

TEACHER'S PROFILE, READINESS, AND THE PROCESS SKILLS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION LEARNERS IN SELECTED PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN CALAUAN SUB-OFFICE

MA. FRANCIS KATHLAINE H. SAN JOSE
 mafranciskathlaine.sanjose@deped.gov.ph
 Laguna State Polytechnic University, Philippines

ABSTRACT

The study aims to determine the effect of the teacher's profile and readiness to the process skills of learners with special needs in selected public elementary schools in Calauan Sub-Office. The study utilized the descriptive method of research. It was used to test and evaluate the hypothesis. The population of the study are the selected teachers from selected elementary schools in Calauan Sub-Office with diagnosed students with special needs. And those students with special needs that are mainstreamed in normal classes. Based on the responses, the Assessment, Curriculum Modification and Program Option of the teacher's readiness was observed to have any significant effect to the learner's process skills as to classifying, measuring and inferring. Contrast to the Assessment, Curriculum Modification and Program Option of the teacher's readiness was observed to have no significant effect to the learner's process skills as to predicting. Therefore, we can infer that at 0.05 level of significance, there is a "significant effect" on teacher's readiness to the learner's process skills. Except for the Assessment, Curriculum Modification and Program Option to Predicting and Inferring to Program Option. It is recommended that teachers to give focus on developing higher cognitive level among students, especially to those who are diagnosed with special needs. Developing their process skills, especially predicting, and inferring skills will lead to excitement of discovering new ideas and knowledge which are crucial in reasoning and decision-making. This will also give teachers high-quality assessment information to act upon.

Keywords:

Assessment, Classifying, Curriculum Modification, Inferring, Measuring, Predicting, Readiness, Program Options, Teachers, Special Education Learners

INTRODUCTION

Compared to other professions, the teacher turnover rate for special education was astronomically high. Teaching is a uniquely tough profession with enormous duties, yet many fail to appreciate the need of providing special education. The diverse disabilities of the pupils with whom special education instructors deal compound the difficulty of the position. The lack of public recognition and support for special education hampers the goals of inclusion.

Inclusion is the process of addressing and reacting to the diverse educational needs of all students by enhancing their engagement in learning, cultures, and communities, and decreasing their exclusion from education. This demonstrates the nation's dedication to provide inclusive education to all Filipinos, regardless of their specific talents or situations. (Child Rights Network, 2021). When the COVID19 outbreak began in 2020, however, the schools moved from the traditional face-to-face learning method to distance learning. The use of different delivery modalities altered the method in which schools fulfill their special education responsibilities. Now that schools are returning to face-to-face mode, it is crucial to scientifically assess the teacher's readiness for special education.

This also sought to assess the teacher's profile, readiness, and process skills of special education learners in selected public elementary schools in Laguna as part of the inclusive education program of the Department of Education. Specifically, it finds answers to the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the teachers with regards to:
 - a. Age,
 - b. Sex,
 - c. Civil Status,
 - d. Educational Attainment, and
 - e. Seminars and Trainings Attended?
2. What is the level of teacher's readiness in terms of:
 - a. Assessment,
 - b. Curriculum Modification, and
 - c. Program Options?
3. What is the level of learner's process skills relative to:
 - a. Classifying,
 - b. Measuring,
 - c. Inferring, and
 - d. Predicting?
4. Does the teacher profile have a significant effect on the learner's process skills?
5. Does teacher readiness have a significant effect on the learner's process skills?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

O'Shea (2022) emphasized that a lot of pupils are eligible for additional support and assistance in school. Children qualify for special education if a physical, cognitive, behavioral, or emotional problem affects their ability to learn. According to Lee (2020), public schools have a significant duty to seek, identify, and assess any children who require special education. In addition to notification systems and the regular adult-student contacts that take place on school campuses, according to Newman (2017), a kid with a handicap is frequently and not always easy to identify. It is crucial that schools provide their employees with enough training on how to recognize disorders that are less obvious, especially those that are social, emotional, or psychological in origin.

McLeskey et al. (2017) highlighted that special education depends on assessment. Disabled students have distinct needs and strengths. Effective special education teachers must recognize strengths and needs. According to the Center for Parent Information and Resources (2022), evaluating a child with a disability is a crucial first step in the special education process. Desfroges and Lindsay (2014) discovered major differences in policy and practice across the several countries included in a single research. There was significant variation between states or provinces within a country, and not all nations required a disability diagnosis when determining special education needs. Corbat (2021) explained that curriculum modifications or accommodations are adjustments made to the curriculum to better meet the requirements of pupils with a disadvantage.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher used a quantitative research method. It is a method of research that relies on measuring variables using a numerical system, analyzing these measurements using any of a variety of statistical models, and reporting relationships and associations among the studied variables (City University of Seattle, 2022). Specifically, survey method is employed. It is employed because the method provides a broad range of information. Surveys can yield a great range of data, and researchers can use surveys to gather information related to socioeconomic opinions, advertising and marketing and planning or testing product features. Most importantly, they are cost-effective and efficient (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022).

To find the sample size, the researcher used the probability sample as one of the kinds of sampling technique methods wherein the respondents were known. The population of the study are the selected teachers from Balayhangin Elementary School, Calauan Central Elementary School, Dayap Elementary School – Annex, and Imok Elementary School with diagnosed students with special need, and those students with special needs that is mainstreamed in normal classes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Respondents

Figure 1. Profile of respondents with regards to Age

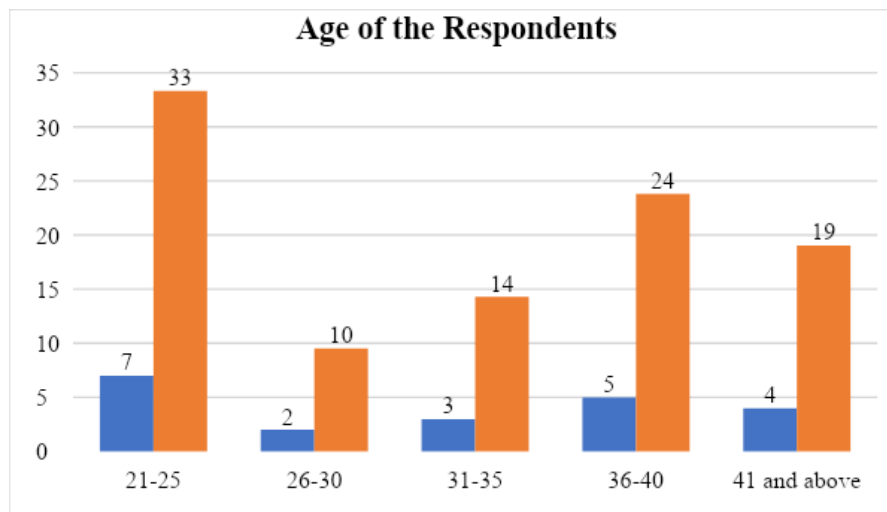
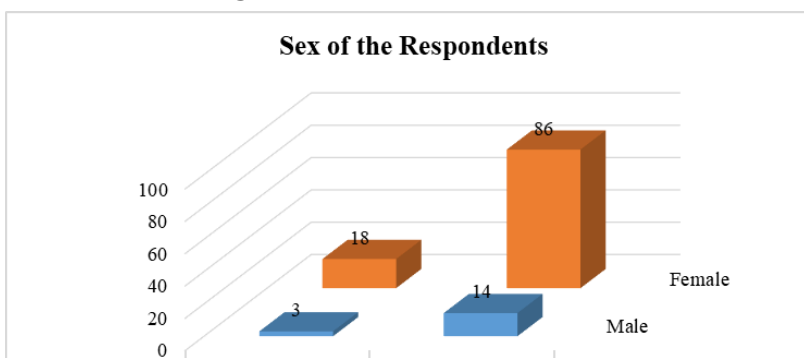


Figure 1 shows the profile of the respondents with regards to Age. Out of 21 respondents, the age ranges “21-25 years old” received the highest frequency of seven (7) or 39.3% of the total sample population. Followed by the age range of “36-40 years old” with the frequency of five (5) or 24% of the total population. While the range of “26-30 years old” received the lowest frequency with two (2) or 10% of the total sample population.

Based on the figure above, this means that the profile of the respondents with regards of age were majority adults during the time of the study. This disclosed that there were more mainstream teachers who belonged to the age of 21 to 25 years old. It means that mainstream teachers have been in the Department of Education for 1 to 3 years before they were assigned to mainstreaming. In this regard, a teacher’s experience in the regular classroom could be a criteria for becoming a mainstream teachers.

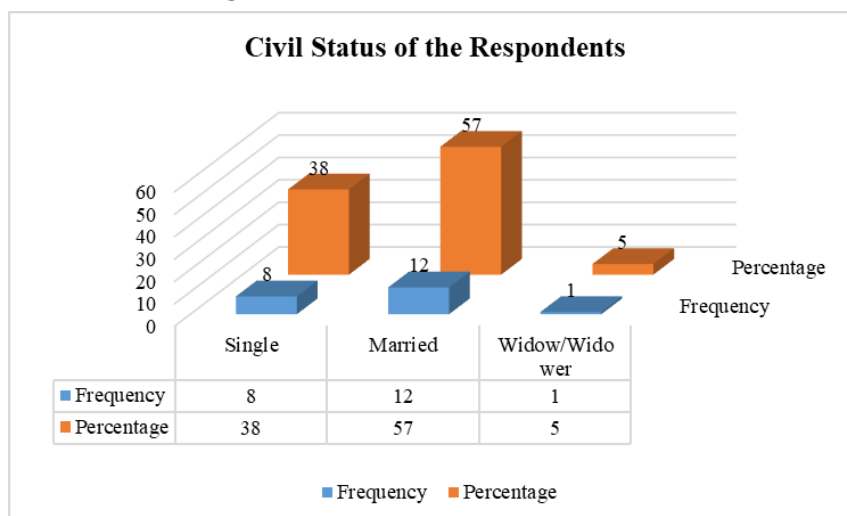
Figure 2. Profile of respondents with regards to Sex



Out of 21 respondents, dominantly “*Female*” respondents received the highest frequency of fourteen (14) or 86% of the total sample population differently to the “*Male*” respondents with the lowest frequency of three (3) or 18%.

It shows that majority of the respondents during the time of the study were Female. This result revealed that there were more female than male teachers who participated in the study. Further, this implies that there are more teachers employed in the Department of Education (DepEd) than males.

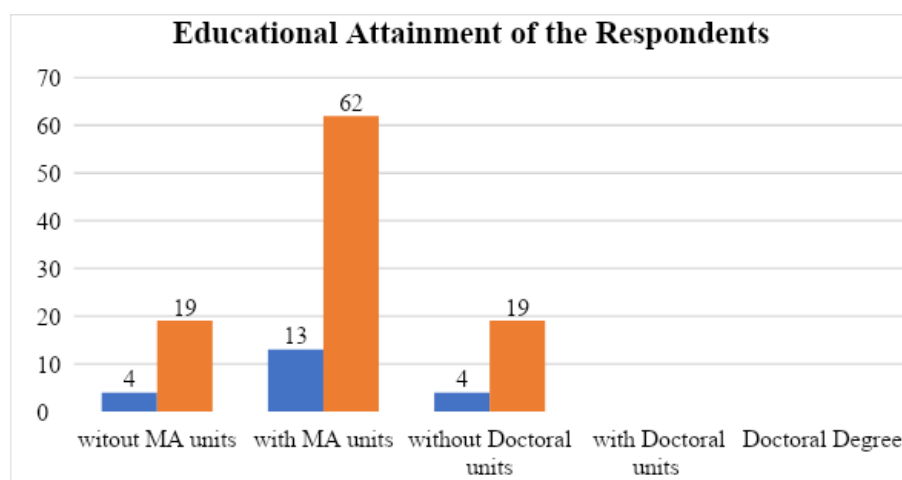
Figure 3. Profile of respondents with regards to Civil Status



Out of 21 respondents, dominantly of the respondents are “*Married*” with highest frequency of twelve (12) or 57% of the total sample population. Contrast to the “*Single*” respondents with lowest frequency of eight (8) or 38% of the total sample population. One (1) frequency and percentage for the “*Widow*” respondents.

This means that the profile of the respondents with regards to Civil Status were majority married at the time of the study. This implies that there are more Married teachers that are handling students with special needs in their regular classes.

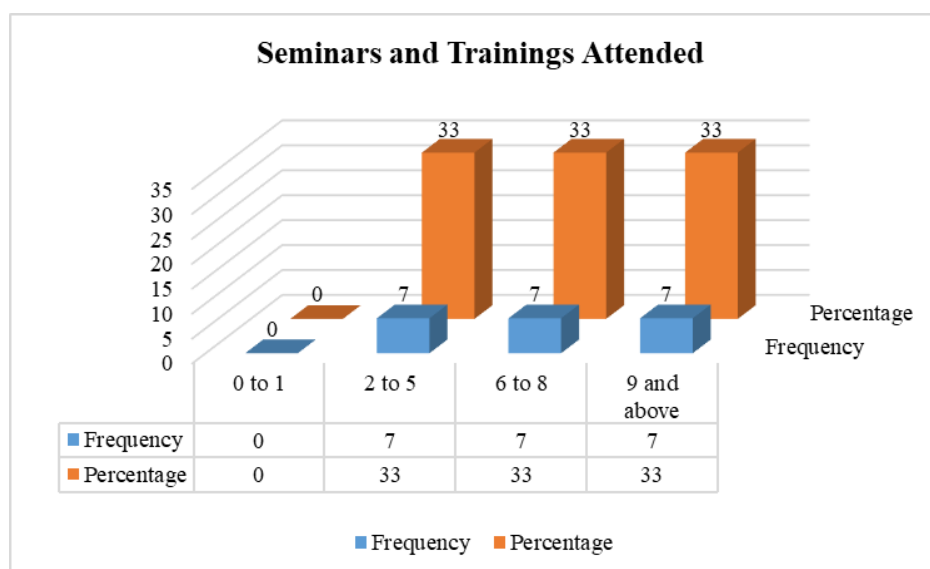
Figure 4. Profile of respondents with regards to Highest Educational Attainment



Out of 21 respondents, the highest frequency of the respondents lies to the range of “*bachelor’s degree with Masteral Units*” with thirteen (13) or 62%. Followed by the range of “*bachelor’s degree without MA units and without Doctoral units*” with four (4) or 19%.

This means that the profile of the respondents with regards to highest educational attainment were majority Masteral Unit Earner or Graduate during the time of the study. Nevertheless, there are 4 mainstream teachers that has no Masteral Units. This implies that these teachers are not motivated to pursue graduate studies.

Figure 5. Profile of respondents with regards to Seminars and Trainings Attended



Out of 21 respondents, the highest frequency of the respondents lies the same to all range of number of trainings and seminars with seven (7) or 33 of the total sample population.

This means that the profile of the respondents with regards to seminars and trainings attended were majority all well knowledge during the time of the study. Result showed that the teachers were provided seminars related to their field of specialization.

Level of Teacher’s Readiness

Table 1. Level of Teacher’s Readiness in terms of Assessment

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
<i>I have a formal tool for assessing the learning needs of learners with special needs.</i>	4.76	0.44	Always
<i>I have an informal tool for assessing the learning needs of learners with special needs.</i>	4.57	0.60	Always
<i>I receive assistance from the Special Education Teachers in assessing students with special needs.</i>	4.76	0.44	Always

<i>I relate to professional partners that support the assessment of students with special needs</i>	4.71	0.46	Always
<i>I can do school-based assessment of students with special needs.</i>	4.76	0.44	Always
Overall Mean: SD	4.71: 0.31		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

Legend: Scale Range	Remarks	Interpretation
5 4.20 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
4 3.40 – 4.19	Agree	High
3 2.60 – 3.39	Moderately Agree	Average
2 1.80 – 2.59	Disagree	Low
1 1.00 – 1.79	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

From the statement above, “*I have a formal tool for assessing the learning needs of learners with special needs*” and “*I receive assistance from the Special Education Teachers in assessing students with special needs*” and “*I can do school-based assessment of students with special needs*” yielded the highest mean score ($M=4.76$, $SD=0.44$) and was remarked as Always. On the other hand, the statement “*I have an informal tool for assessing the learning needs of learners with special needs*” received the lowest mean score of responses with ($M=4.57$, $SD=0.60$) yet also remarked Always.

The level of readiness in terms of assessment attained a weighted mean score of 4.71 and a standard deviation of 0.31 and was Highly Evident among the respondents. The data revealed that the respondents of the study were very much aware of the needed tools in assessing the learning needs of learners with special needs as a receiving teacher of these mainstream pupils. They also receive assistance from Special Education Teachers in assessing the students with special needs. This signifies that many of the respondents were very much aware on the need of assessment to understand and perform better as mainstream teachers.

Table 2. Level of Teacher’s Readiness in terms of Curriculum Modification

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
<i>I have varied service delivery options like cooperative or group work, consulting teacher programs and others.</i>	4.62	0.59	Always
<i>I receive support services from professionals and specialists, parents, volunteers, and peers or buddies to children with special needs</i>	4.71	0.46	Always
<i>I conduct activities on curriculum modification for special education learners and regular students.</i>	4.81	0.40	Always
<i>I have contextualized learning materials for students with special needs and regular students.</i>	4.57	0.51	Always
<i>I have varied assessment tools for students with special needs</i>	4.81	0.40	Always
Overall Mean: SD	4.70: 0.34		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

Table 2 illustrates the level of readiness in terms of curriculum modification. From the statement above, “*I conduct activities on curriculum modification for special education learners and regular students*” and “*I have varied assessment tools for students with special needs*” yielded the highest mean score ($M=4.81$, $SD=0.40$) and was remarked as Always. On the other hand, the statement “*I have contextualized learning materials for students with special needs and regular students*” received the lowest mean score of responses with ($M=4.57$, $SD=0.51$) yet also remarked Always.

The level of readiness in terms of curriculum modification attained a weighted mean score of 4.70 and a standard deviation of 0.34 and was Highly Evident among the respondents.

Table 3. Level of Teacher's Readiness in terms of Program Option

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
<i>I can provide educational services to children with special needs.</i>	4.71	0.46	Always
<i>I can access educational services from SPED Centers or SPED-trained teachers</i>	4.62	0.50	Always
<i>I have a self-contained class for children with similar disabilities which can be mono-grade or multi-grade handled by a trained SPED teacher.</i>	4.67	0.48	Always
<i>I include those children with disabilities in a regular student where he/she learns with his/her peers.</i>	4.52	0.60	Always
<i>I offer different options for different students with varying special needs</i>	4.81	0.40	Always
Overall Mean: SD	4.70: 0.40		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

Table 3 illustrates the level of readiness in terms of program option. From the statement above, “*I offer different options for different students with varying special needs*” yielded the highest mean score ($M=4.81$, $SD=0.40$) and was remarked as Always. This is followed by “*I can provide educational services to children with special needs*” with a mean score ($M=4.71$, $SD=0.46$) and was also remarked as Always. On the other hand, the statement “*I include those children with disabilities in a regular student where he/she learns with his/her peers*” received the lowest mean score of responses with ($M=4.52$, $SD=0.60$) yet also remarked Always.

The level of readiness in terms of curriculum modification attained a weighted mean score of 4.70 and a standard deviation of 0.40 and was Highly Evident among the respondents.

Level of Learner's Process Skills

Table 4. Level of Learner's Process Skills relative to Classifying

Score	Classifying		Verbal Interpretation
	f	%	
4.20-5.00	21	100	Very High
3.40-4.19	0	0	High
2.60-3.39	0	0	Moderate High
1.80-2.59	0	0	Low
0.00-1.79	0	0	Very Low
Total	21	100	
Mean	5.00	Very High	
SD	0.00		

Table 4 illustrates the level of learner's process skills relative to classifying. Out of 21 respondents, score “4.20-5.00” received the highest frequency of twenty-one (21) or 100% of the total sample population. Score shows the mean ($M=5.00$, $SD=0.00$) as remarked as *Very High*.

Five questions were used in classification skills to distinguish the level of learner's process skills. Based on the result, the students can easily classify objects. Hasimah (2016) stated that students need to be aware of the shared characteristics in a subject or object that were compared. They need to match the shared / same characteristics with the general characteristics that have been observed. Therefore students need to be exposed to the object of their surroundings in order to be more sensitive and aware in making the comparison.

Table 5. Level of Learner's Process Skills relative to Measuring

Score	Classifying		Verbal Interpretation
	f	%	
4.20-5.00	21	100	Very High
3.40-4.19	0	0	High
2.60-3.39	0	0	Moderate High
1.80-2.59	0	0	Low
0.00-1.79	0	0	Very Low
Total	21	100	
Mean	5.00	Very High	
SD	0.00		

Table 5 illustrates the level of learner's process skills relative to measuring. Out of 21 respondents, score "4.20-5.00" received the highest frequency of twenty-one (21) or 100% of the total sample population. Score shows the mean ($M=5.00$, $SD=0.00$) as remarked as *Very High*.

Panoy (2016) deliberately conducted the study that investigated on a new teaching strategy called differentiated strategy and tested its effect on the Science process skills development. It proven the null hypothesis that states that there was a significant effect between the teacher and learner's process skills in terms of measuring, classifying, and problem solving. Thus, it can say that still, teacher's readiness is a factor that requires several strategies to cope up with vast changing learning environment of the students.

Table 6. Level of Learner's Process Skills relative to Inferring

Score	Classifying		Verbal Interpretation
	f	%	
4.20-5.00	9	43	Very High
3.40-4.19	10	48	High
2.60-3.39	2	9	Moderate High
1.80-2.59	0	0	Low
0.00-1.79	0	0	Very Low
Total	21	100	
Mean	4.33	Very High	
SD	0.66		

Table 6 illustrates the level of learner's process skills relative to Inferring. Out of 21 respondents, score "3.40-4.19" received the highest frequency of ten (10) or 48% of the total sample population. Score shows the mean ($M=4.33$, $SD=0.66$) as remarked as *Very High*.

Dawes et al. profiled the language and cognitive skills that contribute to oral inferential comprehension in young children with developmental language disorder (DLD). Oral inferential comprehension of narrative was the primary outcome measure. Narrative macrostructure and microstructure, literal comprehension, vocabulary, phonological loop, and theory of mind were significant predictors of inferential comprehension in bivariate analyses.

Table 7. Level of Learner's Process Skills relative to Predicting

Score	Classifying		Verbal Interpretation
	f	%	
4.20-5.00	15	71	Very High
3.40-4.19	1	5	High
2.60-3.39	5	24	Moderate High
1.80-2.59	0	0	Low
0.00-1.79	0	0	Very Low
Total	21	100	
Mean	4.48	Very High	
SD	0.87		

Table 7 illustrates the level of learner's process skills relative to Predicting. Out of 21 respondents, score "4.20-5.00" received the highest frequency of fifteen (15) or 71% of the total sample population. Score shows the mean ($M=4.48$, $SD=0.87$) as remarked as *Very High*.

According to the findings of Gurces, et al.,'s (2020) study to predict knowledge and ways to knowledge acquisition can be explained that students' attending schools and teachers can cause a significant difference in terms of their potential use of science process skills. This situation may stem from teachers' different strategies and knowledge in handling students regardless of their needs.

Table 8. Significant Effect of Teacher's Readiness to the Learner's Process Skills

Learner's Process	Teacher's Readiness	t-stat	p-value	Analysis
Classifying	<i>Assessment</i>	-4.264	0.000	Significant
	<i>Curriculum Modification</i>	-3.999	0.001	Significant
	<i>Program Option</i>	-3.712	0.001	Significant
Measuring	<i>Assessment</i>	-4.264	0.000	Significant
	<i>Curriculum Modification</i>	-3.999	0.001	Significant
	<i>Program Option</i>	-3.712	0.001	Significant
Inferring	<i>Assessment</i>	2.450	0.024	Significant
	<i>Curriculum Modification</i>	2.126	0.046	Significant
	<i>Program Option</i>	1.926	0.069	Not Significant
Predicting	<i>Assessment</i>	1.183	0.251	Not Significant
	<i>Curriculum Modification</i>	1.068	0.298	Not Significant
	<i>Program Option</i>	0.942	0.357	Not Significant

The *Assessment*, *Curriculum Modification* and *Program Option* of the teacher's readiness was observed to have any significant effect to the learner's process skills as to classifying, measuring and inferring. This is based on the computed t values obtained from the tests which were greater than the critical t value. Furthermore, the p-values obtained were less than the significance alpha 0.05, hence there is presence of a significance.

Contrast to the *Assessment*, *Curriculum Modification* and *Program Option* of the teacher's readiness was observed to have no significant effect to the learner's process skills as to predicting. This is based on the computed t values obtained from the tests which were less than the critical t value. Furthermore, the p-values obtained were greater than the significance alpha 0.05, hence there is an absence of significance.

From the findings above, we can infer that at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis "There is no significant effect of teacher's readiness to the learner's process skills." is rejected. Thus, the alternative should be rejected which incites that there is a significant effect between them. Except for the

Assessment, Curriculum Modification and Program Option to Predicting and Inferring to Program Option.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the foregoing findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Findings showed that there is significant effect on teacher's profile to the learner's process skills.
2. The Assessment, Curriculum Modification and Program Option of the teacher's readiness was observed to have any significant effect to the learner's process skills as to classifying, measuring and inferring. Contrast to the Assessment, Curriculum Modification and Program Option of the teacher's readiness was observed to have no significant effect to the learner's process skills as to predicting. The findings showed that there is significant effect on teacher's readiness to the learner's process skills except for the Assessment, Curriculum Modification and Program Option to Predicting and Inferring to Program Option.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Inclusive education must be imposed and introduced in all schools through seminars and workshops that are required to teaching and non-teaching personnels, including regular students. This will help students with special needs to effectively and safely acquire quality education until they reach their full potential as individuals.
2. Schools must conduct meetings and seminars to all parents and teachers to raise awareness about Special Education. This will help parents and teachers to be educated about the importance of identifying and understanding their child's situation as learners and individuals. This partnership between school and parents will be a great step in achieving the goal of providing quality and equal education to children with special needs.
3. All public and private schools are encouraged to hire licensed and experienced SPED teachers who will be in-charge to students who are/will be diagnosed with special needs. This breakthrough will greatly help not only the students with special needs, but also the teachers who are adjusting to address the needs of students with special needs who are mainstreamed with regular classes.
4. Teachers must give focus on developing higher cognitive level among students especially to those who are diagnosed with special needs. Developing their process skills, especially predicting, and inferring skills will lead to excitement of discovering new ideas and knowledge which are crucial in reasoning and decision-making. This will also give teachers high-quality assessment information to act upon.
5. Future researchers may conduct this kind of research that is anchored on the student's with special needs and also the Inclusive Education, for there are few researches and studies about it.

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