

Challenges of Teachers in Handling Hearing-impaired Students in Blended and Modular Approaches in Instructional Delivery

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Abstract

Teaching students with special needs is challenging for every special education teacher, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study, which delved into the list of common challenges that teachers experienced in handling learners with hearing impairment in modular and blended learning approaches, provides crucial insights. The study was conducted in the Division of Danao City during the school year 2020-2021 and employed a qualitative-empirical phenomenological design through thematic analysis to analyze and interpret the collected responses from the participants. The findings revealed that significant experiences of the teacher were products of constant interaction and collaboration through direct instruction, social and academic interactions, involvement in the learning process, and activities with their learners with hearing impairment. The study's findings underscore the need for comprehensive training action plans to be adopted and implemented, which would scaffold realistic reinforcement and intervention that would develop teaching and learning variables and structures, sustain positive results, and encourage future relevant studies.

Keywords: Special Education, hearing impairment, inclusive education, intervention, modular approach, on, Philippines

1. Introduction

Teachers face significant challenges in effectively supporting hearing-impaired students within blended and modular learning environments (Utami et al., 2024), requiring specialized strategies to ensure equitable education. These challenges include adapting instructional materials (Aljedaani et al., 2023; Majoro, 2021), ensuring clear communication (Manga & Masuku, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2022), and providing accessible resources that meet the diverse needs of hearing-impaired learners (Robert & Mkulu, 2023). Teaching students with special needs is challenging for every special education teacher (Crispel & Kasperski, 2021), particularly during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the virus outbreak and the indefinite suspension of face-to-face classes, teachers, students, and parents were personally affected and uncertain about educational expectations from the Department of Education. Apparently, due to the immediate cancellation of face-to-face instruction (Hanna, 2022), the students affected by the onset of the pandemic are learners with hearing impairment (Aljedaani et al., 2023) who need a strong command of classroom approaches, verbal and sign-language communication, and direct visual contact through face-to-face instructions. With this, outcomes such as the regression of

personality and social skills, the ability to recoup, and other academic concerns affect these vulnerable students tremendously.

Similarly, due to the pandemic and suspension of face-to-face instruction, the teachers indicated they had experienced challenges or hardships in teaching and their personal lives (An et al., 2021; Marshall et al., 2020; Robinson et al., 2023). The teachers have expressed their doubts and concerns about how their students learn and who provides help or support for students with disabilities, knowing the parents of the learners with hearing impairment were unfamiliar with accommodation and modification and not well-versed in sign language communication. The challenges are expectedly evident and distinct due to the absence of face-to-face instructions and other undesirable factors during modular distance and blended learning. According to Castroverde and Acala (2021), additional challenges include module preparation, finding suitable accommodation and intervention for each student (Duraku & Hoxha, 2020), time constraints in delivering the module and instructional materials (Alsadoon & Turkestani, 2020), providing available help and services to check progress (Francom et al., 2021) which are also the primary concerns of special and general education teachers.

To respond to the concerning call of the World Health Organization (WHO), the DepEd drafted a series of Memorandum (DM) Nos. 15, 21, 23, 31, and 34. The general content of these memoranda is about establishing a task force for managing the Department of Education's response to novel coronavirus acute respiratory disorder (Department of Education, 2020a). In October 2020, the DepEd proposed and adopted conservative instructional platforms or Learning Delivery Modalities (LDM). These learning modalities are Modular Distance Learning (MDL) and Blended Learning. The availability of sign language interpreter modalities is instrumental in the continuing instructional operations of public and private schools and other higher educational institutions (HEIs) all over the Philippines. Modular learning has been mandated to be used by all public school teachers for their students nationwide and can be given or delivered in hardbound or digital copies. This learning modality has been the lifeline of reinforced teaching in the absence of face-to-face instruction inside the four walls of a classroom.

It has been several months since the implementation of modular distance and blended learning. However, uncertainties about the efficacy of LDM on printed modules are one of the primary concerns of most educators. Based on informal feedback, responses from the teachers and students have identified the pros and cons of LDM and interpreted the validity of the result. Another educational program highly affected by the pandemic was the quality implementation of inclusive education (Reimers, 2022). The education landscape adopted by public secondary schools in the Philippines has shown setbacks in implementing inclusive education. The scarcity or absence of SPED senior high schools catering to self-contained SpEd learners with hearing impairment is highly apparent and alarming. These researchers observed the enormous disparity between the absence and lack of established senior high school (SHS) programs with complete SpEd teachers and well-trained related services personnel, which are intended and carefully designed for learners with hearing impairment.

The researchers believed that the DepEd has implemented the inclusive education program and background knowledge about special education. According to Gyasi et al. (2020), the teachers' limited capacity to handle students with disabilities will result in lackluster efforts to provide the best services for our learners with hearing impairments. The background knowledge, skills, support, and leadership exhibited by the principals or school administrators of the current (SpEd) and the receiving (non-SpEd) schools also contribute significantly to the success or failure of implementing an inclusive education program (Pedaste et al., 2024). Unfortunately, the absence of comprehensive assessment, reinforcement, related services, IEPs, and other detailed documents is an issue overlooked by the DepEd and most SpEd program implementers. These are necessary upon the change of placement or transfer to the least restrictive environment. Existing problems like these need immediate action and concrete solutions.

If all of these factors are not carefully addressed, learners with hearing impairments and disabilities will not receive the best possible quality educational service, which is the ultimate goal of inclusive education.

The researcher wants to know how these challenges affect our teachers' jobs, commitment, perspective, resiliency, and well-being. Likewise, it is essential to know and understand how teachers and educators, the primary facilitators of education, adjust to diverse educational setups and react positively to the challenges or problems they experience in preparation for future instructional adaptation.

In conclusion, the researchers were optimistic that this study will significantly help special education and general education teachers in the SpEd programs. It also guides educators, support service providers, master teachers, school heads, principals, supervisors, and division superintendents in finding the best possible solutions to the challenges currently experienced by our diverse teachers. Finally, this study served as a guide or blueprint to providing awareness, effective and efficient reinforcement, and interventions for the SpEd and general education teachers during the pandemic and new normal.

2. Related Literature and Studies

These studies and literature are relevant to formulating variables concerning the challenges experienced by teachers in handling learners with hearing impairment in modular and blended learning approaches.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all educational systems of schools over the globe. The spread of the virus has significantly affected billions of people worldwide, as well as scholars, schools, and institutions at all levels. Since then, our lives and ways of living have never been the same (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). In response to the needs and urgency, the World Health Organization and each nation's health authorities have taken action to contain the virus outbreak. Health guidelines and protocols issued by the IATF prohibit mass gatherings and other activities, suspension of all flights, and closures of all educational schools, institutions, recreation centers,

malls, religious, sporting, and activities as mandated by the Inter-Agency Task Force against COVID-19 (Fong et al., 2020; Galea et al., 2020).

The enormous effect of the pandemic has created a domino effect on the education of different types of scholars, students with disabilities, including learners with hearing impairment. The onset of the pandemic was extremely difficult for all students with disabilities regarding social, emotional, psychological, financial, and instructional adjustments. In a study by Krishnan et al. (2020), the pandemic shutdowns the active engagement of humankind in society. The educational landscape has changed by adopting different varieties of learning platforms based on the individual mandate of each nation's educational agency. In the Philippines, the DepEd has initiated the adoption of Learning Delivery Modalities.

Meanwhile, several teachers expressed that modular distance learning was exceedingly challenging for teachers and students. To them, tasks such as creating, printing, compiling, distributing, and checking modules are too stressful and extra burdens for teachers and their scholars. Unlike in face-to-face instruction (Iivari et al., 2020), the teacher could not be available for assistance and advice when and where needed during the pandemic. The idea of this alone could develop challenges for both teachers and their learners with hearing impairment.

Researchers asked parents about their perceptions or ideas of modular and blended learning at home. They unanimously agreed that homebound schooling or providing learning instruction at home was extremely challenging. The parents have admitted that their levels of education, time, skills, support, and safety have played roles in delivering successful instructions for learners with disabilities. Most of these parents have honestly expressed that their capacity and skills were limited and unreliable during the personal learning-teaching process. According to Luckner and Dorn (2017), the pressure on educators to educate students with special needs to higher levels of learning than at any other historical period. Teachers for deaf or hard-of-hearing students must possess knowledge and skills about their job and must learn to adjust to any negative impact.

During the pandemic, special education teachers have been experiencing moderate or excessive mental, emotional, and psychological stress. Parts of these stress levels connect to teacher preparedness, emotional stability, and approach to the accumulated pressure in their job. Relatively teaching special needs students, special educators must have attained goal-oriented and substantial service training to deliver successful accommodation and services for learners with disabilities. Most educators must upgrade their personal manipulative and technological-based skills in preparation for virtual applications. As special educators, the effects of the pandemic will provide an extra opportunity for SpEd teachers to learn virtually and digitally (Smith, 2020).

Due to the pandemic, the researchers believed that the complexity of adjustments based on developing possible stress factors and challenges in teaching essentially requires physical, mental, emotional, and psychological stabilities. These elements will trigger the stimulating factors to react and respond to any possible stress stimuli. Likewise, teaching students with

disabilities requires co-teacher support, positive collaboration, and community involvement. Unfortunately, the absence of positive components and the presence of challenges have resulted in burnout. Demoralization, expectation pressure on deadlines, the lack of administrative support, the scarce supply and resources, external and personal problems, emotional instability, health and conflicted issues, financial dilemmas, and life events are additional valid stress indicators.

Realistically, these stimulating stress factors are the negative indicators/components we do not wish to have in our classroom environment as educators. Stress factors have affected our ways of delivering concrete instructions and valuable services. Precisely our students with special needs under the exceptional education program will be significantly affected.

So far, the pandemic has shown us the importance of the efforts rendered by teachers. Without them, the educational landscape would have been affected tremendously. The lack of special education teachers and support service personnel has an enormous effect on the flow of delivery of instruction. These affect the quality of instruction and services delivered to students with disabilities. Relatively, to show the importance of the teaching force, in the United States of America, one out of every five teachers said they would not return if schools reopened physically sooner or by the summer of 2020 (Reich et al., 2020). As a result, a new wave of resignations and retirements is probable in many states (Bailey & Schurz, 2020). When paired with staff cuts to cover budget constraints and layered on top of pre-existing workforce issues, it might result in the contradictory result of simultaneous educator shortages and layoffs (Kim et al., 2020). Teacher shortages were already a concern in several countries before schools were closed due to the pandemic (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020; Kim et al., 2020). It is necessary to assist newly hired educators with their challenges. Moreover, recruiting well-trained teachers is necessary (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020).

The DepEd has never fully mandated online or digital platforms during the pandemic. However, the department encouraged teachers to utilize the best possible instructional modalities for different types of learners. In modular distance learning, the special education teachers have delivered and retrieved their modules through proper scheduling. On the other hand, blended learning has not been so successful due to the stability of internet connectivity in some urban and rural areas. For elementary teachers, it is possible to communicate with their pupils through their parents. However, teachers may use online platforms for their high school students since they are tech-savvy, using technology to access email and social media (Maity et al., 2020).

Per experience and observation, knowledge, overall foundation skills, and readiness have played indicative roles in delivering instructional needs to learners with disabilities. As for deaf students, the teachers need expertise in sign language. During the pandemic, the SpEd program was greatly affected. As a result, the special education teachers, the students, and parents have uncertainties about sustaining education. The idea of having modular distance and blended learning modalities as a replacement for face-to-face instruction had been stressful to all involved individuals, anticipating the degree of challenges, difficulty, or burdens the SpEd

teachers, students, and parents would face if no direct instruction. With all this, the need for modular distance and blended learning is necessarily particular.

In response to the request for sustained education despite the global health hazard, Philippine higher education institutions unexpectedly switched to emergency remote teaching (ERT) (Alvarez Jr, 2020). List of vital stressors like low-rate understanding of the modules and blended discussion, limited skills with technology, complex stress, and the external events during the blended approach are the challenges that impact the overall performance of students with hearing impairment (Krishnan et al., 2020). Students with hearing impairment sustain the flow of communication and social interaction not just by using sign language but also by their capability of using and manipulating available e-learning and online media applications (Hashim & Tasir, 2020). Students' performance and developmental growth have anything to do with their ability to communicate and comprehend using sign language, lip-reading, and total communication. Besides, teachers must be able to give effective interventions to HI students. This will connect to the student progress and promote better communication with their students (Ramadhan et al., 2020).

Language and communication are significant to cognitive development and impact conceptual manipulation and comprehension. The global crisis brought on by COVID-19 has intensified the challenges currently experienced by students with hearing impairment (Swanwick et al., 2020).

3. Purpose of the Study

The study delved into the list of common challenges that teachers experienced in handling learners with hearing impairment in modular and blended learning approaches in the Division of Danao City during the school year 2020 – 2021. Specifically, it has sought to investigate the significant experiences of teachers in handling learners with hearing impairment in instruction delivery.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Design

This study used qualitative, empirical, and phenomenological designs to gather data from teacher participants. The data collected were based solely on honest statements and responses about the challenges and concerns they have currently experienced while handling learners with hearing impairment. The selected qualitative analysis and thematic assessments were based on semi-structured interviews, online consultations, observations, and written surveys from selected special education and general education teachers. Empirical evidence is a result based on phenomena that have been observed and measured That derives knowledge from real experiences and recorded narratives rather than theoretical perspectives or beliefs. It is the primary data collected by the researcher using various methods such as semi-structured interviews, online consultations, direct observations, and written surveys. The phenomenological method aims to interpret, perceive, and explain the meanings of experiences of human life. It focuses on research questions such as what it is like to experience a particular situation. Also, it provides phenomenological research with an interpretive component that will allow it to serve as

the foundation for a practical theory and be utilized to inform, support, or contradict policy and action (Selders, 2021; McIntosh, 2021).

4.2 Participants

The researchers carefully selected the teacher participants based on qualifications, the study component, and tier using convenient purposive sampling. The study identified 15 teachers as participants. The participants were teachers teaching learners with hearing impairment in a self-contained or general education inclusion setting. The said participants were of legal age, teaching or working full-time, and had a direct instructional connection and hands-on involvement with the learners with hearing impairment in this school year or previous years.

The selected teacher participants were two (2) SpEd teachers and 12 general education teachers having instructional schedules with some specific learners with hearing impairment. The teacher participants were graduates of Education degree programs majoring in SpEd or another field of specialization with teaching experiences of more than three years and with or without varying skills training, seminars, and orientation about SpEd programs.

4.3 Instrument

During data gathering, the researcher considered three data collection instruments: An informed consent form, a google spreadsheet or forms, and a four-parts interview guide. However, the self-made four-part interview guide questionnaires were used due to the observance of the standard health protocols as suggested and recommended by the head of the division office. It was just then that the self-made four-part interview guide questionnaire was optionally chosen and used. The self-made four-part interview guide consisted of four (4) parts.

Part 1 was the introductory questions for the teacher participants, which contained four (4) common personal introductory questions about the teacher participants. Part 2 of the interview guide dealt with the teacher participants' experiences with learners with hearing impairment in modular or blended learning approaches that address responses to the delivery of instruction, language and communication, transition needs and related services, social adaptation and difficulty, and learning and schools.

Part 3 of the interview focused on the challenges of the teacher participants in handling learners with hearing impairment while using modular and blended learning approaches during the pandemic. In this part, each teacher participant answered about personal experiences on challenges or struggles during the COVID-19 pandemic when the mode of instruction was either modular or blended learning. Part 4 was the last part of the interview guide questionnaire that dealt with each teacher participant's knowledge or understanding of SpEd Inclusive Education. During the giving of the interview guide questionnaire, the official instructional time of each teacher participant was not bothered or utilized. All distributed questionnaires were filled in or answered at home during vacant schedules or on weekends. During the process, the researcher organized and set up all the preparations and smooth implementation of the particulars during data gathering. The researcher also observed the conduct, etiquettes, and preliminaries of

acquiring permissions throughout the process. During the data gathering, the researcher valued the secrecy or confidentiality of all documents and responses compiled during the entire process with the utmost respect.

4.4 Data Collection

Before acquiring data through interview guide forms, the researchers drafted and prepared the transmittal letters. The adviser noted the letters and approved them by the Dean of the College of Education. Then, the transmittal letters were forwarded to the Office of the Division Superintendent and approved by the Schools Division Superintendent before being disseminated to the school principals for reference and implementation.

During the actual data gathering, the researchers successfully explained to each teacher participant the entire proceedings or the particulars of the data gathering, including the purpose of the study. They constantly informed the teachers of their rights as participants. Likewise, they clarified his obligations to each participant before, during, and after the conduct of the study. Since the data gathering was through a paper and pencil survey, they reminded each teacher participant to answer the survey packet on weekends or after school to avoid disrupting or utilizing the official working hours. Besides, answering at home has given each teacher participant enough time to think accurately and respond honestly. After answering the questionnaires, they acquired all the data, transcribed, and initially interpreted all the responses coming from the participants. Lastly, after responses were encoded, they asked for the assistance of his adviser or other licensed experts for data analysis, interpretation, or treatment.

Ethical Considerations. Utmost confidentiality is a must in keeping all data and information safe. They carefully observed and applied this conduct after responses were gathered during the paper and pencil surveys. The division office, the schools, and all the teacher participants of the research study would remain unknown and confidential even when the final result or conclusion comes out. Participation in the research was voluntary, and each teacher participant was allowed to withdraw.

Validity and reliability issues arise when questions arise about the integrity and authenticity of collected data information and interpretation. To protect and ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the researcher has conducted thorough literature research and reference linkages. Furthermore, the researcher has conducted fieldwork observations and interviews to double-check, verify, and confirm the results and conclusions.

Data Privacy. This study has adhered to the mandate of the National Privacy Commission to administer and implement the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and monitor and ensure compliance with data protection. The researcher has enforced the Data Privacy Act and adopted generally accepted international principles and standards for personal data protection. Furthermore, the researcher protected every individual fundamental human right to privacy while ensuring the free flow of information for continuous innovation, academic growth, and national development. The researcher secured personal data accumulated and compiled through government information and

communications systems and those collected from private institutions. The dependability of this research study assures that any findings and subsequent results of future studies somehow related to this study would show consistency and a higher chance of replicating the current results. The research was conducted, analyzed, and presented using standard tools and procedures. Every procedural detail in the study has been recorded and kept for future referrals, benchmarking, and inquiry to achieve the same results or compare differences.

The said processes or procedures have affirmed the accuracy and validity of the findings and conclusions based on factual data. Furthermore, all data of this study have been re-examined, verified, and reaffirmed before the issuance of validated final results or conclusions.

Lastly, the researchers described all the conformability processes or procedures for referral and validation, where quality and standard-based study were the main priority.

4.5 Data Analysis

This study used thematic analysis to analyze and cluster answers derived from interviews into common themes. A deductive analysis sorted out and interpreted responses collected from the pen-and-paper survey. The content acquired from the surveys shall exhibit data relevant to the problems of the study. Since the collected data came from a self-made four-part interview guide questionnaire, the method used was a qualitative data analysis under analyzing qualitative (textual) assessment data. It utilized thematic code analysis that was perfect in inspecting and constructing themes that emerged during data decoding and interpretation. It gauged the frequency of identified themes corresponding to statistical details of the preferences, choices, and comparisons. These are the steps used in analyzing data:

Transcription. The data were interpreted and transcribed from survey questionnaires into the paper. The purpose of this is to clean and edit the manuscripts by eliminating typographical errors and contradictions such as; a) checking and editing transcripts, b) preparing data for further analysis, c) developing categorical analysis and interpretation, d) completing data reduction, and, e) identification of trends in the data. During this process, the researcher has taken all the collected data, including field notes and transcripts of interviews (if necessary), and has formulated a clear and concrete understanding of the gathered information.

Coding. The researchers coded the data and conducted content analysis through identified themes from selected composite words. Then, findings were generalized with the identification of similarities and differences, allowing the development of typologies.

Verification. The researchers checked the validity and authenticity of the study's interpretations. This process happened after all the content was re-examined from the collected surveys, thus allowing the researchers time to verify or modify previous hypotheses. Finally, the panel of examiners approved the summary of findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations.

5.0 Results and Discussion

This section presents the data about the challenges of the teachers in handling hearing impaired students in blended and modular teaching approaches. The data were based from the narratives of the teacher-participants.

5.1 Profile of the Participants.

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the teachers-participants in terms of age, years of teaching, and years of teaching SpEd or handling students with hearing impairment.

Table 1. Participants' Profile

Teacher-Participant No.	Age (in years)	Length of Time as a School Teacher	Length of Time in Teaching SpEd or Handling Students with Hearing Impairment
1	28 years old	4 years	Not applicable
2	32 years old	9 years and 10 months	2 years
3	27 years old	3 years	Not applicable
4	28 years old	4 years	Not applicable
5	26 years old	3 years	Not applicable
6	28 years old	4 years	Not applicable
7	40 years old	4 years	2-3 years
8	35 years old	7 years	2 years
9	27 years old	3 years	Not applicable
10	37 years old	7 years	Not applicable
11	37 years old	4 years and 8 months	2 years
12	40 years old	4 years	Not applicable
13	38 years old	6 years	Not applicable
14	38 years old	8 years	Not applicable

As presented in Table 1, the data showed that regarding the age of the teachers who participated in this investigation, teacher-participants 7 and 12 were the oldest at 40 years old at the time of the study, while teacher-participant 5 was 26 years old. The mean age is 32.92 years old.

This data indicates that the teacher participants belonged to the young adulthood stage, where they are at the gateway to improving their teaching skills and craft. Hence, they took postgraduate degrees for those interested in climbing to the higher level of their teaching career.

Early adulthood is frequently associated with the 20s and 30s. At this age, people are at the height of their physiological potential. It's a time to think forward and devote a lot of effort to making decisions that will help one become seen as a fully-fledged adult by others. At this point in life, the two main interests are love and work. This data relates to the study findings that more

teachers belong to the 31-40 age bracket. Also, most of the teachers were young and middle-aged adults (Francisco, 2020).

Regarding the length of time, the participants had been school teachers; teacher-participant 2 had the most extended years of service of 9 years and 10 months, while teacher-participant 3, 5, and 9 had the shortest length of service as a school teacher. The mean years of teaching are 5 years. This result means that the teachers were already at the career stage where they had achieved contentment. However, this does not mean that they are no longer motivated to improve their teaching craft. At this stage, the teacher aims to take a higher level in their teaching career and feel gratification for touching their learners' lives.

In terms of the length of time spent teaching SpEd or handling students with hearing impairment, teacher-participant 7 had the amplest experience of 2 to 3 years, while teacher-participants 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, and 14 had no relative experience teaching deaf and hard-hearing learners. These data indicate that these special education teachers have yet to experience the rigors of dealing with learners with physical disabilities.

According to Alshmasi (2019), teaching hearing-impaired pupils in self-contained classes is one mode of inclusion for individuals interested in instructing this category. The task of teaching in these classes is challenging, and teachers must put in effort and never stop working. When deaf and hard-of-hearing pupils are included in the same self-contained classroom, teachers face additional problems.

5.2 Experiences of the Teacher Participants on Students with Hearing Impairment in Modular and Blended Learning Approaches to Instruction Delivery

This part displays the teachers' responses about their experiences handling hearing-impaired students in the modular and blended teaching-learning approaches to instruction delivery.

The first question the research participants were asked was about their critical assessment of whether or not the implementation of the new learning modalities significantly affects the students with hearing impairments' ability and capacity to learn the lesson given to them. Then, they were asked to provide a short explanation of their answer.

1. *Hearing-impaired Learners Need Direct Instruction from Teachers.* The teachers expressed that the face-to-face teaching modality works better for hearing-impaired students since they need guidance in their learning activities.

The hearing-impaired learners require a special type of teaching approach due to their inability to hear. Teacher-participant 1 said that:

“Yes. Students, especially the hearing-impaired, need and prefer face-to-face instruction.”

The teachers should be there to guide the hard-of-hearing and deaf learners according to teacher-participant 2, who opined that:

“Yes, because no one can guide the students in terms of activities.”

Direct instruction works best for learners who lack hearing capacities. Teacher-participant 3 revealed that:

“Yes, students need face-to-face and direct instruction from teachers.”

Also, teacher-participant 4 expressed that school-based learning is more effective for learners with hearing loss. It was shared that:

“Yes, I guess face-to-face works them best.”

Teacher-participant 5 observed that the hearing-impaired learners have more preference to speak that:

“Yes, I am so sure they need or prefer face-to-face instruction. They also found it hard to learn through modular/blended learning.”

Learners with hearing problems learn best when presented with visual materials. Hence, using only the self-learning modules is insufficient for them to understand their lessons. Teacher-participant 6 uttered that:

“Yes, as a teacher, I must see to it that all students learn differently, like by sending PPT or multimedia presentations.”

The lack of direct interaction between the teacher and learners in modular learning creates a problem in the transfer of knowledge. Teacher-participant 7 explained that:

“Yes, find it difficult because of no face-to-face instructions.”

The distance modular teaching approach implemented by the Department of Education created a learning gap among hard-of-hearing learners. Teacher-participant 8 uttered that:

“Yes, change of placement and no direct instruction.”

Also, teacher-participant 9 found the absence of concrete teaching support from the government educational authorities and the opportunity to provide instructional delivery made it hard to infuse knowledge among the learners. It was uttered that:

“Yes, no support and no face-to-face.”

The utilization of modules as the primary teaching-learning materials created a half-based learning outcome. Teacher-participant 10 revealed that:

“Yes, for sure because of no face-to-face.”

It was observed that the sudden shift from face-to-face to distance learning modality caught the learners with hearing loss in the trap of adjustment. Teacher-participant 11 further said that:

“Yes, because they are not used to home learning without direct instructions.”

Likewise, teacher-participant 12 expressed that remote learning with no teacher-student direct discussion affected the reliability of learning. It was opined that:

“Yes, the absence of face-to-face.”

Teacher-participant 13 further explained that the lack of physical classroom discussions on the subject matter affected the hearing-impaired learners’ ability to comprehend their lessons. It was uttered that:

“Yes, absence of direct instruction.”

Teacher-participant 14 simply uttered that:

“Yes.”

Teachers who use the distance modular teaching strategy in public schools have found that the learning modalities currently used substantially impact the pupils with hearing impairments' capacity and ability to learn the lesson being taught to them. The lack of face-to-face training from the students' teachers is one of the causes of the issues and difficulties that hearing-impaired learners encounter in their inability to understand the lessons. There was a considerable learning gap among the pupils at this age as a result of the distance learning method.

Students' lives are significantly shaped by their education. One of the key components in delivering high-quality learning is the teacher. The Philippines' educational landscape underwent numerous changes as a result of the introduction of COVID-19. The Department of Education's implementation of the mode of instruction is one of them. Most education systems have been forced to adopt alternatives to face-to-face teaching and learning because of the current COVID-19 dilemma. A lot of educational systems transferred activities online so that instruction could go on even while schools were closed (OECD, 2020). The transition from primary quality education delivery in schools to modular distance learning made it more difficult for the school staff to provide. DepEd officials continuously seek ways to address issues and equip teachers and school administrators to be more productive in modular distance learning (Bagood, 2020).

The second question the research participants were asked was about the three most important concerns they had observed, heard, and experienced from their hearing-impaired (HI) student or parental feedback concerning the effectiveness and reliability of different subject modules.

1. *Hearing-impaired learners Hardly Understand the Self-Learning Modules.* The teachers expressed concern over the use of self-learning modules as the main learning materials in the distance education classes implemented by the Department of Education in lieu of the prohibition of face-to-face classes.

The teachers cannot provide direct explanations concerning the lesson to the learner using the appropriate teaching approach that would work for learners with hearing disability. Teacher-participant 1 said that:

“Too many reading materials and long. No support, instruction, and interpreter.”

It had been observed that the hearing-impaired learners experienced difficulty in comprehending the lessons contained in the self-learning modules due to the absence of instructional delivery from the teachers. Teacher-participant 2 exposed that:

“Hard for us to communicate with the use of sign language. The teacher can’t clearly explain the content of the subject matter. Students have difficulty answering the modules.”

Teacher-participant 3 disclosed that the self-learning modules prepared by the Division Office of the Department of Education are not well-prepared to suit the learning style of deaf and mute learners said that:

“Modules are hard and long. Hard to explain and teach. Confusing and not reliable.”

Moreover, the hard-of-hearing learners need to constant guidance from competent teachers, which was not provided in the current teaching approach of the Department of Education. Teacher-participant 4 uttered that:

“Modules are hard to answer. They are looking for assistance. They complain for lacking of support.”

Parents manifested struggles in taking the place of the teachers with the distance educational arrangement. Teacher-participant 5 shared that:

“They said modules are hard to learn. They struggled because of lacking support and assistance. Parents have a hard time helping the kids.”

When the parents cannot provide the needed time, attention, and direct guidance to the learning activity of the hearing-impaired child, the learners cannot obtain the most essential learning competencies. Teacher-participant 6 revealed that:

“In terms of the module, it should have a clear outline so that it’s easier to learn. For me, HI should have needed big attention to their learning. Parents of HI must have full support for their child in assessing the modules.”

The absence of formal training for the parents about sign language hindered their role as home tutors. Teacher-participant 7 disclosed that:

“Struggled in their modules or during modular. They complained about the lack of face-to-face communication and the lack of support. Parents cannot help them / do not know sign language.”

The teachers who can interpret the lesson at home are needed by the hearing-impaired lessons. Teacher-participant 8 said that:

"Difficulty to learn using sign language. Lacking of support, and no interpreter at home."

The parents find it hard to interpret the lessons in the self-learning modules since they do not have enough competence and skills in the proper teaching approach for deaf and mute learners. Teacher-participant 9 said that:

"Difficulty in answering modules. Challenges due to absence of support and interpreter. Deaf cannot finish modular activities."

Deaf and mute learners need different teaching approaches, unlike normal learners. This was not addressed in the usage of self-learning modules. Teacher-participant 10 revealed that:

"Deaf students have difficulty with modular. Deaf cannot answer all activities. There is no immediate support from parents and teachers."

Learning alone at home without instructional supervision deterred the learning progress of exceptional education learners. Teacher-participant 11 revealed that:

"Modular learning is hard because of so many activities to accomplish. No support. Students don't finish their outputs."

According to teacher-participant 12, the self-learning modules overwhelmed the hearing-impaired learners since no teachers could explain the lesson to them. It was said that:

"Modules are difficult for deaf students. So many activities and outputs. Too much work for modules."

The dearth of teacher-student direct interactions deprives the hearing-impaired learners' ability to learn their grade-level lessons. Teacher-participant 13 disclosed that:

"Modules are difficult to answer for HI. No support for HI."

Also, teacher-participant 14 discoursed that the learners with hearing problems faced great hardships with their self-learning modules. It was said that:

"Difficulty on modules."

The teachers acknowledged that the hearing-impaired students struggled significantly with homework at home. When their parents act as their instructors at home, they cannot fully convey the material because they lack special education and sign language training. As a result, in order for deaf and hard-of-hearing students to swiftly understand the lesson, they needed teachers who could give direct teaching. Also, it was not a feasible teaching strategy to leave them to learn while using their self-learning modules. They even yearn for the return of in-person instruction so that their academic progress can restart.

Not many students are eager to return to the classroom. Not only is the elementary school student afraid of COVID-19, but she also had to transfer to online learning last year because of the pandemic, which caused a statewide shift in education. It was challenging for pupils in public schools to learn independently—a sector severely impacted by the change in teaching methods. She mentioned having trouble understanding the teachings, having to overcome the added challenge of learning how to utilize technology and software and coping with the Philippines' infamously subpar telecommunications services (Cruz, 2021).

The third question asked the research participants about their awareness of accommodations and modifications in teaching students with disabilities. They were further asked if they had applied these two terms in teaching or dealing with students with hearing impairment. They were also made to explain their answers briefly.

1. *Competence Inadequacy in Teaching Special Education Through Teaching Accommodation and Modification.* The teachers revealed that they were not formally trained in teaching special education, hence they find it hard to integrate various strategies in accommodations and modifications in teaching students with a disability.

Not all special education teachers have adequate knowledge in handling and teaching learners with disabilities. Teacher-participant 1 shared that:

“Not really, I know about regular education. But not in SpEd.”

Despite the insufficiency of knowledge about the usage of sign language, teacher-participant 2 employed alternative modes of communication with the deaf and mute learners. She disclosed her teaching strategy by saying that:

“Yes, partially. If we failed to communicate using sign language, we merely wrote the instructions. Provide visual aids.”

Also, the dearth of formal orientation about the appropriate teaching strategy in special education hindered teacher-participant 3 from applying the proper teaching approach to hard-of-hearing learners and said that:

“Not really, not SpEd-oriented.”

Likewise, the background of teacher-participant 4 was not on special education, her competence in handling learners who cannot hear and speak is inadequate. She said that:

“Not really, not SpEd graduate.”

The same with other research participants, teacher-participant 5 was not accustomed to special education programs. She revealed this reality in her teaching job by saying that:

“Yes, but I am not familiar with SPED programs.”

Teacher-participant 6 failed to accommodate the learning style and needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing pupils in the schools. She divulged that:

“Yes, the teacher must accommodate/ assist HI students and must see to it that their learning is addressed. Not really, because I am not so well-trained about providing proper accommodation as well as modification.”

Teacher-participant 7 customizes her own accommodation teaching strategy to deal with learners having hearing and speaking disabilities. She said that:

“Yes, but not sure about SPED accommodation. I applied a little bit to make their work easier.”

Teacher-participant 8 revealed that the lack of training specializing in special education hampered in employing the most fitted teaching approach to learners with hearing problems. It was said that:

“Yes, a little. But not well-trained.”

Moreover, teacher-participant 9 disclosed that the accommodation to hearing-impaired learners was not full and also said that:

“Not really. Partially, yes.”

Teacher-participant 10 honestly disclosed one's weakness in teaching children with hearing impairment. It was uttered that:

“A little, but not an expert. Partially applied.”

The teacher must be well-acquainted with the techniques in special education to be able to teach properly with consideration of their learning weaknesses. Teacher-participant 11 revealed that:

“Not so much, especially of SpEd. No SpEd background that much.”

Teacher-participant 12 was trained in formal education, not in special education. Thereby, she cannot fully accommodate the learning needs of the hearing-impaired children and said that:

“Not really about SpEd.”

Well, as a teacher who is assigned to teaching learners with hearing problems, teacher-participant 13 did her best to become effective. She revealed that:

“No, just a little.”

Indeed, the problem of teacher-participant 14 in making teaching modifications appropriate to disabled learners was the lack of formal training on special education and the execution of sign language. Therefore, she said that:

“Not really.”

The teachers' admissions regarding their lack of formal training in special education dominated their narratives. These disclosures indicate that they lacked formal training in sign language

communication and extensive experience teaching deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The teachers found it difficult and uncomfortable to make allowances for the deaf and mute children's learning needs in this circumstance. They also had trouble adapting their teaching methods to the different learning styles of students with disabilities.

An adjustment to the environment, curriculum, or technology that enables a person with a handicap to access the material and/or perform their assigned tasks falls under the category of accommodation. They make it possible for learners with disabilities to follow a conventional course of study. The same grading system should be used for students with disabilities as for those without impairments since accommodations do not change the content being taught. The word "modification" can refer to a change in the curriculum. For students with disabilities who are unable to fully understand the material being taught by an instructor, modifications are provided. For instance, for an elementary school kid with cognitive impairments that limit their capacity to comprehend the material in a general education class in which they are enrolled, assignments might be considerably changed and reduced in number (University of Washington, 2021).

The fourth question the research participants were asked was how students with hearing impairments can answer and submit their modules on time. They were also asked about the common issues they noticed upon checking their modules.

1. *Using Self-Learning Modules, Hearing-Impaired Pupils are on the Verge of Struggles in Compliance with School Requirements.* The teachers disclosed that most often, the pupils with hearing impairment cannot pass the answered modules on time, nor can they complete answering all the assessment items.

The inability of the hearing-impaired children to attain the learning outcomes is manifested by their late submission of the answer sheets in the modules, as well as the comprehensiveness of their answers. Teacher-participant 1 explained that:

"Mostly late. There are no answers on some pages. Content is not cleared."

The children failed to provide the best answer on the learning activities in the modules. Teacher-participant 1 shared that:

"Yes, they submitted their outputs on time but have grammatical errors in the construction of answers."

Teacher-participant 3 observed that the answers of the deaf and mute learners were absurd and incomplete. She revealed that:

"Yes, limited answers and content are not composed and cleared."

Also, teacher-participant 4 had the same observation on the inability of the disabled learners to provide completely answered answer sheets. She divulged that:

“Mostly late. Their modules have so many missing activities or incomplete activities.”

It was evident that the learners with hearing impairment were struggling to meet the deadline for submitting the answered sheets. Teacher-participant 5 disclosed that:

“Yes, they can or are able to finish, but they submitted their modules late and mostly answered incompletely.”

The teachers need to constantly communicate with the parents of the learners so that they will be able to submit the answer sheets as due. Teacher-participant 6 said that:

“Yes, through their adviser, and I'm following up and contacting them via messenger or through their parents.”

Similar to other teachers, not all items in the answer sheets have answers when the parents of the hearing-impaired learners submit these to the teachers. Teacher-participant 7 divulged that:

“They are struggling and submitted their modules late. Lacking answers.”

Teacher-participant 8 had observed that the gap in the learning competence of the special education learners was caused by the absence of teacher-student interaction to provide guidance in studying the lessons; she said that:

“Late, due to lack of support and assistance. No interpreter.”

The activities in the self-learning modules were not completely done by the learners. Hence, teacher-participant 9 talked about these problems with distance education and said:

“Late and incomplete activities. Can't accomplished.”

It cannot be assured that the parents as home tutors can provide the time and appropriate guidance to their learners who face difficulty in learning independently. Teacher-participant 10 said that:

“They can submit but very late. The issue is they can't complete their modules.”

The common problem of the teachers in handling special education pupils was the late submission of the answer sheets. Teacher-participant 11 said that:

“Yes, but they need extra time. Sometimes they submitted late.”

Also, teacher-participant 12 had the same experience on the late and wrong answers of the hearing-impaired learners. She said that:

“Yes, but there are so many grammatical errors, and sometimes they submit late.”

Teacher-participant 13 divulged that the pupils with hearing problems can submit their school activities not on time. She expressed this by saying that:

“Yes, but late.”

Teacher-participant 14 likewise had the same problems with hearing-impaired children. She divulged these problems with a distance modular teaching and learning approach and said:

“Yes, but late.”

The teachers who work with deaf and hard-of-hearing students revealed that although they could turn in the answer sheets from the self-learning modules, they typically did so late or not at all. Another issue was that the students did not complete all of the assessment tasks, which indicated that they did not comprehend the lesson as it was presented in the module. The responses provided by the young people with hearing impairments contained a number of grammatical errors.

The difficulties teachers have in gathering the modules are related to students' accountability for following all the instructions given for their activity. The teacher's schedule for verifying the modules is impacted when students don't submit their modules on time because it takes time to review all of the students' outputs. Nevertheless, when students fail to include their names during submission, teachers have difficulty identifying student modules.

Traceability of the modules that students have responded becomes an issue for teachers as they separate the modules. Sometimes this results in modules being assigned to the incorrect adviser or lead teacher. Along with submitting modules without titles, some students also submit modules with unfinished responses. Instructors frequently accept these modules, but they also provide students information on how to complete the missing exercises. Teachers, however, find it challenging whenever students fail to submit any completed modules during a particular quarter. Because to the pandemic, it is difficult for teachers to identify students who are not learning anything in class, which puts their duty to monitor students' progress under strain (Castroverde & Acala, 2021).

The fifth question being asked to the research participants was about their thoughts on the struggle of their students with hearing impairment due to the absence of face-to-face instruction. They were further asked whether they consider this concern as one of the challenges that need immediate intervention from the teacher.

1. Modular Learning is Not Fitting for Hearing-Impaired Pupils. The teachers discoursed that they had observed myriad of challenges on the part of the learners with hearing problems since they are the types of learners who needed one-on-one teaching approach or closed supervision in learning abilities.

The lack of answers on the assessment and the late submission of the answer sheets are manifestations of hearing-impaired learners' struggle with home-based learning. Teacher-participant 1 divulged that:

“Yes.”

There were cases wherein the learners would contact either the teacher or the classmates when they found the lessons in the modules confusing. Teacher-participant 2 shared that:

“Yes, but they tried their best to cope by asking assistance and questions from classmates and teachers.”

The hearing-impaired are not like normal learners. Hence, giving them self-learning modules without teachers’ instruction is insufficient to attain the learning outcomes. Teacher-participant 3 divulged that:

“Yes, definitely need help and intervention.”

The struggles of the special education learners to do their school words at home are also struggles of the teachers on how to enable them to attain the most essential learning outcomes. Thereby, teacher-participant 4 shared that:

“Absolutely, yes. Yes, this is a big challenge for us teachers.”

It is already given that physically disabled learners have different learning pace. Hence, distance education may not work with them. Teacher-participant 5 said that:

“Yes, they have struggled well. This surely needs intervention from the teachers.”

Hearing-impaired children need guidance and close supervision, especially in education. Hence, working with a self-learning module is not really viable for them to learn. Teacher-participant 6 disclosed this observation and said that:

“Definitely yes. It was very challenging and bothering given the pandemic and the amount of help they are needing to complete their tasks (modules).”

Also, teacher-participant 7 had observed that the physically disabled need their teachers to assist them in comprehending their lessons. Therefore, it was said that:

“Yes, definitely one of the challenges that needed interventions.”

Teacher-participant 8 only had an affirmative answer about their observations on the learners who cannot speak and hear. It was said that:

“Yes.”

The struggles of hard-of-hearing learners need to be addressed with the education authorities and the teachers. Teacher-participant 9 divulged that:

“Yes, absolutely one of the challenges that need immediate intervention.”

Teacher-participant 10 had heard about the learning problems of their pupils when they contacted them during monitoring. Hence, she knew the struggle of their disabled pupils and disclosed that:

“Yes, because that is their main feedback. Intervention is needed.”

The new normal of learning caused the greatest struggle for special education learners due to the absence of a face-to-face teaching modality. Hence, teacher-participant 11 opined that:

“For sure, yes. Absolutely a challenge. Intervention is needed.”

The problem with the COVID-19 pandemic is that the teachers cannot provide instructional delivery to the special education pupils. Teacher-participant 12 said that:

“Yes, a big challenge.”

Just like other teachers, teacher-participant 13 divulged that it was hard for their hard-of-hearing learners to comprehend the lessons. She shared this by saying that:

“Yes.”

Indeed, the adoption of a distance modular teaching approach in the public school caused learning issues with special education learners. Teacher-participant 14 shared that:

“Yes.”

According to their teachers, deaf and silent students struggle to keep up with their academics and develop the necessary learning skills. Giving them self-learning modules to read, study, and comprehend may not be enough because they require qualified trainers to direct them in how to comprehend each lesson and respond to assessment activities. According to (De Claro, 2021; Dangle & Sumaoang, 2020), the primary issues were a shortage of school funds for the creation and delivery of modules, students' difficulties with independent study, and parents' inability to mentor their children academically. So, it is clear that using modular distant learning involves challenges.

The sixth question the research participants were asked was whether or not they consider setbacks to the success of instruction delivery teaching challenges that somehow hugely affect their regular jobs as teachers. They were also asked how these setbacks affect them as teachers. They were made to explain their answers briefly.

1. *Lucid Setbacks towards Successful Instructional Delivery for Hearing-Impaired Students.* The teachers assessed many setbacks in effective instructional delivery when adopting the distance modular teaching approach since the learners are not really independent learners. So remote learning was apparently unrealistic for them to learn the lessons in their curriculum.

There are various dimensions of the well-being of the teacher that were affected by the closure of school learners. Teacher-participant 1 divulged that:

“Definitely, yes. It significantly affects me. More on mental and psychological.”

Even though there are no face-to-face classes, the teachers are too busy addressing the queries of the parents and the learners through text or online. Teacher-participant 2 disclosed that:

“Yes, because I have to adjust and allocate extra time to accommodate them.”

Not being able to teach the hearing-disabled children caused stress to teacher-participant 3, who said that:

“Yes, it bothers me and stressed me out. It also worries me as how the students learn from modules without help from teachers.”

The distance educational approach in public school requires more time and effort for teacher-participant 4 to attend to the questions of the parents and the learners. It was said that:

“Yes, it has taken my time and effort. It bothers me really well.”

The various problems faced by teacher-participant 5 in the utilization of modules as learning materials caused trouble for her. She shared that:

“Yes, this will add to one of many concerns and issues, I need to fix. This also affects me psychologically.”

In spite of the challenges of the current educational paradigm, teacher-participant 6 ensured that appropriate assistance was provided to the home tutors. It was expressed that:

“Yes, it challenged me and tested my capability. Although it’s more physical and mental it encouraged me to do better just to help them.”

Teacher-participant 7 divulged that the prohibition of school-based learning caused her some degree of anxiety on how to carry on with the teaching-learning activity with the hearing-impaired pupils. It was uttered that:

“Yes, setbacks like these have given me stress and pressure.”

Teacher-participant 8 cannot really separate her feelings for her personal life and her work and disclosed that:

“It was a huge challenge on my part. It affects me personally and psychologically.”

The same with the other teachers, teacher-participant 9 experienced so much tension on how to monitor the learning progress of her learners doing their studies at home. She divulged that:

“Yes, it has given me stress and too much pressure.”

The present-day teaching and learning modality that only made use of modules as the learning resources caused teacher-participant 10 to feel strain and worry. She said that:

“Yes, this is a big challenge to us teachers.”

As a teacher handling special education, teacher-participant 11 disclosed that the struggles of her learners in understanding the lessons without her is also her struggle. She discoursed that:

“Yes. Personally, it affected my job as a teacher.”

The same with the other teachers in the public school, teacher-participant 12 opined that the various unprecedented setbacks caused trouble for her as a teacher. She simply responded by saying that:

“Yes.”

Teacher-participant 13 added the same revelations about whether or not the setbacks in teaching affected her as a professional teacher. She said that:

“Yes.”

Clearly, the closure of schools in schools around the country affected the teachers' jobs. Teacher-participant 14 said that:

“Yes.”

The teachers who teach special education classes acknowledged that they faced difficulties in delivering instruction well, which left them unsure of how to handle problems in distant modular education successfully. When parents contacted the teachers, there were instances where the teachers became anxious because the parents did not comprehend the lesson or know how to explain it to their children who had hearing impairments. Since a teacher's primary responsibility is to instruct and convey knowledge to students, dealing with the difficulties of special education in the absence of in-person instruction has an impact on both their personal and professional lives.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of distance learning, students and educators in the Philippines looked for solutions to make sure they wouldn't fall behind once classes started. To give schools time to get ready for the switch to remote learning, the start of courses has been postponed twice. Several students and teachers still found it difficult to keep up with the necessary preparations for the move in spite of the delays. Despite the drawbacks of remote learning, many professors had to be innovative or use extreme tactics to make sure pupils obtain a great education (Rappler, 2020).

5.3 Common Themes Emanating from the Perception of Key Participants

This section presents the themes pertaining to the teachers' experiences with hearing-impairment in the modular and blended teaching-learning approaches in the aspect delivery of instruction.

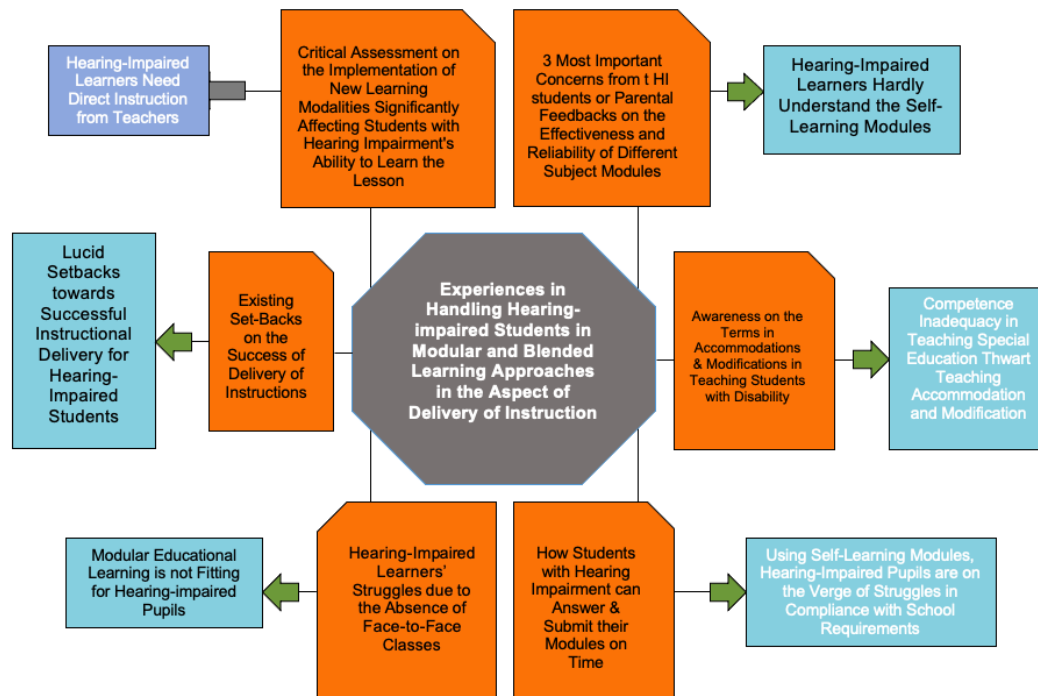


Figure 1 Experiences in Handling Hearing-impaired Students in Modular and Blended Learning Approaches in the Aspect of Delivery of Instruction

The first question being asked to the research participants was about their critical assessment on whether or not the implementation of the new learning modalities significantly affects the students with hearing impairment's ability and capacity to learn the lesson given to them.

1. *Hearing-Impaired Learners Need Direct Instruction from Teachers.* The teachers had observed that the learners need face-to-face guidance on comprehending the lessons, not just giving them the self-learning modules. It should be considered that deaf and mute learners do not have normal learning abilities.

The second question the research participants were asked was about the three most important concerns that they had observed, heard, and experienced from their hearing-impaired (HI) student or parental feedback concerning the effectiveness and reliability of different subject modules.

1. *Hearing-impaired learners Hardly Understand the Self-Learning Modules.* The teachers shared their concerns regarding the effectiveness of using self-learning modules for learners with hearing disabilities. They had observed that remote learning arrangements could not replicate physical instructional delivery.

The third question was about the awareness of the research participants about the terms of accommodations and modifications in teaching students with a disability.

1. Competence Inadequacy in Teaching Special Education Thwarts Teaching Accommodation and Modification. The SpEd teachers who participated in this investigation disclosed that their degrees were not in SpEd but either a Bachelor of Secondary Education or a Bachelor of Elementary Education. Therefore, they cannot be expected to handle deaf and hard-of-hearing pupils since they are not even proficient in sign language.

The research participants asked the fourth question about how the students with hearing impairment can answer and submit their modules on time.

1. Using Self-Learning Modules, Hearing-Impaired Pupils are on the Verge of Struggling to Comply with School Requirements. The teachers revealed that they had to adjust the deadline for submitting the answer sheets in the self-learning modules. When they followed up, the children suffering from hearing impairment were not yet done answering them.

The fifth question the research participants were asked was about their thoughts on the struggle of their students with hearing impairment due to the absence of face-to-face instruction. They were further asked whether they consider this concern one of the challenges that need immediate intervention from the teacher.

1. Modular Learning is Not Fitting for Hearing-Impaired Pupils. Based on the teachers' observations of the new normal of teaching special education in public schools, the deaf and hard-of-hearing learners needed special instructional delivery. Their parents could hardly provide these learning needs as home tutors since they are not capable of using sign language to communicate.

The sixth question the research participants were asked was whether or not they considered setbacks to the success of instruction delivery teaching challenges that somehow hugely affected their regular job as teachers.

1. Lucid Setbacks towards Successful Instructional Delivery for Hearing-Impaired Students. There are myriad apparent setbacks in the effective teaching of learning who need teachers who can adjust their learning disabilities. In this manner, distance education using self-learning modules as the chief learning resource is not suitable for special learners.

6. Findings

Based on the gathered data, six themes were formed from the experiences in handling hearing-impaired students in modular and blended learning approaches in the aspect of delivery of instruction. These themes were hearing-impaired learners need direct instruction from teachers, hearing-impaired learners hardly understand the self-learning modules, competence inadequacy in teaching special education thwarts teaching accommodation and modification, using self-learning modules, hearing-impaired pupils are on the verge of struggling to comply with school requirements, modular learning is not fitting for hearing-impaired pupils, and lucid setbacks towards successful instructional delivery for hearing-impaired students.

7. Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the study's findings, it is concluded that significant teacher experiences were products of constant interaction and collaboration through direct instruction, social and academic interactions, and involvement in the learning process/activities with their learners with hearing impairment. It is suggested educational reinforcement and intervention through action plans of a series of comprehensive training on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) documents and organization of the IEP committee/team are necessary.

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10. Conflict of Interest

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