EXPERIENCES OF PARENTS IN TEACHING SELF-HELP SKILLS TO LEARNERS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract:

The main concern in education and its goal for all learners with Intellectual Disability (ID) is to continue providing learning continuity for them to be functional individuals amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. This study delved into teachers' experiences in teaching self-help skills to learners with intellectual disabilities during the pandemic in the Division of Toledo City. Using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), a qualitative research method was utilized to gather data from the parents/guardians selected through purposive random sampling to determine the parents' experiences in teaching self-help skills to learners with Intellectual Disability (ID). The results revealed that parents had more positive experiences than negative experiences in teaching their children with ID self-help skills during the pandemic. Furthermore, the challenges they encountered included teaching special education, which is tough and about following the teacher's instructions, while the coping mechanisms were teaching through modeling and following the instructions in the module. With the foregoing, it is therefore true that the involvement of the parents in teaching children with Intellectual Disability (ID) greatly affects the learners. The participation of parents in schools can help promote positive behaviors among children. Hence, it is recommended that school administrators and other policymakers encourage activities that would support the families of learners with intellectual disability (ID).

Keywords: special education, self-help skills, parents' experiences, intellectual disability (ID), qualitative research, Toledo City

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1. Introduction

As the world grapples with the unprecedented shift to virtual learning, the magnitude of the challenge becomes apparent. The COVID-19 pandemic, as reported by UNESCO, has disrupted the education of nearly 1.3 billion students worldwide. This sudden and massive shift to online learning was a challenge that no one was fully prepared for, underscoring the global impact of the pandemic on education.

The change from face-to-face classes to online and distance learning has been fast, rapid, and new in the world of education (Bojović *et al.*, 2020; Ghazi-Saidi *et al.*, 2020; Singh *et al.*, 2021). Despite the unprecedented challenges, governments and health officials demonstrate remarkable resilience and adaptability. In the studies of (Kelly, 2020; Ketikidou & Saiti, 2022), education systems worldwide are collaborating to find innovative solutions and ensure quality education for all during these difficulties, instilling hope and inspiration.

As the education system in the Philippines quickly adopts the "new normal," the Department of Education (DepEd) is assuring that there are different ways and strategies to help ensure that all Filipino learners, including those with exceptionalities, can continue to acquire quality education (Agayon *et al.*, 2022; Pajimola, 2023). Despite the challenges encountered by everyone in continuing their education amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the DepEd is committed to its Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BELCP) (Rabor *et al.*, 2022; Tusi, 2023, 2023), which is designed to cater to the basic and specific needs of learners with exceptionalities, ensuring no one is left behind. In line with this, DepEd is implementing a variety of learning modalities for learners with intellectual disability, providing a comprehensive and inclusive approach to education during these challenging times.

In the Schools Division of Toledo City, Special Education (SPEd) teachers use video-based instruction for learners with exceptionalities, specifically those with ID, to increase the learners' engagement by watching the tasks being performed repeatedly, and then the student practices the skills. Learners with ID are more affected by this new normal because they are used to going to school and doing repeated tasks daily. The required in-person education has been lost due to the pandemic. Moreover, learners with ID depend on teachers, guardians, or loved ones to help them connect gaps in intellectual and communication abilities. Without these face-to-face classes or classroom time, teachers provided modules and video-based instruction or supplemental videos as instructional support for learners with intellectual disability. Modules are designed to cater to the learning needs of the learners, but for learners with ID, the modules themselves are not enough to cater to their needs.

The learner with ID is characterized by deficits in memory and motivation, inattentive/distractible, deficits in cognitive functioning, and adaptive behavior (Alnoaim, 2021). Students with intellectual functioning limitations may struggle with memory recall, generalizing tasks and skills, and showing signs of poor motivation or

acquired helplessness. According to Kapp (2018) and Patel *et al.* (2020), learners with ID can achieve a high quality of life in many aspects with the appropriate support. Teachers need to give direct teaching in some skill areas outside of the main curriculum, according to Knight *et al.* (2019), in order to completely address the limits in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior that people with ID frequently encounter. These skills are more functional but essential for the individual's future independence. Concepts related to money, time, independent living, self-care and hygiene, community access, recreational activities, and vocational training are some other skill categories. Students with ID learn these skills most effectively in the settings or activities they will be asked to apply them. Once the skills are mastered, additional environments can be added to work towards generalization.

SpEd teachers are worried about ensuring that quality education will still be served well to learners with exceptionalities, especially those with ID, under this new approach. Still, despite these challenges, they are willing to give their learners the best. Special Education is doing the best it could ever do to provide learners with ID quality education by using different strategies or techniques (Osei, 2020). In this new approach, according to Chen and Rivera-Vernazza (2023), the parents may ask and be assisted by the teacher through various distance communication methods such as e-mail, phone calls, text messaging, social media messaging, etc. In modular learning, parents are not replacements for teachers but teachers' partners in education. Teachers teach, and parents guide the learners at home (Domingo, 2022; Trovela, 2021).

Parents would have to play an active role in the learning process in a distance learning approach (Apriyanti, 2020). It may be crucial in a way that they relay the given direction to the learners with ID, and they will be accountable for the learner's behavior while doing the distance learning. Parents will encounter lots of challenges in fulfilling their roles as learning facilitators because learners with ID choose who will be the one to assist them with their lessons and assignments (Abuhammad, 2020; Garbe *et al.*, 2020).

The researchers chose to study the experiences of parents in teaching self-help skills to learners with intellectual disabilities using modules and instructional videos. This study shows a comprehensive view of the parents' positive and negative feedback in facilitating the learning of learners with intellectual disabilities using the distance learning approach.

2. Purpose of the Study

This study delved into teachers' experiences in teaching self-help skills to learners with intellectual disabilities during the pandemic in the Division of Toledo City. Specifically, it sought to explore the participants' positive and negative experiences in teaching self-help skills to learners with intellectual disabilities and their challenges and coping mechanisms in handling them.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study used interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), a qualitative research method, to examine, explore, and gather insights into parents' real-life experiences in teaching self-help skills to learners with intellectual disabilities during the pandemic. Qualitative methodology was used during the analyzing phase. Qualitative research is a subjective approach used to express life experiences and give them meaning to collect insight and explore the depth, richness, and complexity inherent in the actual situation. Qualitative research involves using qualitative data such as interviews, observations, surveys, and document analysis.

3.2 Research Participants

This study's participants were the parents of the schools offering special education classes to learners with intellectual disabilities at the Division of Toledo City using purposive random sampling.

3.3 Research Instrument

The study utilized an interview guide and voice recorder to gather data about the parents' experiences teaching self-help skills to learners with intellectual disabilities. The questionnaire contained three (2) parts: Part I is the demographic profile of parents, including age, civil status, number of children in the family, and number of children in the family who have intellectual disabilities. Part II is about parents' experiences in teaching self-help skills to learners with intellectual disabilities, the challenges they encountered, and their coping mechanisms.

3.4 Data Collection

A letter was addressed to the Division of Toledo City to seek permission to distribute the survey form to the parents to enable the researchers to officially administer the survey form and interview the respondents to gather the demographic profile of the participants. The researchers guarantee strict compliance with the directions provided to the participants. To guide them properly in taking time to answer each item, the researcher personally distributed the research instrument. The researcher tallied the data and tabulated it for analysis and interpretation.

3.5 Data Analysis

The questionnaire was analyzed during the second week of November 2020 using a thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis is a method of analyzing qualitative data. It is usually applied to texts, such as interview transcripts. The researcher closely examines the data to identify common themes of parents' experiences in teaching self–help skills to learners with

intellectual disability (ID). It is an approach to finding out something about parents' views, opinions, knowledge, and experiences in teaching self–help skills to learners with intellectual disability (ID) from a set of qualitative data through interview transcripts or survey responses. Researchers would collect data from relevant participants and then analyze it. A thematic analysis identifies and uses themes to address the research or say something about an issue.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Research Participants

Participant	Age	Civil Status	No. of Child/children in the Family	No. of Children in the Family with Intellectual Disability (ID)
1	45 years old	Married	2	1
2	40 years old	Unmarried	2	1
3	52 years old	Unmarried	7	1
4	40 years old	Married	4	1
5	48 years old	Married	5	1
6	43 years old	Unmarried	7	1
7	45 years old	Married	2	1
8	39 years old	Married	6	1
9	35 years old	Married	2	1
10	59 years old	Married	7	1

Table 1 shows that the oldest among the research participants of Magdugo Elementary School at the time of the interview was 59 years old, married, had seven (7) children in the family, and had one (1) child with an intellectual disability. It can be noted that the research participant's family is considered huge and that aside from the parents, six other (6) siblings could take care of the special child in the family.

On the other hand, the youngest among the research participants was 35 years old, married, and had two (2) children who were intellectually disabled. The family of these research participants is relatively small. The parents can pay more attention to the special child in the family, especially in teaching the module's contents since learning is home-based and requires parents' time and attention.

Mothers of neurotic and intellectually challenged children experience higher levels of stress than mothers of normal or chronically ill children. Siblings may become resentful and jealous if their parent's attention is mostly focused on their impaired child, leaving the other children with short fuse and impatience (Aktaş *et al.*, 2021).

A study by Butterfield *et al.* (2021) shows that parental feelings were characterized by future-oriented concern. Significant characteristics related to having an intellectually disabled child in the family were miscommunications within the family, negative impacts on other siblings, psychological stress, decreased interaction with neighbors and relatives, and economic loss.

According to Weiber *et al.* (2019), mothers of children with ID unanimously expressed sadness, worry about the child's future, and stress associated with raising a child with ID. Opoku *et al.* (2020) added that parents created awareness of the challenges involved in raising their children with ID, which were described as demands on caregiving, employment, and financial issues.

4.1 Positive Experiences of the Participants in Teaching Self-Help Skills to Learners with Intellectual Disability
This part of the study presents the parents' positive experiences in teaching their child or children about self-help skills. The following themes were developed from the experiences of the research participants.

The first question asked to the research participants relates to their positive experience teaching their child or children about self-help skills.

- **Provides the Feeling of "Can Do It"**

The parents expressed that they can teach their children skills for daily activities even though they have intellectual development problems.

Informant 1 clearly expressed that teaching self-help to one's own is not difficult since she felt she could do it. She uttered that:

"It's okay for me. It is in Visaya. I did not find it difficult; it was also easy for the child. I can do it. If there are things that I do not understand, I can quickly call you ma'am." (Informant 1)

Also, Informant 2 said teaching self-help is easy because the contents of the modules are easy to understand. It was expressed that:

"It's okay; there is no problem because it's for them. The module is just easy." (Informant 2)

Informant 3, another parent of an intellectually-deficient child, shared that:

"It is okay that the (child) is at home because I can teach. There was observed improvement because the child will do it." (Informant 3)

Informant 4 narrated that teaching at home using the modules was the new normal and uttered the following statement:

"It is okay." (Informant 4)

Informant 5 said that it was easy to teach one's child with the aid of the modules, and the activities can be done at home. It was shared that:

"It is easy to teach. There are few to choose from. It is better because there is a module. The (child) is in the house because there is COVID. It might be difficult." (Informant 5)

Informant 6 discoursed that the child could learn in one's teaching because the child would easily follow the instructions. It was uttered that:

"The child was able to learn and follows when being taught." (Informant 6)

Informant 7 opined that her child learns to bathe independently due to her teaching. She added that:

"It is okay. The child knows how to bathe alone." (Informant 7)

Informant 8 shared that it was easier to teach the child since the child tends to be obedient and narrated that:

"I will teach the (child) how to apply, and then the (child) will be okay; there is no problem." (Informant 8)

Informant 9 said that the child could learn from one's teaching because the child would follow instructions easily. It was uttered that:

"The (child) was able to learn and follow when being taught." (Informant 9)

For Informant 10, it was also fine with the current teaching modality of using modules prepared by the teacher while the parents teach the child at home. Also, the child would follow the instructions given to them. She added that:

"It is okay. The (child) would just follow)." (Informant 10)

The parents of children with intellectual disabilities shared that teaching their children about self-help skills was okay since the modules' instructions could be easily understood. The children manifest cooperation and interest in learning by following simple instructions. In this way, the parents felt self-gratification that they could develop their teaching skills at home and feel fulfillment since there is observable development with their children.

Parents and guardians know their children better than anyone else and fully understand a child's physical, social, developmental, and family history (Jones *et al.*,

2020). Throughout a child's school career, parents are the only adults who have been and will remain heavily involved in the educational process. Despite not being educators, they nonetheless contribute their years of expertise from various professions and facets of life to the process. Even though children spend roughly six hours a day in school, they rarely receive the full focus of their teachers during class. Parents might spend a lot of time sitting with their children as they complete homework and other educational tasks. It's possible that parents are the only adults who closely monitor their children's work and provide comments. As such, in a meeting, this is the lone parent's viewpoint (Schneider & Coleman, 2018).

The second question asked of the research participants concerned their opinion on whether or not the self-help skills helped the child and how.

- **Development of Mental Alertness**

Teaching self-help to children with intellectual disabilities enabled them to develop their mental attentiveness.

Informant 1 shared that teaching self-help skills enables her child to understand their lesson. She revealed that:

"The (child) knows the things for males and females. Can separate the things for taking a bath." (Informant 1)

Informant 5 expressed that teaching about life skills was helpful. She revealed that:

"It was helpful. I will just help in explaining. The (child) knew the things." (Informant 5)

Informant 7 further that teaching at home with the use of modules given by the teacher enabled her as a parent to help the child learn and observe the development. She narrated that:

" I was able to monitor my child. I was able to monitor the progress." (Informant 5)

The parents explained that teaching self-help paved the way for developing the child's mental alertness. When the child was given the activity, they could harness one's ability to think and find ways to address issues or problem areas. Hence, the child could exhibit progress toward making them function in the house and the outside environment. They need to remember facts and trivia. In cognitive skills, one can ask questions (Sıburıan *et al.*, 2019), learn to pay attention for longer periods of time (Buchele Harris *et al.*, 2018), solve problems, distinguish between fact and fiction (or what is true and false), comprehend cause and effect, and use simple reasoning. They are attempting to improve

their cognitive skills. Playing at home or in formal education, these qualities ought to be welcomed and promoted.

- **Enabling the Child to Do Something at Home**

Parents find that teaching self-help skills helps their children be preoccupied with activities to be performed at home, energizes them to stay home most of the time.

Informant 3 shared that by teaching self-help at home, the child would have something to look forward to doing daily. She uttered that:

"The (child) has something to do every day compared to if there is none. It is different now that the (child) has something to do; there is an improvement." (Informant 3)

Informant 4 added that having modules in teaching self-helped enabled the child to have something to do every day and shared that:

"It helped because the (child) had something to do at home, was not bored, and enjoyed answering (the modules) and singing." (Informant 4)

Informant 6 shared that the new normal of teaching was helpful to her child because he has something to accomplish at home. It was articulated that:

"It helped because the (child) is happy when there is something to be done and be answered at home." (Informant 6)

For informant 8, teaching life skills to the child despite the mental difficulty enabled the child to be alert in studying and complying with the activities in the module and discoursed that:

"It helped because the (child) was alert, and if there were modules, the (child) would answer immediately." (Informant 8)

Informant 9 further said that teaching skills for daily activities enabled the child to be engrossed in some activities that developed one's cognition. She discoursed that:

"It's better if there is nothing to do at home. The (child can practice thinking. The hands can be moved." (Informant 9)

According to Informant 10, teaching life skills to the child despite the difference in understanding made the child learn how to practice personal hygiene. It was said that:

"It helped because the (child) had something to do at home. The (child already knew how to use a toothbrush and take a bath)." (Informant 10)

Teaching self-help skills to children with ID makes them pensive about doing something at home since there are no classes to be done in school amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The activities in the modules empower the children to use their cognitive abilities. Also, it energizes their affective ability since they become happy when they have something to perform and accomplish at home.

Most youngsters only sometimes think from the perspective of others, but this is a skill that can be acquired. In order to survive in a complex world, one must regularly analyze data and make various decisions. Rich, unstructured play is one of the finest methods to develop critical thinking skills. It must guarantee the youngster gets time each day to play alone or with pals. This play could involve role-playing (behaving like superheroes or firefighters), building structures, playing board games, or engaging in physical games like tag or hide-and-seek outside. Children develop critical thinking skills through play by formulating hypotheses, taking chances, trying out ideas, making mistakes, and solving problems (Parker & Thomsen, 2019).

The third question asked to the research participants related to their assessment of whether or not they were already confident that their teaching about self-help enabled their child or children to use this knowledge in their daily activities.

- **The Experience is Favorable**

The parents of the children with intellectual disabilities expressed that they already have confidence that their children's learning will be applied to their daily activities.

Informant 1 is confident that there is a desirable outcome in teaching her child self-help amid the COVID-19 pandemic. She expressed that:

"Yes." (Informant 1)

Likewise, Informant 2 had the same answer as Informant 1 and expressed that:

"Yes." (Informant 2)

Informant 3 added the thought and discoursed that:

"Yes". (Informant 3)

Moreover, Informant 4 further said that:

"Yes." (Informant 4)

Informant 5 shared the same response with the other informants and narrated that:

"*Yes*." (Informant 5)

Informant 6 also added that:

"*Oo.* (Yes).*"* (Informant 6)

The informant further opined that:

"*Yes*." (Informant 7)

For Informant 8, the responses were just the same and said that:

"*Yes*." (Informant 8)

Furthermore, Informant 10 explained that there are indeed positive results in teaching skills for daily activities to her child even though the child has a cognitive deficiency. She said that:

"*Yes*." (Informant 10).

It can be noted that out of the research participants' uniform responses, they built confidence by teaching their cognitively weak children life skills that enabled these children to function in their daily activities. The parents likewise gained the sense of fulfillment that there was a good outcome from sharing necessary life skills with their children to boost their self-confidence and outlook in life despite their weaknesses compared to other children.

A child who loves learning becomes an adult who is rarely bored in life. Many skills children will need as adults to compete in a global economy are not easily taught in a typical classroom setting. One of the essential things parents can do is raise kind children and kind adults (Altalib *et al.*, 2024; Cline & Fay, 2020).

4.2 Common Themes Emanating from the Perception of Key Participants
This chapter section shows the common themes expressed by the research participants who are parents of learners with intellectual disabilities.
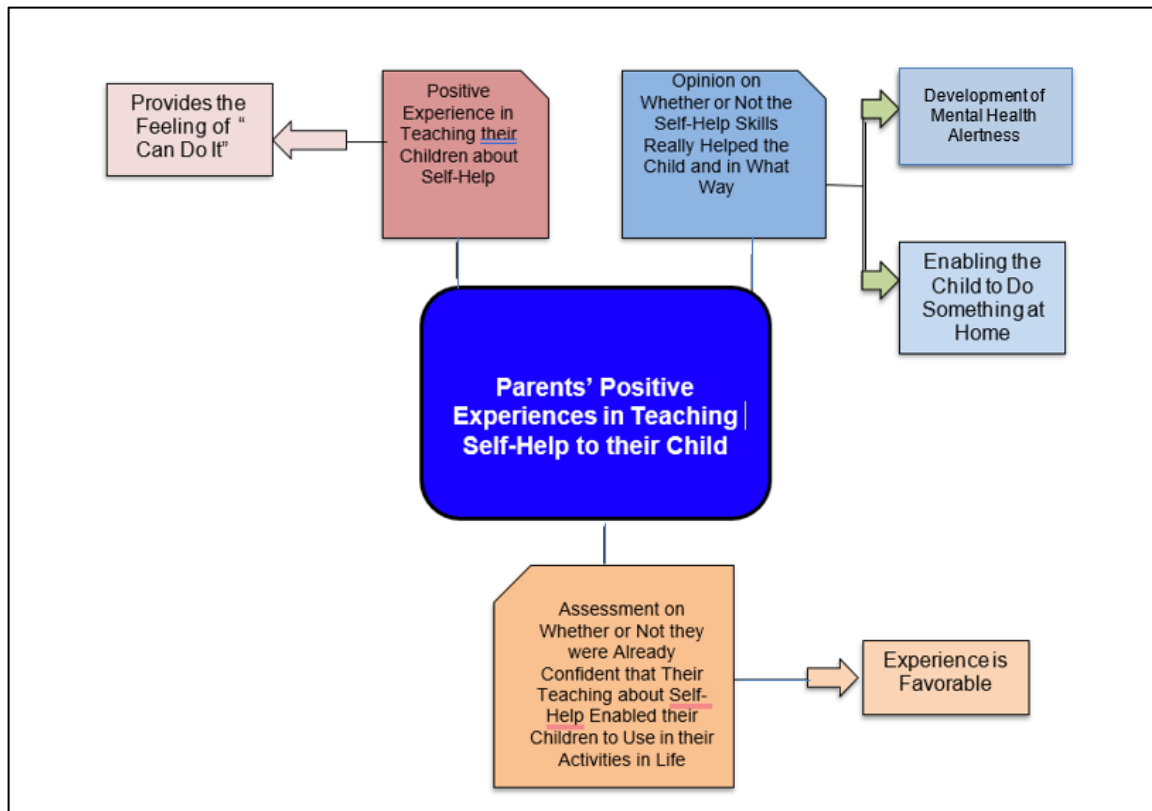
Figure 1: Parents' Positive Experiences in Teaching Self-Help to their Child

This part of the study presents the parents' positive experiences in teaching their child or children about self-help skills. The following themes were developed from the experiences of the research participants.

The first question asked to the research participants relates to their positive experiences teaching their child or children about self-help skills.

- **Provides the Feeling of "Can Do It"**
   The parents reported that teaching practical skills to children with intellectual weaknesses had given them the fulfillment to teach their children at home during this health emergency. Their experience proved this feeling, which shows that their children are interested in learning by following instructions cooperatively.

   The second question asked of the research participants concerned their opinion on whether or not the self-help skills helped the child and how.

- **Development of Mental Alertness**
   The modules provided to learners guided the parents in teaching their children at home. Fortunately, the children showed eagerness to answer the activities contained in them, which developed their cognitive ability.

- **Enabling the Child to Do Something at Home**

The modules containing lessons also enabled the learners to have something to be busy with. In this way, the unique child would be bored by staying longer inside their house since they looked forward to accomplishing the activities related to self-help skills development. They got to learn simple, practical actions that are helpful in daily activities.

The third question asked to the research participants related to their assessment of whether or not they were already confident that their teaching about self-help enabled their child or children to use this knowledge in their daily activities.

- **The Experience is Favorable**

According to the research participants, the experience of teaching their child self-help skills with the aid of the modules provided by the teaching enabled them to be confident that their child will use the basic life skills in daily activities. Also, it gave them the skill to be serviceable in the family and society by simple means.

4.3 Negative Experiences of the Participants in Teaching Self-Help Skills to Learners with Intellectual Disability

This part of the study presents the parents' negative experiences in teaching their child or children about self-help skills. The following themes were developed from the personal experiences of the research participants.

The first question asked to the research participant relates to their negative experiences in teaching their children about self-help skills.

- **Time off from Negative Experience**

Based on their responses during the interview, the research participants did not have any undesirable experience teaching their children self-help skills since it was very favorable to their children.

Informant 1, out of her experience as a mother teaching one's child at home amid the pandemic, said that:

"*Nothing is not applicable.*" (Informant 1)

Also, Informant 2 uttered the same positive answer and shared that:

"*There was none, not applicable.*" (Informant 2).

Further, Informant 6 expressly said she did not have any unfortunate experience in teaching her child despite the disability in understanding immediately compared to normal learners. She shared that:

"There was none; I do not have a negative experience." (Informant 6).

Also, Informant 8 had the same utterances as Informant 6 and opined that:

"There was none. So far, I do not have a negative experience." (Informant 8)

Informant 10 also added the same responses to the abovementioned question and said:

"There was none. I do not have a negative experience." (Informant 10).

The intellectually disabled children's parents shared that they did not experience any unfavorable reaction from the children when teaching them practical life skills. It was also clear that the research participants' earlier pronouncements indicated that their children would follow the instructions based on the module's instructions. Hence, teaching and learning were easily demonstrated.

Deficits in self-help skills are an inevitable problem with the mentally disabled (Rynkowska, 2021). According to Adebisi and Jerry (2019), self-help skills, learned effortlessly by more intelligent children, are crucial for the mentally disabled child's overall development.

- **Undesirable Behavioral Manifestations Towards Learning**
  The parents observed that the children showed a negative attitude during teaching sessions at home.
  One of the problems in dealing with children is their tendency to disobey. This was the experience of Informant 3, and shared:

"There is. There were instances that the (child) will disobey me, and I have some chores to do." (Informant 3)

Also, the problem of Informant 4 was the stubbornness of her child, and she shared that:

"In times when I teach the (child) then keeps on putting the soap again and again, toothpaste keeps on repeating inputting, and it's a waste if cannot find it. I will reprimand sometimes; then I forget if the (child) did not ask sorry. I cannot erase the statement." (Informant 4)

Informant 7 shared that her child was hard-headed and would not want to be taught. Instead, she opted to do his task on her own. She narrated that:

"There were times when the (child) would get mad and not want to be disturbed and wanted to do things on his own." (Informant 7)

Informant 9 shared that her child would manifest outbursts at times. She narrated that:

"When the (child) will show tantrums." (Informant 9).

The parents would have problems teaching their child when their child would exhibit different negative attitudes towards learning, like shrewdness, sulking, and not paying attention to the instructions given. Instead, their children would sharply insist on doing their things without their parents' close supervision. As a result, the child would be making adverse outcomes like wasting the family's resources and affecting the family's budgetary situation.

Negative emotions can exacerbate academic struggles, and learning climate can also be a significant factor. Students who do not feel a sense of safety or belonging are less likely to pay attention to study. They are likelier to engage in harmful behavior (National Center for Learning Disabilities, 2017).

The second question asked the research participants about their way of enhancing the hostile experience of teaching their child or children about self-help skills and whether or not it is effective.

- **Deeper Tolerance**

The parents exercise high tolerance when it comes to managing the negative behavior of their children, especially during teaching sessions

To entice the child to focus on studying, Informant 3 used food to motivate her to study. She said that:

"I prepared food so that the (child) would move faster if there were food being prepared. It's effective." (Informant 3)

Informant 4 needed to be more patient with her and shared that:

"Lengthen the patience. It's effective." (Informant 4)

Informant 5, for her experience, would ask her child what the child would want to catch the attention towards studying. She narrated that:

"If the child is not in the mood, I just let her play so that there is no pressure on her and me. It's effective." (Informant 5).

On the part of informant 7, she tends to neglect if her child does not want to study and wait for the proper timing. She discoursed that:

"I will just neglect the (child) if he does not want to work on the tasks. It's effective." (Informant 7).

Also, Informant 9 did not force the child to learn that the child was not in the mood and narrated that:

"I will not force the (child) until she's in the right mood. It's effective." (Informant 9)

The parents exercise a high degree of tolerance to their children's different negative behavioral manifestations, considering that they already knew that special children would have a high propensity to show tantrums, laziness, and short temper. In reality, it would be hard to teach special children when one is a parent because there are many things to consider.

Parents of children and individuals with special needs often face extreme stress when it comes to managing troublesome behavior. However, it is imperative to regard it as a mode of communication. Difficult behavior suggests a learning issue rather than an individual issue. Listening to what the other person is trying to express is the key to controlling behavior. Strive for consistency in your approach and steer clear of conflict. Pay attention to the children's body language, particularly when they're stressed. Even though challenging conduct is a taught behavior, keep in mind that individuals with special needs do not purposefully act in a manipulative manner against others. There is always a purpose behind behavior (Malott & Kohler, 2021).

4.4 Common Themes Emanating from the Perception of Key Participants

This section shows the common themes expressed by the research participants based on their negative experiences in teaching self-help to their children with intellectual disabilities and when they were studying.

This part of the study presents the parents' negative experiences in teaching their child or children about self-help skills. The following themes were developed from the personal experiences of the research participants.
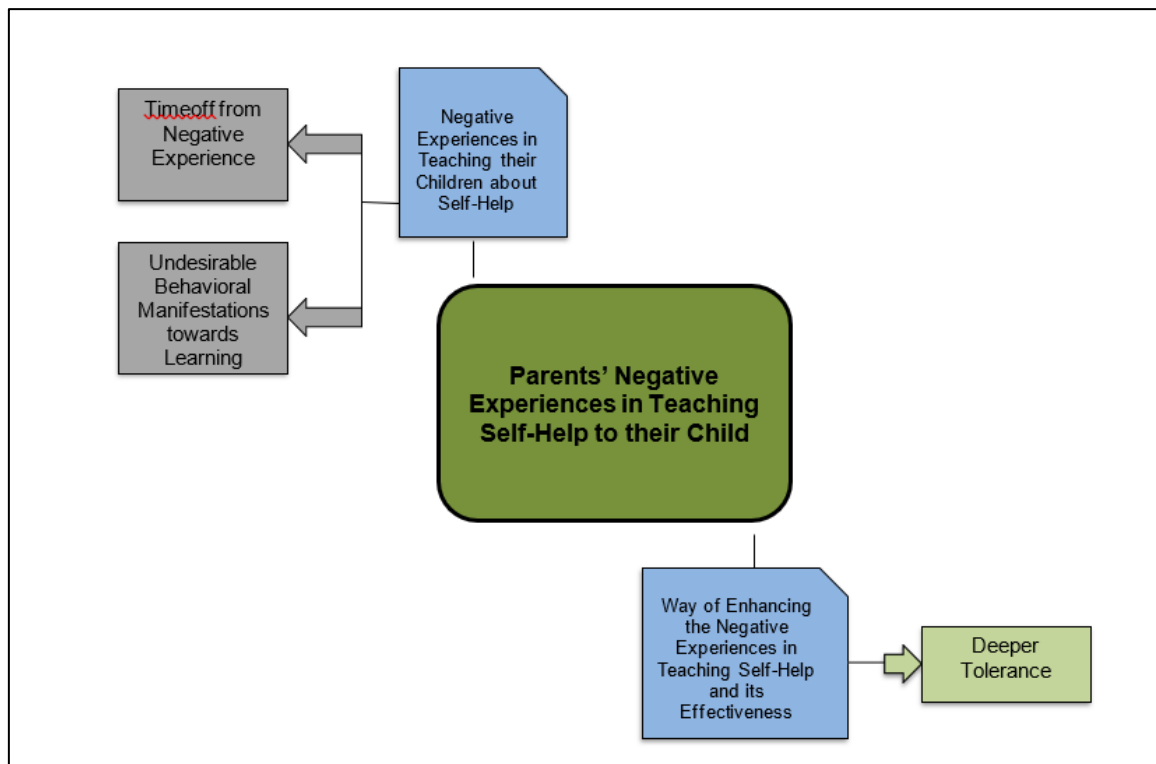
Figure 2: Parents' Negative Experiences in Teaching Self-Help to their Child

The first question asked to the research participants relates to their negative experiences in teaching their children about self-help skills.

- **Time off from Negative Experience**

  There were parents who did not have any negative experiences when they were teaching their children at home in the midst of the current situation wherein modules were prepared beforehand by the teachers, and the parents would have personal contact with the child in teaching the lesson. In this approach, the parents would stand as the teachers of the learners at home.

- **Undesirable Behavioral Manifestations Towards Learning**

  Special children understandably exhibit different negative behaviors toward learning. This undesirable behavior is just part of their abnormal physical condition. Therefore, the parents who act as teachers would have to deal with this while teaching self-help.

  The second question asked the research participants pertained to their way of enhancing the negative experience in teaching their child or children about self-help skills and whether or not it's effective.

- **Deeper Tolerance**

Special children tend to exhibit tantrums, fretting, and attention deficits, so parents need to deepen their tolerance for their children to not lessen their patience. Hence, the parents apply various strategies to deal with their child.

4.5 Challenges of the Participants in Teaching Self-Help Skills

This part of the study shows the challenges experienced by the parents in teaching their child or children about self-help skills. The following themes were developed from the personal experiences of the research participants.

The first question asked to the research participants pertained to the difficulties experienced in teaching their children about self-help skills.

- **Teaching Self-Help is Not Arduous**

Some parents shared that they did not experience any tough circumstances while teaching self-help to their children at home despite their children's intellectual disabilities.

Informant 1 denied any problems in teaching her child at home about self-help with the guidance of the prepared modules and expressed that:

"I did not find it difficult." (Informant 1)

Further, Informant 2 had the same response to the query on whether or not they experience difficulty in teaching self-help and shared that:

"I did not experience difficulty." (Informant 2)

Moreover, Informant 3 denied any cause of difficulty in teaching life skills to her child suffering from mental disabilities. She said that:

"I did not experience difficulty. I have no comment because I did not experience difficulty teaching self-help skills." (Informant 3)

The same with the other parents who were teaching their special child at home, Informant 4 opined that:

"I did not experience difficulty. No comment because I did not experience difficulty in teaching about self-help skills." (Informant 4)

The same was true with the other parents who were also personally teaching their special child at home; Informant 5 shared the same opinion. It was said that:

"I don't comment because it's not complicated. I did not experience difficulty." (Informant 5).

Informant 6 also discoursed the absence of any difficulty in teaching practical skills to her child at home and said that:

"I did not experience difficulty. I did not experience difficulty in teaching because it's too short. It's easy." (Informant 6)

Likewise, Informant 8 shared happily about the comfort of being able to teach one's child. She recalled that:

"I did not experience difficulty." (Informant 8)

Informant 9 added the same revelations with other research participants and shared the foregoing narrations:

"I did not experience difficulty. It's effective)." (Informant 9).

Also, Informant 10 revealed the same response by saying that:

"I did not experience difficulty." (Informant 10).

At the interview, the research participants denied problematic circumstances when they taught their children self-help abilities. Even though they were dealing with children with an intellectual deficiency, their experience was harmonious and favorable. The children showed positive behavior when the parents taught them at home about skills for everyday life.

Life skills for students with disabilities will help them live independently, and they need to start with grooming, feeding, and toileting. Teaching functional skills will look very different depending on the student's age and level of function. With young students with disabilities, it is a matter of creating the structure for acquiring those skills not that long after their typical peers. Still, success in those skills is a mile marker those students must put behind them. In many cases, parents over-function for their children with disabilities (Singer *et al.*, 2019). It is often left to the special educator to encourage and coach the parent through self-dressing, tooth brushing, and the other skills required for independence (Shepherd & Ivey, 2019).

The second question was about how they hurdle the problems in teaching their children related to self-help skills and whether or not it's effective at all.

- **No Comment: No Hardships in Teaching**

When the research participants were asked how they managed their challenges in teaching self-help to their children with mental development problems, they said nothing since they had positive experiences in the first place.

Informant 3 revealed that they cannot share any difficulty in teaching pertaining to skills for everyday life. She said that:

"I have no comment because I did not find it difficult to teach self-help skills. It's effective." (Informant 3)

Informant 4 said she also needs to acknowledge any bad experience teaching her child about self-help skills at home. She discoursed that:

"I have no comment because I did not find it difficult to teach self-help skills. It's effective." (Informant 4).

Also, Informant 5 narrated the same response on how they address the challenges in teaching practical life skills to her child. The foregoing statement was narrated:

"I have no comment because I did not find it difficult to teach. It's effective" (Informant 5).

The same with the other parents, Informant 6 revealed that they also find it manageable to teach their child and said that:

"I did not find it difficult to teach because they were few. It's effective." (Informant 6)

Informant 8 also said that she had no difficulty teaching her child amid the new normal of teaching and learning. She revealed that:

"It did not find it difficult. It's effective." (Informant 8)

Further, informant 9 narrated the same statement in response to the foregoing question. She said:

"It did not find it difficult. It's effective." (Informant 9)

Then, Informant 10 also narrated the same response to the foregoing question. She narrated that:

"It did not find it difficult. It's effective." (Informant 10)

The parents did not share any problematic experience in teaching their children having intellectual disabilities about self-help skills. Therefore, they were not challenged to think of the best approach to deal with the issues and hardships in teaching their children at home since, at the present set-up, the teachers to the children are the parents, while the teachers' role is to design the lesson, construct and distribute the modules containing activities for the children to study and answer at home.

It is worthwhile to invest time and energy in self-help skills in a childcare program. Giving kids experiences that are appropriate for their age and the right kind of assistance will go a long way toward making them successful. Providers of child care can provide kids with the chance to learn self-help techniques and enough time to complete these important activities. Never forget that adults provide valuable role models. Children learn a great deal by watching us as we serve as role models for self-help skills (Childcare Extension Organization, 2020).

4.6 Common Themes Emanating from the Perception of Key Participants

This section shows the common themes narrated by the research participants relating to the challenges experienced by the parents in teaching their child or children about self-help skills.
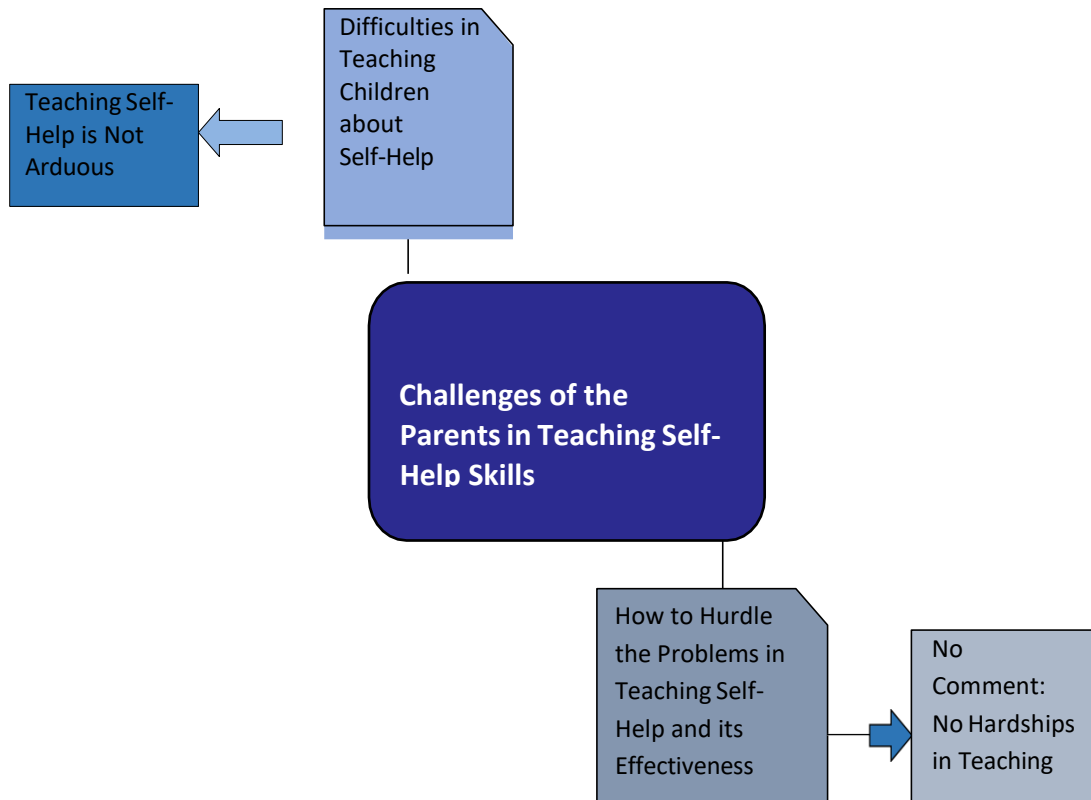

Figure 3: Challenges of the Parents in Teaching Self-Help Skills

This part of the study shows the challenges experienced by the parents in teaching their child or children about self-help skills. The following themes were developed from the personal experiences of the research participants.

The first question asked was about the difficulties experienced in teaching their children about self-help skills.

- **Teaching Self-Help is Not Arduous**

Based on their experiences teaching self-help skills to their children diagnosed with intellectual disabilities, the parents did not have hardships dealing with their children since they could refer to the modules. For them, the chance to teach their children was fulfilling and gave them a feeling of contentment.

The second question was about how they hurdle the problems in teaching their children related to self-help skills and whether it is effective.

- **No Comment: No Hardships in Teaching**

Since the research participants have experience teaching life skills to their children at home, they cannot just comment on how they hurdle the challenges.

4.7 Coping Mechanisms and Feelings of the Participants in Teaching Self-Help Skills
This part of the study shows data on the participants' coping mechanisms for teaching their children self-help skills.

The questions asked to the research participants relate to their methods of teaching self-help skills to children despite the challenges.

- **Follow the Instructions in the Module**

The parents of special children opined that to teach their children about self-help abilities, they should follow the instructions contained in the module, so it would not be easy to think of teaching strategies.

Informant 1 shared that her strategy in teaching her child about self-help skills was to follow the instructions provided in the module. She shared that:

"I read and explained the content of the module to my child. I followed what was there. I will teach my child first, and then the (child) will follow. It's helpful)." (Informant 1)

In addition, Informant 4 also followed what was written in the modules made by the teacher. She said that:

"I followed the module's contents. There were pictures. The (child) was amused. It is helpful." (Informant 4).

Informant 5 also said she followed the contents and procedures illustrated and explained in the modules. She explained the following narrations:

"I read with what is indicated in the module so that I will just follow with what's there. I will get dipper, pour water. With what are the contents of the module I will follow. It's helpful." (Informant 5)

To be able to teach self-help skills to the child with intellectual disabilities, Informant 6 followed the contents of the module and said:

"I just followed what was in the module. I guided my child. It's helpful." (Informant 6).

Also, Informant 7 disclosed that she studied the contents of the modules before teaching her child. She divulged that:

"I read and follow the module. It's helpful." (Informant 7)

For Informant 9, learning the module's contents provided an easier way to teach the child with intellectual problems. She divulged that:

"I asked and followed the contents of the module. It's helpful." (Informant 9)

Informant 10, learning the contents in the module provided an easier way to teach the child with intellectual problems. She divulged that:

"I read what is written in the module on what to do. It's helpful." (Informant 10)

To teach children with intellectual developmental delays, the parents follow the instructions in the module, which the teacher prepares and designs. In this way, the parents teach the child self-help skills by demonstrating the instructions written in the module. Then, the child follows the parents' actions so that they can develop the skills.

Task analysis is breaking a skill down into smaller, more manageable components. Once a task analysis is complete, it can be used to teach learners with ASD a skill that is too challenging to introduce all at once. Other practices, such as discrete trial training, video modeling, and reinforcement, can teach the individual components, building one upon another until the skill is complete. Using the learner's Individual Education Plan (IEP)/Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) goals, teachers/practitioners should identify the skill the learner needs to acquire. The target skill should consist of a series of chained discrete steps. A single discrete skill is not appropriate for task analysis, nor is a task with multiple variables and outcomes (National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders, 2010).

- **Teaching Through Explaining and Describing**

The parents ensured that they described the practical actions directly to their children so they could easily understand and obey.

Informant 2 shared that she explained to her child carefully the skills that needed to be learned. She narrated that:

"I explained the importance of taking a bath. The (child) tends to follow. But I will do it slowly so that the child will not get angry. The (child) wants to do it on his own. It's helpful." (Informant 2)

Informant 3 also said that she described the picture over and over again so that the child would have a grasp of the lesson about life skills. She narrated that:

"I teach and describe the picture and teach it repeatedly. The (child) tends to understand. It is helpful." (Informant 3)

Then, Informant 8 also said that she described the picture over and over again so that the child would have a grasp on it. She narrated that:

"I demonstrated to the (child) first, and then the (child) imitated. It is helpful." (Informant 8)

The parents clearly explained that their method of teaching self-help skills to their children was to describe the picture and demonstrate it firsthand to the child. In this manner, the child, despite his or her intellectual disability, would easily understand the task and do the action independently.

The most fundamental functional abilities are those that we typically pick up in our first few years of life: walking, feeding ourselves, using the restroom by ourselves, and expressing basic needs. These skills must frequently be taught through modeling, dissecting, and the application of Applied Behavior Analysis to students with developmental difficulties, such as Autism Spectrum Disorders, and major cognitive or multiple disabilities. In order to teach specific abilities, teaching life skills also necessitates that the teacher or practitioner conduct the proper task analyses (Gould-Yakovleva *et al.*, 2020).

The last question asked to the research participants related to the feelings or comments received when teaching the child self-help skills.

- **Teaching is Within Self-Capability**

The parents assessed that teaching self-help to their children was easy since such a task under the new normal was within their ability to perform despite needing to be trained as teachers.

Informant 1 said that teaching life skills to her child is easy and revealed that:

"It's easy for me." (Informant 1)

In addition, Informant 2 explained that teaching self-help skills is very helpful to the child and is easy to do and shared that:

"Nothing. It is okay." (Informant 2)

For Informant 3, using the modules in the current normal teaching and learning setup helped the child's development because the child has something to look forward to accomplishing by staying at home most of the time. She opined that:

"It was okay. It helped very much because (the child) has something to do at home. There's an improvement." (Informant 3)

Moreover, Informant 4 finds it okay to teach self-help skills to her child at home with the help of the modules provided by the teacher. She stressed that:

"I find the module very okay. It is helpful." (Informant 4).

Also, Informant 5 said that with the ongoing community transmission of the COVID-19 virus, the module was of great help in teaching their children practical skills at home. She divulged that:

"It's okay, ma'am. The module is okay at this time compared to face-to-face. It's helpful." (Informant 6).

Likewise, informant 6 expressed the great help of the modules to their teaching at home. She said that:

"Nothing. The module is very okay." (Informant 6).

Informant 7 added the same response to the question on their feelings relating to teaching self-help skills to their child at home. She shared that:

"The module is okay. It's helpful." (Informant 7)

Finally, Informant 10 was also grateful for the modules prepared by the teachers so that the parents could know what the topic was to teach their child. She narrated that:

"It's okay. I will deal with the module when I have nothing else to do." (Informant 10)

Amid the prohibition of face-to-face classes among the learners in the Philippines, the parents were required to teach their children at home using the module as learning materials. The module would also be used as a guide for the parents on the subject matter and how to teach the contents therein. Hence, the parents expressed gratitude for the modular teaching approach to supplement the traditional teaching and learning methodology.

For people with mental retardation to fully engage in the community, they must be able to use recently learned abilities in unfamiliar situations and in response to a variety of demands that come with daily living. A person who has mastered bus riding, for instance, might need to adjust to modifications in bus routes, schedules, or fees. Alternatively, in a fast-food restaurant, an employee who has been trained by a coworker to produce salads will have to continue finishing orders when the coworker is not around. Despite being an implicit educational aim, skill generalization is rarely achieved by instructional methodologies (Schippers *et al.*, 2020). Self-instruction is a strategy that has been effective in promoting the independent performance of people with mental retardation. Self-instruction provides individuals with the means for guiding their behavior in novel situations not associated with training and after assistance has been withdrawn. For example, by using self-instruction, people with mental retardation have learned, among other skills, to sequence.

4.8 Common Themes Emanating from the Perception of Key Participants

This section presents the common themes developed from the narratives of the research participants relating coping mechanisms and feelings out of teaching their children with intellectual disabilities about self-help skills
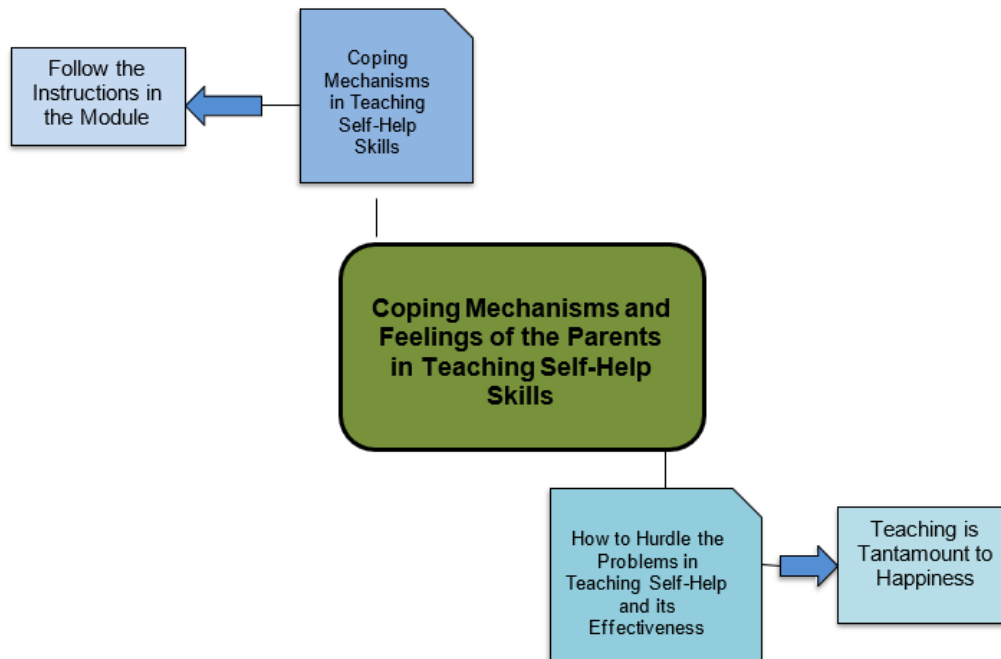
Figure 4: Coping Mechanisms and Feelings of the Parents in Teaching Self-Help Skills

This part of the study shows data regarding the participants' coping mechanisms for teaching their children self-help skills.

The questions asked to the research participants relate to their methods of teaching self-help skills to children despite the challenges.

- **Follow the Instructions in the Module**

To teach the children about daily life activities at home, the parents find solace in following the contents of the modules on the topic to be taught and the procedures for doing the activities. So, the modules extensively guided the parents on the subject per teaching session, even at home.

The last question asked to the research participants related to the feelings or comments received when teaching the child self-help skills.

- **Teaching is Within Self-Capability**

Parents also find teaching practical life skills gratifying. They can perform such tasks easily because the modules made by the teachers guide them, and the topics are easy to comprehend.

5. Findings

Based on the data gathered from the participants, results revealed that the positive experiences of the participants in teaching self-help skills to learners with intellectual disability were summarized in four themes, namely, Provides the Feeling of "Can Do It," Development of Mental Alertness, Enabling the Child to Do Something at Home, and The Experience is Favorable. Three themes emerged regarding the negative experiences: Time Off from Negative Experience, Undesirable Behavioral Manifestations Towards Learning, and Deeper Tolerance. Moreover, two themes emerged for the participants' challenges in teaching self-help skills: Teaching Self-help is not Arduous, and No Comment: No Hardships in Teaching. Finally, the coping mechanisms of the participants had two emerging themes, namely, Follow the instructions in the Module and Teaching is Within Self-Capability.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, there is enough evidence to support the claims that the nature of parents' experiences in teaching self-help skills to their children with intellectual disabilities amid a pandemic in the identified public elementary schools in the Schools Division of Toledo City have considerably higher understanding of what help the teachers could give to parents to address negative experiences of the parents in teaching their children. More specifically, I will communicate with the parents about the ways and techniques of teaching and give the proper strategies based on the training and seminars the teacher has attended and participated in. The same empirical results further disclosed that the diverse profile of the respondents does not correlate with the nature of parents' experiences in teaching self-help skills to children with ID amid the pandemic despite a few problems with students' behavior and interest in learning. These are primarily traced in school in previous school years and now at home under modular delivery mode of learning. However, in general, the respondents- parents are indeed aware and have been informed or explained by teachers about possible problems in teaching self-help skills to children with ID.

7. Implications

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted educational practices worldwide, presenting unprecedented challenges and opportunities, particularly in special education. Among the most affected are learners with intellectual disabilities, whose education heavily relies on hands-on, personalized instruction. A recent qualitative study delves into teachers' experiences with teaching self-help skills to these learners during the pandemic, offering a unique perspective on the adaptations and innovations necessitated by remote and hybrid learning environments. Understanding the

implications of these findings is crucial for school administrators, special education teachers, parents, and researchers, as it highlights the need for tailored resources, collaborative efforts, and ongoing research to enhance the educational experiences and outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities in a post-pandemic world.

8. Implications for Practice

8.1 School Administrators
The study underpins the critical need to invest resources and professional development tailored to special education. Firstly, it highlights the urgent need for comprehensive professional development programs that equip teachers with the skills to deliver remote and hybrid instruction tailored to special education. Administrators should also prioritize integrating advanced technology and digital tools to facilitate interactive and engaging learning experiences for students with intellectual disabilities. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of fostering a collaborative environment where special education teachers can share best practices and innovative strategies. Ensuring robust support systems, such as access to mental health resources and teacher peer support networks, is also critical. Lastly, administrators should advocate for and allocate funding to ensure the sustainability of these initiatives, demonstrating a commitment to the continuous improvement of special education services in response to evolving educational landscapes.

8.2 Special Education Teachers
They gain valuable insights into adaptive teaching methods that can be integrated into their practice, enhancing their ability to support diverse learning needs. Firstly, it emphasizes adopting flexible and creative instructional strategies to effectively engage students in remote and hybrid learning environments. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate multimedia resources, interactive activities, and individualized learning plans that cater to each student's unique needs. The study also highlights the value of ongoing professional development, suggesting that teachers should seek training opportunities to enhance their technological proficiency and adaptive teaching skills. Furthermore, collaboration emerges as a crucial element, with teachers benefiting from regular communication and resource sharing with colleagues, parents, and other stakeholders. Developing strong partnerships with parents is particularly important, as it ensures continuity of learning and reinforcement of self-help skills at home. The study also suggests that teachers should implement regular assessments and feedback mechanisms to monitor student progress and adjust teaching methods accordingly.

8.3 Parents
They are identified as crucial partners in the educational process, with the findings emphasizing the importance of their involvement in reinforcing self-help skills at home.

Firstly, it points to parents' critical role in their child's education, especially in reinforcing self-help skills at home. Parents are encouraged to actively engage in their child's learning process by participating in virtual lessons, practicing skills in daily routines, and providing consistent feedback to teachers about their child's progress and challenges. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of creating a structured and supportive home learning environment. Parents can facilitate this by establishing clear routines, using visual schedules, and providing appropriate materials and resources aligned with the school's curriculum.

Communication with teachers is another critical area, with the study emphasizing the need for regular, open, and collaborative interactions between parents and educators. This ensures parents are informed about their child's goals, progress, and adaptations to the teaching plan.

8.4 Researchers

They are provided with a rich foundation for further investigation into the efficacy of these emergent practices. Firstly, it highlights the need for further exploration into the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of the adaptive teaching strategies employed during this period. Researchers should investigate how these methods impact the overall development and independence of learners with intellectual disabilities over time. Additionally, the study points to the necessity of developing comprehensive frameworks and guidelines for remote and hybrid special education, which can be refined and validated through empirical research. This includes identifying best practices, technological tools, and instructional approaches that can be widely adopted.

8.5 Future Researchers

They are encouraged to conduct longitudinal studies to understand the long-term impacts. This comprehensive understanding is essential for developing robust, inclusive educational strategies that ensure continuity and quality of learning for students with intellectual disabilities, irrespective of future disruptions.

Acknowledgment

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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