



Instructional Approaches and Behavioral Practices for Learners with Nonverbal Disabilities in Selected Special Education Centers: A Basis for a Proposed Intervention Plan

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FLOR JUNEMA C. MABUTIN, PhD

Ruidoso High School, USA

fjunema@gmail.com

Abstract:

This study investigates the instructional approaches and behavioral practices utilized for learners with nonverbal disabilities within selected Special Education (SPED) centers in the Division of Quezon City. Employing a descriptive survey research design, the study assesses the implementation of five pedagogical frameworks: constructivism, collaborative learning, thematic/project-based approaches, inquiry-based learning, and reflective teaching. Data gathered from school heads and SPED teachers reveal that while thematic and inquiry-based strategies are widely utilized to reintegrate the curriculum, significant gaps exist in connecting lessons to real-world "relevant topics." The t-test analysis identified critical challenges, including learners' sensory sensitivities and a lack of professional development for educators. Consequently, a proposed professional training model was developed and evaluated, receiving high marks for acceptability (Mean: 4.49) and feasibility. The study concludes that systemic implementation of evidence-based training and authentic task integration is essential to improving educational efficacy for students with nonverbal disabilities.

Keywords: Nonverbal Disabilities, Special Education (SPED), Instructional Approaches, Thematic Instruction

Introduction:

Nonverbal learning disabilities present a complex array of educational challenges that necessitate highly specialized interventions and structured classroom environments. In traditional settings, learners with these disabilities frequently encounter significant barriers to communication, sensory processing, socialization, and behavior management. According to Fernandez and Gomez (2021), the engagement of children with disabilities in the Philippine context is heavily influenced by the quality of these instructional environments. To address these needs, effective strategies such as constructivism and collaborative learning are vital for fostering problem-solving skills and social competence (Adams & Gresham, 2016).

This study specifically examines the Division of Quezon City, acting as a hub for educational innovation, to gather data from both public and private special education (SPED) centers regarding current instructional practices. The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in Social-Constructivist Theory, which emphasizes that learners make meaning of their experiences through active engagement and collaboration. Collaborative teaching has been identified as a highly effective approach for students with disabilities, as evidenced by meta-analytical research (Ganz & Flores, 2018).

Furthermore, the integration of thematic and project-based learning allows for hands-on skill-building within a predictable framework, which is essential for academic achievement and the development of critical thinking (Bae, Kim, & Kim, 2018). These approaches allow educators to move beyond rote memorization toward a more holistic educational experience.

Complementing these constructivist methods are Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Cognitive Load Theory. ABA provides the systematic structure required for teaching new skills through discrete trial training and positive reinforcement, a method shown to be effective in school-based intensive behavioral treatments (Eikeseth et al., 2019). Simultaneously, Cognitive Load Theory ensures that instructional design manages the limited cognitive resources of



learners to minimize processing overwhelm. By balancing systematic behavioral support with cognitive management, educators can create a more accessible learning path for students who struggle with complex nonverbal cues and sensory information.

The study further incorporates the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework and modern inquiry-based approaches. UDL offers a flexible curriculum with multiple means of representation, which is critical when addressing diverse learning profiles in the Philippines (Gomez & Fernandez, 2021). Inquiry-based learning enhances this by encouraging students to explore and discover, which has been shown to improve outcomes in higher education and specialized settings (Bell & Cowie, 2017). Additionally, the use of modern tools, such as iPad-based instruction, has been compared to traditional methods to determine which best facilitates knowledge acquisition for this specific demographic (Garcia & Reyes, 2019).

Central to the improvement of these instructional practices is the Reflective Approach. Reflective teaching allows educators to analyze their own efficacy and teaching skills, which is directly linked to higher teacher satisfaction and student achievement (He & Li, 2016). For those working with students on the disability spectrum, reflective practice is considered a key component of effective instruction (Cox & Cox, 2018). By consistently evaluating the relationship between teaching methods and student responses, teachers can improve their instructional efficacy and better meet the unique needs of their learners (Chen & Liu, 2017).

The study utilizes the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model to structure the investigation and address the support needs of both educators and families (Gomez & Fernandez, 2022). The Input phase includes the assessments and challenges identified by SPED teachers and school heads in selected Philippine schools.

The Process involves the systematic administration of survey questionnaires and subsequent statistical analysis to identify trends and gaps in current practices. The ultimate Output of this research is a proposed professional training plan for educators, designed to enhance the implementation of the special education curriculum and improve the quality of support for learners with nonverbal disabilities.

Literature Review

The educational landscape for learners with nonverbal disabilities is characterized by a necessity for highly structured and evidence-based interventions. Research consistently demonstrates that these learners face significant hurdles in communication, sensory processing, and socialization, which traditional classroom settings often fail to address adequately. As the global educational community moves toward more inclusive practices, the identification of effective instructional approaches becomes paramount.

This literature review synthesizes current research on constructivist, collaborative, thematic, inquiry-based, and reflective teaching strategies within the context of special education. Constructivism remains a cornerstone of modern pedagogical theory, emphasizing that learners actively construct knowledge through experience. Meta-analytical studies have shown that a constructivist approach significantly impacts academic achievement across various student demographics (Kocakaya & Ozdemir, 2018).

However, the application of constructivism in special education is often debated. While some argue that minimal guidance can lead to instructional failure (Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2016), others maintain that with proper scaffolding, problem-based and inquiry learning can lead to high levels of achievement and cognitive development (Hmelo-Silver, Duncan, & Chinn, 2018).

Collaborative learning has emerged as a vital strategy for fostering social interaction and academic growth among students with disabilities. Research by Kim and Park (2019) highlights that inclusive education environments benefit significantly from collaborative frameworks, which allow for peer-mediated support. Furthermore, peer-mediated instruction has been shown through meta-analysis to specifically enhance the social interaction skills of children with disabilities, providing them with naturalistic opportunities to practice communication (Kim & Solomon, 2017). This synergy between students helps bridge the gap created by nonverbal communication deficits.



The breadth of collaborative research also extends to the infrastructure of special education itself. Kozleski and Waitoller (2016) argue that advancing collaborative research requires a robust infrastructure that supports shared leadership and data-driven decision-making. In the classroom, this translates to comprehensive collaborative models where general and special education teachers work in tandem to modify curricula (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2021).

Such models ensure that the unique learning profiles of students with nonverbal disabilities are addressed through multiple perspectives and specialized expertise (Kim & Kwon, 2019). Thematic instruction offers a holistic approach by integrating various subject areas around a central concept, which is particularly effective for learners who struggle with fragmented information.

Recent meta-analyses indicate that thematic instruction significantly improves academic outcomes for students with disabilities by making learning more meaningful and connected (Li & Zhang, 2020). Beyond academic scores, integrated thematic instruction has been found to boost critical thinking skills, allowing students to see the "big picture" and apply knowledge in diverse contexts (Kim, Kim, & S. Kim, 2019).

Inquiry-based and design-based learning strategies provide students with the agency to solve problems, which is essential for developing independence. Kolodner (2017) emphasizes that "learning by design" helps students transition from theory to practice by engaging them in physical and cognitive tasks. The integration of digital technologies has further revolutionized inquiry-based learning, offering new ways for students with disabilities to explore and interact with information (Khaddage, Lattemann, & Knezek, 2019). These technology-enhanced environments provide the necessary scaffolding to make complex inquiry accessible to all learners.

Specific behavioral and social interventions are often required to supplement broader instructional strategies. Pivotal Response Treatment (PRT) is one such intervention that focuses on "pivotal" areas of a child's development, such as motivation and self-management, to produce widespread improvements in social and communicative behavior (Koegel, Koegel, & McNeerney, 2018). Similarly, play-based interventions have proven effective in enhancing social communication skills, providing a low-pressure environment where children can practice nonverbal cues (Lim & Tan, 2022). These focused interventions are critical for increasing independence in daily life (Hume, Loftin, & Lantz, 2018).

The role of the educator as a reflective practitioner is central to the success of any SPED program. Reflective teaching—the process of self-observation and self-evaluation—is a key driver of teacher professional development (Huang & Chang, 2016). For special education teachers, this practice is directly linked to increased teaching efficacy, as it allows them to adapt their methods to the specific, often fluctuating, needs of their students (Kim, Lee, & Lee, 2019). Meta-analyses further confirm that teacher effectiveness is significantly higher when educators consistently engage in reflective practices (Kim & Kim, 2018).

Advancements in technology, such as "seamless flipped learning" and mobile-enhanced classrooms, have provided educators with new tools to implement these reflective and instructional strategies. By utilizing mobile technology, teachers can create more flexible and responsive learning environments that cater to individual student paces (Hwang, Lai, & Wang, 2017).

Additionally, a reflective approach in digital and online courses has been shown to promote metacognitive skills, helping students become more aware of their own learning processes and outcomes (Kuo et al., 2019). The success of instructional approaches for learners with nonverbal disabilities is inextricably linked to the involvement of their families. Understanding the perspectives and experiences of parents is essential for creating a supportive educational setting (Johnson & Jones, 2022).

Social competence interventions are most successful when they involve a systematic approach that includes the child's broader social ecosystem, including home and community (Mak et al., 2019). By aligning school-based strategies with family needs and professional reflection, educators can create a truly inclusive and effective learning environment.

Methodology:



The methodology of this study utilizes a descriptive survey research design to systematically collect and analyze quantitative data regarding the prevalence and perceived effectiveness of various instructional approaches. This specific design was selected for its efficiency in gathering a comprehensive dataset from a significant number of participants within a limited timeframe, allowing for a broad overview of the current educational landscape for learners with nonverbal disabilities. By employing this descriptive framework, the research accurately captures the "what" and "how" of instructional delivery as practiced across diverse educational settings.

The participants for this investigation consisted of school heads and special education (SPED) teachers situated within selected centers in the Division of Quezon City. These individuals were purposively selected based on their direct professional experience in managing and teaching learners with disabilities, ensuring that the data gathered was grounded in practical, classroom-based expertise. This dual-perspective approach—incorporating both administrative oversight and frontline instructional experience—provides a balanced view of how strategies are implemented and supported within the school system.

To facilitate data collection, a primary survey questionnaire was developed and administered digitally via Google Forms. This instrument was designed to be supplemented by direct classroom observations, where a subset of the participants was evaluated using a structured checklist to document the real-time application of instructional practices. Furthermore, an acceptability survey utilizing both Likert-scale and open-ended questions was integrated into the research tools to evaluate the feasibility and perceived value of the proposed training model, ensuring a multi-dimensional assessment of the research objectives.

The data collection process was initiated through formal email invitations and the distribution of digital links to the survey instruments. Once the data was compiled, it underwent a rigorous statistical analysis to derive meaningful conclusions. Descriptive statistics, specifically means and standard deviations, were calculated to identify and describe the frequency and extent to which specific instructional strategies are utilized by educators. These metrics provide a clear baseline for understanding the dominant pedagogical trends within the participating SPED centers.

To explore deeper relationships within the data, inferential statistics were employed to test the research hypotheses. Specifically, the Mann-Whitney U test and the t-test were utilized to determine if there were statistically significant differences between the assessments provided by school heads and those of the SPED teachers. By comparing these two distinct groups, the study was able to pinpoint areas of alignment and divergence in professional perceptions, ultimately providing a data-driven foundation for the development of targeted intervention plans and professional training modules.

Results and Discussion:

Utilization of Instructional Approaches

The findings of this study reveal a significant commitment to diverse pedagogical strategies within the surveyed special education centers. Primarily, the data indicates that thematic and inquiry-based approaches are widely utilized, serving as the foundational pillars for delivering complex concepts to learners with nonverbal disabilities. The integration of these methods suggests a shift away from isolated, rote instruction toward a more interconnected and student-centered educational framework. By prioritizing these approaches, educators in the Division of Quezon City are actively working to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application for their students.

Thematic instruction, in particular, emerged as a highly favored strategy among the respondents, achieving an overall composite mean of 3.561, which classifies it firmly within the "Utilized" category. A deeper analysis of this data shows that the highest-ranked indicator for this approach was its utility as a "tool for reintegrating the curriculum," which earned a mean of 3.73. This suggests that SPED teachers find immense value in organizing learning around central themes, as it allows for a more cohesive delivery of various subjects that might otherwise seem disjointed to a learner with processing difficulties.

Inquiry-based learning also demonstrated strong prevalence in the classroom, with a composite mean of 3.66. The qualitative feedback from respondents highlighted a consensus that knowledge acquisition is most efficient when the learning process is coherent and holistic. Rather than passively receiving information, learners are encouraged to



explore and ask questions, a method that aligns with the social-constructivist goals of the curriculum. This approach helps students with nonverbal disabilities build a sense of agency and improves their ability to navigate unpredictable social and academic environments.

A critical component of the instructional landscape is the reflective approach, though the data revealed a notable disparity in how it is perceived across different professional roles. Teachers utilized this method primarily to analyze and refine their own teaching skills, aiming for continuous improvement in their instructional delivery. However, the statistical analysis showed that school heads gave this approach a significantly higher mean of 4.54, compared to the 3.43 mean provided by the SPED teachers. This gap suggests that while administrators view reflection as an essential, high-priority practice, frontline teachers may face time constraints or lack the formal structures needed to implement it as deeply as they would like.

The characteristics of these teaching approaches were also scrutinized to understand the specific techniques being employed. Under the umbrella of the Thematic and Project-Based Approach, the technique of "Parts of a Whole"—which involves breaking down complex, multi-step concepts into smaller, manageable segments—was identified as "Highly Utilized." This alignment with Cognitive Load Theory demonstrates that educators are acutely aware of the need to prevent sensory and cognitive overwhelm in their students, ensuring that the pace of instruction remains accessible.

However, the study also identified areas for growth, specifically regarding the "Relevant Topics" indicator, which involves incorporating meaningful, real-world themes into the daily lessons. This was noted as the least utilized characteristic among the surveyed educators. This finding indicates a potential disconnect between the structured curriculum and the students' immediate, real-world environments. Strengthening this area could significantly enhance student motivation and the practical utility of the skills being taught in the SPED centers.

The comparative assessment between school heads and SPED teachers provided further insight into the operational challenges of these institutions. While both groups generally agreed on the importance of the five instructional categories, the differences in their mean scores highlight varying levels of focus and pressure. School heads often view instructional strategies through the lens of school-wide performance and standards, while teachers prioritize the immediate behavioral and communicative needs of their specific students. Identifying these divergent viewpoints is essential for creating a unified intervention plan that addresses both administrative goals and classroom realities.

The results confirm that while effective instructional strategies are being utilized, there is a clear need for a more standardized and supported intervention framework. The high acceptability of the proposed training model (with means ranging from 4.41 to 4.59) suggests that educators are eager for professional development that bridges the gap between theory and practice. By focusing on the high-utility areas identified in the results—such as thematic integration and inquiry-based exploration—and addressing the barriers to reflective practice, the Division of Quezon City can continue to lead the way in providing high-quality, inclusive education for all learners.

Characteristics of Teaching Approaches

The analysis of the "Characteristics of Teaching Approaches" provides a granular view of how theoretical frameworks are translated into daily classroom activities. Within the scope of the Thematic and Project-Based Approach, the data highlights a sophisticated understanding of cognitive scaffolding among educators. The indicator "Parts of a Whole," which refers to the systematic decomposition of complex, multi-step concepts into smaller, manageable segments, was categorized as "Highly Utilized." This high frequency of use suggests that teachers are acutely aware of the processing limitations often associated with nonverbal disabilities and are proactively mitigating cognitive overwhelm.

By breaking down information, educators are effectively applying the principles of Cognitive Load Theory to ensure that the pace of instruction remains accessible. This approach allows students to master individual components of a task before attempting to synthesize them into a larger project. Such a structured methodology is essential for learners who may struggle with executive functioning or the synthesis of abstract information. The high utilization of this characteristic reflects a pedagogical priority on foundational mastery and incremental progress.



In contrast, the research identified a significant instructional gap regarding the "Relevant Topics" indicator. This characteristic involves the integration of meaningful, real-world themes and community-based problems into the daily curriculum. The data revealed that this was the "least utilized" characteristic among the surveyed centers. This suggests that while the internal structure of the lessons is sound, there is a recurring difficulty in extending that learning beyond the four walls of the classroom and into the students' immediate environment.

The underutilization of real-world relevance may stem from a reliance on standardized curriculum materials that do not always account for the local or personal contexts of the learners. When instructional themes are disconnected from the students' lived experiences, it can lead to a decrease in motivation and a struggle to generalize skills to non-academic settings. Addressing this gap is critical for ensuring that the education provided in SPED centers has a functional and lasting impact on the students' quality of life.

Furthermore, the "Learning in the World" indicator followed a similar trend of lower utilization. This characteristic emphasizes the importance of experiential learning and community-based instruction. The results imply that the "Project-Based" aspect of the curriculum remains largely theoretical or confined to simulated environments. For students with nonverbal disabilities, the lack of authentic interaction with their environment can hinder the development of social and navigational skills that are necessary for future independence.

The findings also shed light on the characteristic of "Coherent and Holistic Learning." While inquiry-based methods are generally utilized, the degree to which they are integrated into a seamless whole varies. Educators reported that they find knowledge acquisition most efficient when lessons are not fragmented; however, the practical execution of this holism is often challenged by time constraints and the need for individualized behavioral interventions. Balancing the breadth of a thematic unit with the depth of individual student needs remains a primary challenge for SPED practitioners.

Interestingly, the "Inquiry and Discovery" characteristic within project-based learning showed moderate utilization. This suggests that teachers are moving away from purely directive instruction and are beginning to allow students more agency in their learning journey. By encouraging students to explore "how" and "why," teachers are fostering critical thinking skills that are often overlooked in traditional SPED models. However, the data suggests that more structured support is needed to make discovery-based learning successful for nonverbal learners.

The "Scaffolding for Independence" indicator was also a key focus of the assessment. Teachers frequently reported using visual aids and digital tools—such as the iPad-based instruction noted in previous sections—to support the transition from guided to independent work. This characteristic is vital for the "Parts of a Whole" strategy, as it provides the necessary bridge for students to connect individual segments of a lesson into a completed project or skill set.

The results also highlight a need for improved "Interdisciplinary Integration." While thematic units are designed to cross subject boundaries, the data suggests that these connections are often tenuous. Improving the ability of teachers to link language arts, mathematics, and social skills through a single theme would not only improve the efficiency of instruction but also reinforce the relevance of each subject area in a real-world context. This integration is the hallmark of a truly effective thematic approach.

The analysis of these characteristics serves as a roadmap for future professional development and curriculum design. By reinforcing the strengths of "Parts of a Whole" while actively addressing the deficiencies in "Relevant Topics" and "Learning in the World," the Division of Quezon City can create a more balanced and impactful educational experience. Moving toward an instructional model that is both cognitively accessible and socially relevant is the key to unlocking the full potential of learners with nonverbal disabilities.

Comparative Assessment and Challenges

The comparative analysis between the two respondent groups was conducted using a t-test to determine if administrative perceptions aligned with classroom realities. This statistical inquiry sought to identify whether school heads and SPED teachers held significantly different views regarding the effectiveness and implementation of instructional strategies. Understanding these perspectives is vital for institutional cohesion, as a misalignment between



those who manage resources and those who deliver instruction can lead to systemic inefficiencies in the education of learners with nonverbal disabilities.

The findings revealed that while both groups recognize the importance of specialized pedagogy, their assessments of daily implementation often vary. School heads tended to rate the availability and success of instructional frameworks slightly higher, likely reflecting an aspirational or policy-driven view of the school's operations. In contrast, the SPED teachers provided more conservative ratings, which are grounded in the immediate, practical difficulties of managing diverse student needs within a single classroom.

Among the primary challenges identified by SPED teachers, communication difficulties and sensory sensitivities of learners emerged as the most significant hurdles. Students with nonverbal disabilities often struggle to interpret social cues and process environmental stimuli, leading to behavioral outbursts or complete withdrawal from learning activities. These sensory barriers require teachers to constantly adapt their physical environment and communication style, a task that demands significant time and energy beyond standard lesson preparation.

Furthermore, the data highlighted a critical deficiency in professional support systems. SPED teachers explicitly noted that they face limited opportunities for professional development focused on enhancing their knowledge of evidence-based practices. This gap in ongoing training leaves many educators feeling under-equipped to handle the evolving needs of their students, particularly as new research and technology emerge in the field of special education. Without a structured pathway for professional growth, the implementation of complex strategies like Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) or Universal Design for Learning (UDL) remains inconsistent.

The t-test results also shed light on the structural problems within the special education centers, such as inadequate facilities and a lack of specialized instructional materials. Teachers reported that the absence of tailored resources forces them to spend personal time and funds creating their own tactile or visual aids. This systemic lack of support not only contributes to teacher burnout but also limits the potential for students to engage with a truly inclusive and resource-rich curriculum.

To bridge the gap identified in the comparative assessment, the study suggests a more collaborative approach to school leadership. By involving SPED teachers more directly in the decision-making processes regarding curriculum and resource allocation, school heads can ensure that administrative policies are realistic and responsive to classroom needs. Strengthening the feedback loop between these two groups is essential for fostering a school culture that prioritizes both high standards and practical support.

These challenges underscore the necessity of the proposed intervention plan, which aims to provide targeted training and better resource management. Addressing the communication barriers and professional development gaps identified in this study is the first step toward improving the educational outcomes for learners with nonverbal disabilities. By recognizing and mitigating these hurdles, the Division of Quezon City can create a more sustainable and effective environment for both its educators and its most vulnerable students.

Acceptability of the Proposed Training Plan

The evaluation of the proposed professional training plan represents the culminating phase of this research, serving as the bridge between theoretical data and practical institutional improvement. The results indicate that the developed model achieved a status of "highly acceptable and feasible" among the stakeholders who would be responsible for its implementation. This high level of endorsement suggests that the training plan is not only theoretically sound but also resonates with the urgent, real-world needs of educators working in the special education sector within the Philippines.

In terms of pure acceptability, the data revealed a strong consensus between those on the front lines and those in administrative positions. SPED teachers, who would be the primary recipients of the training, provided a mean score of 4.49, while school heads followed closely with a mean of 4.41. These figures indicate a "Strongly Agree" response across the board, demonstrating that the proposed content and delivery methods of the training model are seen as appropriate and desirable by both groups.



The perceived benefit of the training was perhaps the most significant finding in this section, earning an impressive mean score of 4.59. Both groups of respondents strongly agreed that the implementation of this model would provide substantial benefits to their respective institutions. This high score reflects a widespread recognition that the current professional development landscape is insufficient and that a structured, evidence-based training plan is essential for improving student outcomes and teacher morale.

Flexibility was another key attribute of the model that received high marks, with ratings consistently falling between 4.47 and 4.57. This is particularly crucial in the context of the Philippine education system, where resources and classroom conditions can vary significantly between public and private centers. The respondents recognized the model's ability to adapt to different environmental conditions and varied student profiles, making it a versatile tool for a diverse range of special education settings.

The feasibility of the plan was assessed through the lens of resource management and time allocation, two of the most common barriers to professional growth. School heads noted that the modular nature of the proposed training allows for incremental implementation, which reduces the burden on school schedules. This practicality is a vital component of the model's design, ensuring that it remains a realistic goal for institutions rather than a purely academic exercise that cannot be executed in the real world.

Furthermore, the qualitative feedback gathered during the acceptability survey highlighted a specific interest in the "reflective practice" modules included in the plan. While teachers previously reported lower utilization of reflection in their daily routines, they expressed a high desire to learn structured techniques for self-evaluation. This suggests that the training plan successfully addresses a known instructional gap, providing teachers with the tools they need to evolve their pedagogical approach.

The study also evaluated the sustainability of the proposed model. Respondents indicated that the plan's emphasis on "train-the-trainer" strategies would allow for long-term growth within the school system. By empowering local school heads and lead teachers to facilitate the modules, the model reduces reliance on external consultants and fosters a culture of internal professional collaboration. This sustainability factor was a major contributor to the high feasibility ratings recorded in the survey.

Intervention strategies focused on communication and sensory processing—two of the primary challenges identified earlier—are central to the training content. The high acceptability scores suggest that educators find these specific topics to be highly relevant and immediately applicable to their classroom needs. By directly addressing the most difficult aspects of teaching learners with nonverbal disabilities, the training plan positions itself as an essential intervention for the Division of Quezon City.

The overwhelming support for the proposed training plan underscores a collective readiness for change within the special education community. The convergence of high acceptability, clear institutional benefit, and practical flexibility provides a strong mandate for the adoption of this model. Implementing this plan will ensure that educators are not only aware of the best instructional approaches—such as thematic and inquiry-based learning—but are also fully equipped to deliver them with confidence and efficacy.

Conclusions:

The findings of this comprehensive investigation lead to the primary conclusion that while special education centers in the Division of Quezon City are successfully employing several high-impact instructional strategies—specifically thematic and inquiry-based learning—there remain critical systemic gaps that hinder the full development of learners with nonverbal disabilities. The research highlights a significant tension between theoretical pedagogical success and the practical, real-world application of skills. Furthermore, the persistent challenges related to sensory processing and communication, coupled with a lack of structured professional support, suggest that the current educational environment is operating at a functional level but has yet to reach its full transformative potential.

To address these findings, the study offers several strategic recommendations. First, it is essential to prioritize the integration of authentic tasks into the special education curriculum. Educators must move beyond simulated classroom



exercises and incorporate community-based problems and real-world themes that resonate with the learners' immediate environments. This shift is vital for enhancing student motivation and ensuring that the skills acquired in a controlled setting can be successfully generalized to the outside world, thereby fostering greater independence.

Second, the overwhelming support for the proposed professional training plan necessitates its immediate and systematic implementation. This training must move beyond general pedagogy to focus on the "pivotal" areas identified in the research: evidence-based instructional strategies, sophisticated behavior management techniques, and robust frameworks for parent-teacher collaboration. Professional development should be viewed not as a one-time event but as an ongoing, reflective process that empowers teachers to adapt to the evolving complexities of nonverbal disabilities.

This study serves as a foundation for future academic inquiry. While the current data provides a clear snapshot of the Division of Quezon City, subsequent research should aim for larger, more diverse sample sizes to validate these findings on a national scale. Future longitudinal studies are particularly encouraged to explore the long-term effects of specific instructional approaches on the adult outcomes of learners with nonverbal disabilities, such as vocational success and social integration. By expanding the research infrastructure and implementing the recommended training interventions, the Philippine education system can more effectively bridge the gap between instructional theory and the lived realities of its students.

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