Positive Behavior, Communication Skills, Functional Life Skills, and Learning Engagement.

Table 7 Composite Mean on the Impact of Special Education Programs on the Development of Learners with Special Needs in terms of Academic Improvement, Positive Behavior, Communication Skills, Functional Life Skills, and Learning Engagement

	Teacher		Parent		Composite	
	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Academic Improvement	2.95	High Impact	3.03	High Impact	2.99	High Impact
Positive Behavior	3.06	High Impact	2.97	High Impact	3.01	High Impact
Communication Skills	2.92	High Impact	3.02	High Impact	2.97	High Impact
Functional Life Skills	2.97	High Impact	3.00	High Impact	2.98	High Impact
Learning Engagement	2.93	High Impact	2.87	High Impact	2.90	High Impact
IMPACT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	2.97	High Impact	2.98	High Impact	2.97	High Impact

Legend: 4 (3.50 - 4.00) Very High Impact 3 (2.50 - 3.49) High Impact 2 (1.50 - 2.49) Low Impact 1 (1.00 - 1.49) Very Low Impact

Table 7 presents a composite table on the impact of special education programs on the development of learners with special needs, focusing on academic improvement, positive behavior, communication skills, functional life skills, and learning engagement.

The table shows that all the indicators on the impact of special education programs on the development of learners with special needs in terms of academic improvement (WM=2.99), positive behavior (WM=3.01), communication skills (WM=2.97), functional life skills (WM=2.98), and learning engagement (WM=2.90) are verbally interpreted as "High Impact". With an

overall mean of 2.97, the results indicate that special education programs have a significant impact on the development of learners with special needs, particularly in terms of academic improvement, positive behavior, communication skills, functional life skills, and learning engagement.

Special education programs significantly impact learners with special needs, enhancing academic achievement, behavior, communication, functional life skills, and participation in learning. These programs provide individual, focused intervention, enabling significant advancements in academic progress and personal development. The research suggests that



schools and education stakeholders must continue to develop special education programs for sustained success. A balanced approach incorporating academic assistance, behavioral development, social-emotional learning, and life skills training is crucial. Investing in teacher professional development, effective resource utilization, and parent-school coordination can further intensify the success of special education initiatives, ensuring students reach their full potential.

Limmanee (2023) emphasizes the right of every child, including those with disabilities, to receive quality education in Thailand, as mandated by the EPDA. This includes free education from birth or upon disability onset, with necessary support and the freedom to choose educational services tailored to individual needs. The educational framework in Thailand incorporates both inclusive and special education, with inclusive education fostering integration and diversity among students. However, challenges such as inaccessible courses, transportation issues, and financial constraints persist, particularly in special education settings that often isolate children from their families and communities, limiting their social skills and educational opportunities. Despite these challenges, special education remains a prevalent practice, though it restricts access to broader educational options for children with disabilities.

The findings of this study support the work of Drigas et al. (2021) by highlighting the importance of enhancing standards in special education through various interventions. It emphasizes that automatic thoughts and implicit biases can negatively impact motivation and learning outcomes. Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) is identified as a valuable methodology for addressing maladaptive thought patterns, thereby fostering positive behaviors and academic success in children with special educational needs. Additionally, the research suggests that virtual reality can complement NLP by reducing biases and improving perspective-taking and self-perception, which may alleviate depressive symptoms. The study proposes a novel pedagogical approach that integrates NLP, positive psychology, and social psychology to promote brain rewiring and subconscious training, even in virtual settings.

Lyskova et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of communication strategies in inclusive classrooms to engage children with special educational needs (SEN) alongside their typically developing peers. Their findings indicate significant

improvements in communicative skills among schoolchildren when collaborative games and joint activities are incorporated into the curriculum. This approach not only enhances relationships and individual development but also improves partnership dynamics and overall satisfaction in educational interactions. The study aims to promote an integrative approach that enhances resources and conditions for developing communicative competencies and provides recommendations for educators to improve their effectiveness in fostering these skills.

The research highlights differing views between educators and parents on the development of functional life skills in learners with disabilities. Alodat et al. (2020) noted that special education teachers recognize the importance of functional skills for students with intellectual disabilities, influenced by their experience, qualifications, and gender. This underscores the critical role of functional skills across various dimensions. Meanwhile, Padillo et al. (2021) found that parents view learners with special educational needs (LSENs) as having intermediate functional skills, but they encounter challenges such as lack of training, insufficient knowledge about childcare, and limited time.

Campado et al. (2023) explored the use of assistive technology (AT) in the education of learners with special educational needs (LSENs), identifying various technologies used in special education (SPED). The study found that both interactive multimedia and traditional technologies are accessible, though advanced educational applications are used sparingly. SPED teachers employ AT to reinforce learning, which enhances teaching enjoyment and motivates students. However, this reliance on technology can lead to students becoming overly focused on it. Challenges faced by SPED teachers include inadequate resources, student disobedience, technical difficulties, and a lack of skill development.

The study's findings corroborate those of Llanos et al. (2025) and underscore the need for improved teacher training, increased funding, more robust policy enforcement, and enhanced community involvement. Employ evidence-based ways to tackle these obstacles and enhance the accessibility and efficacy of inclusive education. By fortifying the implementation of special education programs, policymakers and educators can cultivate a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all children.



Significant Difference in the Perceived Level of Effectiveness of a Special Program Between Teachers and Parent-Respondents when Grouped According to Factors that Indicate the Participation of the Learners with Special Needs in a Special Education Program

Table 8 Test of Significant Difference in the Perceived Level of Effectiveness of a Special Program Between Teachers and Parent-Respondents when Grouped According to Factors that Indicate the Participation of the Learners with Special Needs in a Special Education Program

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	Remarks
Type of Special Program Participated - Effectiveness of Special Education to the Learners' Progress	-10.026	49	0.000	Reject	Significant
Frequency of Service - Effectiveness of Special Education to the Learners' Progress	-6.044	49	0.000	Reject	Significant
Duration of Participation - Effectiveness of Special Education to the Learners' Progress	-1.154	49	0.254	Accept	Not Significant
Support Services Received - Effectiveness of Special Education to the Learners' Progress	-4.445	49	0.000	Reject	Significant
Severity of Disability - Effectiveness of Special Education to the Learners' Progress	-12.659	49	0.000	Reject	Significant

Table 8 presents the test of significant differences in the perceived level of effectiveness of a special program between teachers and parent respondents when grouped according to factors that indicate the participation of learners with special needs in a special education program.

The table shows that the probability value of 0.000 for the type of special program, frequency of service, support services received, and severity of disability is less than the 0.05 level of significance, which resulted in rejecting the null hypothesis. Rejecting the null hypothesis means there is a significant difference in the. However, the probability value of 0.552 for the duration of participation is higher than the 0.05 level of confidence, which results in rejecting the null hypothesis and finding it significant.

The study reveals significant variability in the use of EYFS teaching strategies, particularly in play-based learning and shared reading, suggesting that factors like training, resources, and teacher confidence influence implementation. In contrast, hands-on sensory approaches are consistently utilized across classrooms. The findings indicate a need for enhanced training and resources to standardize the application of play-based learning and storytelling, ensuring all children benefit from these methods. Strengthening sensory strategies could also serve as a model for improving other EYFS practices, fostering a more effective learning environment for kindergarten students.

The study reveals significant differences in the perceived effectiveness of special education programs between teachers and parents based on factors such as the type of program, frequency of service, support services received, and severity of disability. However, there is no significant difference in opinions based on the duration of participation. These factors significantly impact learners' experiences and stakeholder worldviews. The duration of participation may not be a significant factor in determining the program's effectiveness, suggesting that other variables like the quality or intensity of services might be more significant. The results suggest that changing the nature of the program, the rate of service, and the provision of support services could result in more personalized and efficient learning opportunities. Educators and administrators should consider these conditions when creating and implementing special education programs to address learners' needs. Regular scrutiny and optimization of these factors can lead to tangible improvements in learners.

The study's findings underscore the differences in the effects of special education programs, as Schwartz et al. (2021) indicate that the academic performance of kids with disabilities remains alarmingly inferior to that of their general education counterparts. These disparities partially indicate enduring underlying problems, but they may also signify inadequate assistance. This article addresses the predominant disability category, pupils with learning impairments (LDs), utilizing comprehensive data from New York City public schools. As most learning disabilities (LDs) are identified post-enrollment, we analyze outcomes both prior to and following



categorization, enabling us to assess the impacts using within-student pre-post comparisons (student fixed effects) and an intent-to-treat framework. Academic achievements for students with learning disabilities improve following their classification for special education, with the most significant effects observed for those entering special education at earlier grade levels.

Attendance, however, exhibits minimal variation post-classification. The results remain consistent across several specifications, and falsification tests enhance confidence in a causal interpretation. Variations in effects based on gender, race/ethnicity, academic classification grade, and context reveal potential underlying processes.

Significant Relationship Between the Perceived Effectiveness of the Special Education Program and Its Impact on the Development of Learners with Special Needs.

Table 9 Correlation Between the Perceived Effectiveness of the Special Education Program and Its Impact on the Development of Learners with Special Needs

		Impact of Special Education Programs on the Development of Learners with Special Needs
	Pearson Correlation	.252*
Effectiveness of Special Education on the Learners' Progress	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.011
	N	100

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 9 presents the correlation between the perceived effectiveness of the special education program and its impact on the development of learners with special needs.

It can be inferred from the table that the p-value of 0.011 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, with a Pearson correlation value of 0.252, indicating a significant positive relationship between the perceived effectiveness of the special education program and its impact on the development of learners with special needs.

The study found a positive correlation between the perceived effectiveness of a special education program and its ability to shape the development of learners with special needs. It suggests that as the program becomes more effective, it leads to better outcomes in key domains such as academic progress, good behavior, communication skills, functional life skills, and learning engagement. The study suggests that actions such as improved instructional practices, increased resources, enhanced support services, and increased parent participation can directly impact long-lasting gains for learners with special needs. Schools must prioritize evaluation, stakeholder feedback, and evidence-based practices to ensure consistent effectiveness.

Participation in special education programs significantly enhances learners' progress, as evidenced by Hurwitz et al. (2020), who investigated the impact of such participation on the academic outcomes of students with disabilities. Students from a substantial metropolitan school district were monitored longitudinally during their transition from general to special education to assess whether the receipt of special education services correlated with enhancements in their academic trajectories. Employing student fixed effects models to analyze within-person changes over time, this study assessed individuals' performance on standardized tests before, during, and after special education placement. Results demonstrate that the test results of kids with impairments improved following their enrollment in special education. Moreover, pupils

transitioning out of special education demonstrated a consistent pattern of academic advancement, suggesting that involvement in special education within this district was associated with sustained improvements over time.

Proposed Intervention Program in Special Education Rationale

Special education intervention programs play a significant role in supporting learners with special needs and empowering them to reach their full potential. An intervention program proposed based on the results of this study needs to address the diverse needs of learners in various aspects. One is academic intervention, which is needed to close the gaps in academic attainment and enable learners to develop important skills and concepts. With academic aid, however, the learners with special needs continue to show weaknesses in speech, language, and occupational therapy; thus, a shift towards providing effective communication and functional life skills therapies is necessary. Likewise, behavioral interventions are also necessary, as enhancing behavior and social interaction skills can improve learners' emotional well-being and class participation. This intervention can lead to improved behavior and increased engagement in learning activities. The value of communication is significant for learners with disabilities. Therefore, increasing speech therapy services and incorporating more practice opportunities for communication into daily routines can significantly improve students' ability to communicate with teachers and peers. Coherently, functional life skills training tailored to individual learners' needs is equally important because independence in daily living skills has a direct correlation with academic performance and behavior change among learners. Finally, the learning participation of students with disabilities is relatively moderate and would require innovative methods to arouse their interest and engagement in learning. By applying pedagogical activities and strategies that arouse interest, maintain active participation, and provide motivation, teachers can guide these learners to develop a



constructive learning style, thereby mobilizing them towards academic success.

Empowering Learners with Disabilities: An Intervention Program in Special Education

KEY AREA	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	PERSONS INVOLVED	TIME ALLOTMENT	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Academic	To enhance students' academic performance and task participation.	Differentiated Instruction Individual Learning Plan	Special Education Teacher	Daily/ Weekly	Improved academic achievement, enhanced task completion, and engagement among learners with disabilities.
Behavior	To promote improved conduct and raise academic performance.	Behavioral Intervention Positive Reinforcement Story Telling	Special Education Teacher Behavior Specialist	Daily/ Weekly	Decreased disruptive behavior, enhanced classroom participation, and improved academic achievement among learners with disabilities.
Communication	To enhance pupils' capacity to express their wants, ideas, and emotions	Speech Therapy Drills Role Playing Peer Conversation Activities	Special Education Teacher Speech Therapist	2-3 Times a Week	Improved clarity of communication, enhanced confidence in interactions among learners with disabilities.
Functional Life	To give students useful skills for everyday life.	Proper Hygiene Activities Fashion and Hobbies	Occupational Therapist Special Education Teacher	Daily/ Weekly	Enhanced independence in daily activities, improved self-esteem among learners with disabilities.
Motor Skills and Senses	To enhance sensory processing and fine motor abilities.	Fine Motor Activities Hands-On Activities Hand-Eye Coordination Exercises	Occupational Therapist Special Education Teacher	Daily/ Weekly	Improved motor skills, enhanced sensory processing and task completion among learners with disabilities.
Professional Support Services	To offer resources to improve participation and learning. To enhance students' speech and interactions with adults and peers.	Behavioral Intervention Positive Reinforcement Story Telling	Special Education Teacher Behavior Specialist Occupational Therapist	2-3 Times a Week	Improved speech clarity, enhanced peer communication and interaction among learners with disabilities.
Parents' Collaboration	To improve the relationship between the family and the school and to support home-based initiatives for learners with disabilities.	Behavioral Intervention Positive Reinforcement Story Telling	Special Education Teacher Parents	Monthly/ Quarterly	increased consistency of support at home among parents and members of the family.



IV. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that most learners with special needs participate in mainstream classes, with a maximum duration of six months to a whole school year. They receive academic interventions as support services, with a small number receiving speech and occupational therapies. Most learners have mild to moderate severity of disability and a few have severe disability. The perceived effectiveness of special education is moderately effective in terms of learners' progress, with indicators such as quality of instruction, relevance of individual learning plans, availability of support services, teachers' competence, parents' collaboration, and availability of learning resources. The impact of special education programs on learners' academic improvement, positive behavior, communication skills, functional life skills, and learning engagement is high. There is a significant difference in perceived effectiveness between teachers and parent-respondents based on factors such as type of program, frequency of service, support services received, and severity of disability. A significant positive relationship exists between perceived effectiveness and its impact on learners with special needs.

The study concludes that the school's special education program caters to diverse learners with varying needs, offering individualized support to promote academic and developmental achievements. However, the program's effectiveness is not yet optimized. Factors such as program type, frequency, support services, and disability severity impact learning experiences and progress. The program's effectiveness impacts learners' development in various aspects.

The study recommends schools to integrate special services for highly disabled students, identify areas for improvement, and continue to implement special education programs. It emphasizes a balanced approach combining academic assistance, behavioral development, social-emotional learning, and life skills training. Schools should invest in professional development, resource utilization, and parent-school coordination. Personalized programs based on individual needs and consistent attendance are also suggested. Continuous evaluation and evidence-based practices are also recommended. Another study could address gaps in special education programs for inclusivity.

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