

Vocational Curriculum for Learners with Special Educational Needs

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Abstract

This study primarily aimed to find the difference in the level of functioning in Pizza Making Program of the High School Learners with special needs in terms of Cognitive Skills, Functional Skills, Behavioral Skills and Daily Life Skills. Majority of the high school students with special educational needs in the pre-evaluation rarely observed and practiced level of functioning in terms of Cognitive, Functional, Behavioral, and Daily Life Skills. Majority of the high school learners with special educational needs in the post evaluation sometimes observed and practiced level of functioning in terms of Cognitive Skills; Functional Skills; Behavioral Skills; and Acquisition of Daily Life Skills. This shows that after exposure to a certain program, learners have high potentials of improving. There was a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test in the four skills Cognitive, Functional, Behavioral, and Daily Life Skills. This indicates that utilizing the program and giving more constant exposure to it would help the learner with special educational needs the highest level of functioning which is always observing and practicing the skills needed in pizza making. The teachers or facilitators also need to use up to date, practical and relevant strategies that would make the pizza making program easier and enjoyable. With the utilization of state of the art facilities and strategies, learners would be more encouraged, motivated and trainable. Results of the pre and post evaluation should be carefully analyzed by the pizza making program teachers to address the strengths and weaknesses of the learners.

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Pizza Making Skills. This refers to the ability of the learners with special needs to perform activities related to pizza making.

Transitional Activity. This refers to the activity/program given to children with special needs which intention is to prepare them for employment. In this study, the transitional activity is pizza making.

Vocational Preparedness. This refers to the readiness of the learners with special needs to vocational program such as pizza making.

Introduction

In the past three decades, children with special needs are considered invincible persons of the society (Burtner, 2017). Often times, they are overlooked, cast with pity and considered embarrassment to their family because their physical or mental incapability. They are also often regarded to be persons with less social significance due their incapability and unnoticed contribution to the economy (Burtner, 2017).

But things have changed. Given applicable learning interventions, conducive environment to learn and applicable learning procedure, children with special needs can be trained to perform task they need in their everyday lives. They can be trained to take care of themselves, do simple household chores and do vocational skills such as cooking and weaving.

When their interest is tapped, they can even showcase talents in arts such as painting and photography. These abilities cannot be underscored unless activities related to the discovery and development of skills of interest is implemented. On a documentary featured by Real Time aired by GMA 7 on January 25, 2015, the importance of conducting activities such as photography workshop for children with autism is stressed by Belle Vizcocho, parent and member of the Autism society of the Philippines in Baguio City. She mentioned that without identifying what special children can do, such as those with autism, parents of these children would not also know the children's ability.

This explains that exposure of children with special needs to activities that will showcase their abilities to be a more productive citizen, especially those that will provide economic productivity like vocational programs is one of the ways to improve their quality of life.

One of the fears of parents of children with special needs is to leave their children behind helpless and dependent in all their needs. The thought of leaving behind a child who cannot take care of himself and cannot provide for himself financially are part of these fears. That is why schools that provide curriculum for children with special needs include transitional programs for these children. These transitional programs include vocational programs such as weaving, food tending which include pizza making.

Transitional program or programs and activities given to children with special needs after high school like vocational programs is mandated by the Philippine government to schools that offer educational curriculum to children with special needs. This is in line with the implementation of K to 12 Curriculum (RA 10533).

In the implementation of K to 12 Curriculum, children with special needs are not exempted to be trained after they finish junior high school or grade 10. They should also be given grade 11 a program that will equip them to be ready to work or be productive economically. This is also termed as transitional program in the curriculum given to children with special needs.

Children with special needs have limitations when it comes to performing tasks unlike persons without special conditions. Although they have limitations, they can be trained to do tasks and be skilled to perform these tasks through positive interventions. There are even companies that support children with special needs through trainings and employment. Children with special needs' ability to organize items, perform motor skills and work with patterns makes pizza making vocational skills a good choice of transitional activity for these kinds of learners. This prompted the researcher to determine the progress of children exposed to pizza making as a vocational program for learners with special needs.

Conclusions

The study revealed the following significant findings:

1. Pre-evaluation levels of functioning of respondent high school learners with special needs in terms of: Cognitive Skills; Functional Skills; and Acquisition of Daily Life Skills.

- 1.1 The mean score and the standard deviation of the respondents in the pre-evaluation in terms of Cognitive Skills imply that rarely observed and practiced. It means that if learners are not yet exposed to a certain program or situation, their cognitive skills are not obviously being practiced and observed yet.
- 1.2 The mean score and standard deviation in the functional skills before the learners where exposed in the pizza making program imply that functional skills are not rarely observed and practiced. It is an indication that learners with special needs would only observe and practice these skills if already exposed or experienced.
- 1.3 The mean score and the standard deviation of the respondents in the pre-evaluation in terms of Behavioral skills indicates that learners rarely observed and practiced it. Hence, it means, unless they are exposed to the program, their behavioral skills would be observed and practiced as well.
- 1.4 The mean score and the standard deviation of the respondents in the pre-evaluation in terms of Acquisition of daily life skills indicates to be rarely observed and practice. It implies that if they are not exposed to the program yet, students with special needs would rarely observe or practice acquiring daily life skills.
- 1.5 The findings in the pre - evaluation support the study of Inciong (2011) where it was stated that learners with special needs require repetition and hand-on training for the skills to be developed. In the same manner,

students with special needs from Montessori De San Juan need to be exposed first to activities so the cognitive, functional, behavioral and acquisition of daily life will be observed and practiced often.

2. Post-evaluation levels of functioning of respondent high school learners with special needs in terms of: Cognitive Skills; Functional Skills; and Acquisition of Daily Life Skills.

2.1 The mean score and standard deviation of the respondents in the post evaluation in terms of Cognitive Skills is sometimes observed and practiced. It means that they performed better individually after being exposed to the pizza making program. The learners' cognitive skills would be further improved if constant activities will be provided to the learners.

2.2 The mean scores and standard deviation of the respondents in the post evaluation in terms of Functional skills is sometimes observed and practiced. Hence, after being exposed to the program, learners with special needs have had better improvement in terms of the functional skills.

2.3 The mean score and standard deviation of the respondents in the post evaluation in terms of Behavioral skills indicates that students sometimes observed and practiced the skills. The noticeable improvement could be based to the fact that they were already exposed to the program. So constant exposure would be enriched their behavioral skills.

2.4 The mean score and standard deviation of the respondents in the post evaluation in terms of Acquisition of daily life skills is sometimes observed and practiced. This is an indication of better performance or improvement after the program was introduced and implemented. Thus, it could be improved if more exposure and time would be provided to the learners. Other supplemental activities could also be helpful.

2.5 The findings in the post evaluation support the study of Quijano (2011) where in the program provided to the learner with special needs encourage them to be more productive in in their daily living. Cognitive, functional, behavioral and acquisition of daily life skills of the learners with special needs would definitely improve as long as learners are constantly exposed to the program and other related activities.

3. Significance Difference in the Pre-test and Post Test of the respondent high school learners with special educational needs when exposed in Pizza Making Program in terms of: Cognitive Skills; Functional Skills; Behavioral Skills; and Acquisition of Daily Life Skills.

3.1 There is a significant difference observed in the pre-evaluation and post evaluation levels of functioning under Cognitive Skills. This finding implies that cognitive skills of the learners with special needs could be

improved as they are more exposed to the program and supplemental activities.

- 3.2 There is a significant difference inferred in the pre-evaluation and post evaluation levels of functioning under Functional Skills. This finding implies that functional skills of the learners with special needs could be enhanced if they are constantly exposed and be given more time and exposure to the program and other supplemental activities.
- 3.3 There is a significant difference noted in the pre-evaluation and post evaluation levels of functioning under Behavioral Skills. This finding indicates that behavioral skills of the learners with special needs could be further improved by constant exposure to the program and other
- 3.4 related activities accompanied by close monitoring and well-equipped teachers.
- 3.5 There is a significant difference noted in the pre-evaluation and post evaluation levels of functioning under Acquisition of Daily Life Skills. This finding indicates that student with special needs would improve in terms of acquiring daily life skills. They only need to be exposed to the program constantly or be given additional activities related to the program.

Based on the significant findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

1. Majority of the high school students with special educational needs in the pre-evaluation rarely observed and practiced level of functioning in terms of: Cognitive Skills; Functional Skills; Behavioral Skills; and Acquisition of Daily Life Skills.
2. Majority of the high school learners with special educational needs in the post evaluation sometimes observed and practiced level of functioning in terms of Cognitive Skills; Functional Skills; Behavioral Skills; and Acquisition of Daily Life Skills. This shows that after exposure to a certain program, learners have high potentials of getting improved or enhanced.
3. There was a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test in the four skills: Cognitive; Functional; Behavioral; and Acquisition of daily life. This indicates that utilizing the program and giving more constant exposure to it would help the learner with special educational needs the highest level of functioning which is always observing and practicing the skills needed in pizza making program.
4. These were the problems that high school learners with special needs encountered while engaged in pizza making program:
 - 4.1. Limited time for preparing the pizza dough
 - 4.2. Pizza dough was not made perfectly

- 4.3. Time-consuming
- 4.4. Oven cannot be used by students without assistance of a teacher
- 4.5. Pizza got easily burnt because of over using the oven
- 4.6. Lots of ingredients got wasted during the training for pizza making
- 4.7. Students always wait for instructions
- 4.8. Students tend to lose focus from the task
- 4.9. Some students have the tendency to munch on the topping even before the pizza is prepared
- 4.10. Some students don't like to try pizza that they made
- 4.11. During the announcement of the selling of pizza, not all students were able to speak in the different classrooms confidently.

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