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BE POSITIVE: A TOOL KIT OF LONG TERM BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIES IN MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR OF LEARNERS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER



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ABSTRACT

In accordance with the implementation of DepEd Order No. 044, s. 2021, "Policy Guidelines On The Provision Of Educational Programs/And Services For Learners With Disabilities In The K To 12 Basic Education Program, learners with disabilities or LWDs diagnosed or identified to have severe to profound disabilities were placed under the self-contained classes. Based on the enrolment in Biñan Elementary School for School Year 2022-2023, learners with autism disorder got the highest number among the seventy-nine (79) learners of the Special Education Program.

Truly, handling learners with autism spectrum disorder was challenging and one of the domains concerning autism to get their focus in learning is their behavior. Since autism spectrum disorder is a lifelong disorder; not curable yet treatable, the role of a special education teacher is said to be significant to their lifelong journey in learning. So, this Be Positive – an adopted and modified and long -term behavioral strategies in managing challenging behavior of learners with autism spectrum disorder has helped bridge the gap between the struggle of the learners due to their limitations and teachers effectiveness in making a successful learning to happen in the classroom by applying strategies in the implementation of positive and non-violent discipline to ensure learning focused environment as stated in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), Objective 5 of KRA 2 of IPCRF for Proficient Teachers.

As a result, thirty seven (37) learners with ASD has improved in terms of their behavior as reflected in the Evaluation of Learners Behavior Development taken from their Behavior Intervention Report (BIR). There is a positive progress of learner's level of behavior based on the assistance given to them. From maximum assistance to moderate, from moderate assistance to minimum and from minimum to independent. Adoptee and modified behavior strategies and technique that were incorporated in the teacher's Individual Transition Goal Plan (ITP) or Lesson Plan has helped teachers tracked the learners behavior.

Indeed, through the implementation of Be Positive, learner' challenging behavior may be managed with a long-term effect. Verbal prompts and physical cues as the common strategies used by the teacher can be modified in a more positive approach. Teachers as the facilitator of teaching -learning process in the classroom, applying strategies in a positive and non- violent discipline is ensuring the learning focused environment.

Keywords: challenging behavior, autism spectrum disorder, managing, behavioral strategies

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the implementation of DepEd Order No. 044, s. 2021, "Policy Guidelines On The Provision Of Educational Programs/And Services For Learners With Disabilities In The K To 12 Basic Education Program, learners with disabilities or LWDs diagnosed or identified to have severe to profound disabilities are exclusively placed under the self-contained classes. Based on the enrolment in Biñan Elementary School for School Year 2022-2023, learners with autism disorder got the highest number among the seventy-nine (79) learners of the Special Education Program.

Despite the provision of educational services to learners with disabilities, handling learners with autism spectrum disorder became a dilemma to Special Education Teachers because the majority of these learners manifested several challenging behaviors inside the classroom. Challenging behaviors can be disruptive to daily life for individuals with autism. These include, but are not limited to, self-injury, aggression, property destruction, tantrums, disruptiveness, noncompliance, and repetitive behavior/stereotypy.

In fact, during the first week of the implementation of the face-to face classes after the Covid-19 pandemic, special education teachers reported that learners with autism displayed worst challenging behaviors which resulted to a modification of Classroom Schedule from group to one-one session, dyad, and triad because of behavior concerns. Teachers received physical aggression from these learners and dealing with this problem is not possible in a large group of learners.

Moreover, handling learners with autism spectrum disorder is truly challenging and one of the domains concerning autism to get their focus in learning is their behavior. Since autism spectrum disorder is a lifelong disorder; not curable yet treatable, the role of a special education teacher is said to be significant to their lifelong journey in learning. So, this Be Positive – an adopted and modified and long-term behavioral strategies in managing challenging behavior of learners with autism spectrum disorder might be able to bridge

the gap between the struggle of the learners due to their limitations and teachers effectiveness in making a successful learning to happen in the classroom by applying strategies in the implementation of positive and non-violent discipline to ensure learning focused environment as stated in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers(PPST), Objective 5 of KRA 2 of IPCRF for Proficient Teachers.

METHODOLOGY

This action research utilized a descriptive research design to give a description of learners behavior, teaching strategies and their progress. The researcher gathered data from the learners data such Behavior Intervention Report (BIR) Individualized Educational Plan (EIP) and Individual Teachers Plan (ITP).

The researcher involved thirty six (36) enrolled learners with autism spectrum disorder and five (5) special education teachers in Biñan Elementary School S.Y. 2022-2023. These learners are diagnosed by the developmental doctors with autism and are placed under the contained classes of Special Education Program due to their profound and severe disabilities and has a consent from their parents or guardians. The special education teachers are the teachers who are handling classes of learners with autism. They will be selected purposively for the benefit of this study. Prior to the implementation of the study, the researcher seek permission from the School Principal and Public Schools District Supervisor and consent from the participants and their parents or guardians.

Also, Informal and Formal Classroom Observation Report to gather data. Data gathered has been validated by the school rater and approving authority.

RESULTS

Based on the gathered data, the challenging behavior manifested by the learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder are: Disruptive, Manipulative, Aggression towards

self and others, Obsessive, Hyperactive, Rigidity, and Repetitive Behaviors.

Majority of the teachers used verbal prompts as strategy in managing challenging behavior of learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder which signifies that the special education teachers are used apply behavioral strategy with short-term effect which can be helpful in just a short period of time.

Based on the result of the progress monitoring on the learner's behavior after the implementation of Be Positive, a tool kit of long-term behavioral strategies in managing challenging behavior it has been noted that out of thirty seven (37) learners who participated

In this study, three 3 learners or 8% became independent with less assistance to perform in class, thirty-four (34) or 92% performed with minimum assistance which implies that though learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder displayed challenging behavior at first, these behaviors can be managed and modified given an appropriate behavioral strategies.

DISCUSSION

Thirty seven (37) learners with ASD has improved in terms of their behavior as reflected in the Evaluation of Learners Behavior Development taken from their Behavior Intervention Report (BIR). There is a positive progress of learner's level of behavior based on the assistance given to them. From maximum assistance to moderate, from moderate assistance to minimum and from minimum to independent. Adoptee and modified behavior strategies and technique that were incorporated in the teacher's Individual Transition Goal Plan (ITP) or Lesson Plan has helped teachers tracked the learners behavior.

Through the implementation of Be Positive, learner' challenging behavior may be managed with a long-term effect. Verbal prompts and physical cues as the common strategies used by the teacher can be modified in a more positive approach.

Teachers as the facilitator of teaching - learning process in the classroom, applying strategies in a positive and non- violent discipline is ensuring the learning focused environment as stated in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers(PPST), Objective 5 of KRA 2 of IPCRF for Proficient Teachers.

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