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“KLASE” FOR MC: THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SPED CENTERS IN CEBU, PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

For a student, the classroom is an important aspect of learning for it is where most of their learning takes place. The classroom for special children—the mentally challenged—is equally important to look into as to a general education classroom. This study explores the teaching-learning process that takes place in the classroom or “klase” for mentally challenged children of three public school sped centers in Cebu, Philippines: the organization of the classroom, the classroom management, teaching strategies, and problems encountered by the SPED teachers. This is anchored on the dimensions of classroom organization and classroom management theories of B.F. Skinner and Jacob Kounin. Employing the qualitative-descriptive research method through video documentations, it shows that teaching-learning process takes place in the class or “klase” for mentally challenged in the three sped centers, thus revealing the commonalities and differences in the classroom organization. Classroom management includes rules and procedures that need to be followed by the children, and also takes into account positive reinforcement, reward style, and punishment used by the SPED teachers. Teaching

strategies embrace motivations, use of Individual Instruction Plan or IIP for each child and the utilization of an eclectic teaching strategy. Problems encountered in teaching these mentally challenged students involve short time period considering the number of pupils handled, nature of disabilities, tantrums and financial status of these children. This brought to light that classroom organization and classroom management pose a great impact on the learning of these mentally challenged students.

Keywords

Special Education, Teaching-Learning Process, Mentally Challenged, Classroom Organization, Classroom Management, SPED Teachers

1. Introduction

School is the second home of the students. Most of their waking hours outside the house is spent there. And for 200 days of a year the department of education requires them to be in school. Meanwhile, inside the school, their educational activities center in the classroom. It is what the students really see as their “home” in school, as maintains by Bert Creamers (1994). In his book ‘*The Effective Classroom*’, he wrote that [s] students’ well being depends on their class, their classmates, and the teachers, activities within the class and outside the classroom with their classmates.” It is the predominant place in the school where learning and teaching takes place, so that the classroom level is more important for learning and outcomes than other levels in education.

What happens inside the classroom encompasses a convergence of teaching and learning process between the teacher and the students. There are lectures, question and answer and many other varied activities, which has only one objective. That is for students to learn. What is going inside the classroom for special children specifically the mentally challenged is not really apart from the regular classes? Though there are a lot of differences, there are also similarities.

Kirk and Gallagher (2000) maintain that in special education, it often appears necessary to change the learning environment to provide the special curricular skills required to meet students’ special needs. On the other hand, the least restrictive environment principle states that child should only be moved away from the mainstream of education only as far as necessary to meet their needs. The SPED classroom does have differences from the regular classrooms

because of the special needs of the special students, but it also has similarities because of the desire to make the special students experience as much as those experienced by the regular students, learn as much as those learned by the regular students so that they could adapt to the mainstream of society.

Special education is an offspring of the basic philosophy of democratic education that states every individual is valuable in his own right and should be afforded equal opportunities to develop his full potential. According to the Handbook on Special Education, every child even the most severely handicapped should be given equal educational opportunities within the nation's educational system.

Section 1 and 2 of article 1 on Philosophy, Goals and Objectives of the Policies and Guidelines for Special Education say that the state shall promote the right of every individual to relevant quality education regardless of sex, age, creed, socio-economic status, physical and mental condition, social or ethnic group, political or other affiliation. Every learner with special needs has a right to an education program that is suitable to his needs.

As of 2005, SPED program of the Department of Education in the Philippines has reported that in its almost 40 years of existence, 794 SPED Centers have been set-up the country where some 63,000 students with disabilities are currently enrolled.

While UNESCO estimates 6 percent of a country's GDP should be set aside for education, the Philippines allocates a meager 2.53 %. While the World Bank notes that developing countries should spend 20 percent of their budgets for education, the Department of Education allocates only 12 percent of its national outlay.

The lack of funds is more revealed when compared to other countries. The Philippine government allotment of Php6, 354 per student is very small compared to the Php47, 700 per student of Thailand, Php56, 846 of Malaysia, Php123, 200 of the United States, and Php293, 440 of Japan.

In June 2008, the militant Alliance of Concerned Teachers says that 41,905 new classrooms are needed to attain a 1:45 classroom to student ratio. Some regions in the country also reported shortages of books, desks, teachers and pupils who were unable to enroll. And this is only the condition of the regular classes. How worse could be the situation in the special classes?

The National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons reported that in 2001 out of the 32.4 million Filipino children, 2.28 million are disabled or special and only 78,114 disabled children are able to go to school. Only 3.4 percent of special children are able to go to school, and even many of them struggle to keep up in the regular classrooms because of a lack of a SPED Center in their localities.

Besides the government SPED centers, private and non-governmental organizations are also operating SPED schools of their own. But their number is too few to augment the deficiencies of the government program. Under these conditions, the Filipino special student goes to class and tries to learn the skills that will ease his or her transition to mainstream society.

2. Problem and Methodology

This study explores the teaching-learning process in the classroom or “klase” for mentally challenged students of three public school SPED Centers in Cebu, Philippines. Specifically, it looks into the organization of the SPED classroom, the management of the SPED classroom, and the teaching strategies employed by the SPED teachers.

Effective teaching-learning process experience happens through a well-managed and well-organized classroom (Ornstein, 1990). This refers to the dynamics in the SPED classroom including the teachers, the mentally challenged pupils, and the classroom interactions.

Public schools in Cebu, the second busiest city in the Philippines, have made a way to accommodate special children like the mentally challenged to have access to learning like normal children do. Three public school SPED centers were the focus of the study: Zapatera Elementary School SPED Center, Mandaue City Central School SPED Center, and Consolation Central SPED Center.

In order to answer all the questions, video recordings of on-going learning activities, participant observations, and focus interviews with the SPED teachers were done.

3. Organization of SPED Classrooms

Classroom organization refers to the arrangement of the seats of students, the position of the table of the teacher, the size and shape of the classroom, the placement of the educational

materials, equipment, and other decorations in the classroom. But it involves more than this. According to special education book author Tom Smith, et al (1995), there is seven dimensions for an effective classroom organization. These are the physical, psychosocial, instructional, behavioral, procedural, personnel, and time dimensions.

Making sure that these dimensions are present inside SPED classrooms, such as those of the mentally challenged students, would help in coping with their learning disability some of these dimensions as experienced in the classrooms in Zapatera, Mandaue and Consolacion will be discussed.

3.1 Physical Dimension

What immediately catches the eye of a visitor in a SPED classroom is the abundance of educational materials scattered all over the classroom. Mounted on the walls are display boards of numerals, the alphabet, and polite expressions. Below are shelves filled with unarranged activity books, toys, and manipulative. There are also bulletin boards pinned with the students' works. There are also pictures or drawings of children sweeping the floor, watering the plants, and doing other home chores. And the classroom and its displays are painted in very bright colors too! Some classrooms have a mini library while the SPED Center in Consolations even has a media player.

The many educational materials inside the classrooms are very helpful. Delia Minoza, a teacher in Mandaue, says her classroom is filled with bulletin boards so that her students "will have it in their minds because they see it every day; through this way they are learning things such as the numerals, number words and polite expressions." This is one way of familiarizing and if possible memorizing for the intellectually disabled because it is difficult for them to learn.

Leonora Abing of Consolations Central School SPED Center agrees to the importance of classroom arrangement: "It will really affect [the learning of the special students]. Just like our display boards; our lessons are seen on the display boards. They will look at those, especially the autistic pupils, the moment they enter the classroom."

But the SPED teachers think they can still do better with the arrangement of their classrooms. The lack of budget for this is their problem. Virginia Enricosso of Zapatera bewails, "But [my classroom] is not well-arranged. I don't have cabinets, closed cabinets, like the other classrooms... [I have] no budget." In the Philippines, the teachers spend personal money for the

decoration of their classrooms. They do not receive support for the making of the displays from the school administration.

Another factor in a good physical arrangement of the classroom is its size. Enough room space is even more critical for special students because they often adopt the Montessori Method of learning, wherein students learn through hands-on activities and collaborative play. Although special classes have fewer students than regular classes, they need more space for their educational materials and class activities. Zapatera Elementary School SPED Center has a small classroom for its upper primary mentally challenged students. The room is a bit congested. Five medium-sized tables fill the room. Each table crowds four students. To make the seating orderly, each pupil's name is pasted on the space he or she is assigned in the table. The classrooms of the mentally challenged classes in Mandaue and Consolacion are more spacious though.

Sometimes, a big classroom is still not enough because two different levels of students have to share with it. This is necessary because many centers lack enough number of classrooms for all its special education programs. While they are able to segregate the students according to their disabilities: the visually impaired are taught separately from the hearing impaired and intellectually disabled, the different levels of students within each program are often mixed together. Like regular students who have grade levels, high school, special kids also have different levels of ability.

In Mandaue Central School SPED Center, Level 3 and 4 of intellectually disabled students occupy a single classroom. The space is still enough for them though. However, the management of the class is much more difficult because they are just too many in the class. The students often tend to be more unruly.

In order to deal with the lack of classrooms, some schools adopt shifts for their classes. One classroom will each host two sessions: a morning session and an afternoon session. In Consolations, they only have two classrooms assigned for the mentally challenged (MC) program that has four levels, 1, 2, 3, and 4. Each level is assigned a classroom and a session in a day. In classroom a, the morning session is for level 3 pupils and the afternoon time is for level 1. In classroom B, the morning time is for level 4 students and the afternoon session is for level 2. Each class session is for one hour only.

This solution though results to another (although smaller) problem still needs a good time

management because what if the morning and afternoon session in a single classroom caters to different disabilities. Such is the case of Leonora Abing in Consolacion Central School SPED Center.

Abing handles visually impaired (VI) students in the morning and mentally challenged pupils in the afternoon. Although she has freedom to design and structure her own classroom, she cannot arrange it according to what she really wanted. She explains, “With our VI, [the arrangement] should have been like a house, it should have a sala, a workplace, that should be like that for VI... but I did not arrange my room in that way because I have my MC in the afternoon.” Since the two sets of students have different learning disabilities, they have different means of learning. The visually impaired needed patterns to make their familiarization and memorization easier, while the mentally challenged requires a lot of visuals and manipulative between the two, the MC has more difficulty in learning so their needs were prioritized by Abing in the classroom arrangement.

3.2 Psychosocial Dimension

An important factor in the organization of the classroom is the establishment of the authority of the teacher. In a regular class, the teacher’s leadership is rarely challenged and most often obeyed, but in a mentally challenged class this is not automatically established. The authority recognized by the intellectually disabled has to expand from his parents and family to the teacher. With the help of the parents, who at the initial stages of the class of their children join them in school, the SPED teacher slowly earns the respect and obedience of the students. In all the three schools, Zapatera et al., SPED Centers, the teachers of mentally challenged classes were able to establish their authority. However, some conditions limit the rapport they have established with the children. One of these is the big number of students they have to teach and to supervise.

While the number of students is a concern in classroom management, it is also a fundamental criterion for a well-organized classroom. The ideal number should be small, preferably not more than ten for a mentally challenged class. In Consolations, Abing is doing okay. She has 41 mentally challenged pupils. But these pupils are divided into different sessions according to their levels. In each of her class session, she has only between 7 to 10 pupils.

However, Mandau is not as fortunate. Due to lack of classrooms, the administration is

forced to combine two intellectually disabled levels. Levels 3 and 4 classes shared only one classroom and are taught together in a single session. The class becomes more unruly than expected because there are just too many in the class. And there is only one teacher to deal with all of them. The result is a breakdown in the teacher's authority. To cope up with this, parents are asked to accompany their children. Among level 1 student, a parent or guardian stays with them throughout the session.

On the other hand, a teacher's authority is easily set and maintained in a smaller class size. One way of encouraging this is through the seating arrangement. With a small class and a big enough room, a teacher will have a bigger leeway to set and arrange the tables and chairs that favors her management style.

Grouping the students around tables instead of individual armchairs is favorable to group interaction. However, it removes the teacher away from the direct sight of the students. The Zapatera upper primary class of mentally challenged students has this arrangement. Their class is filled with five tables, and each table sets four students. To make her presence felt, Virginia Enrico positions her table in front of the class where she conducts the lectures and discussions. She shares, "I see to it that I have a table in front where I can place my things like when you do your motivation. You can easily get it there rather than get it from my teacher table at the corner."

A much smaller class is even much better. In Consolation, they arranged the pupils in a U-shaped table with the teacher sitting at a smaller table at the head of the U. This way she can easily maintain eye contact with each student, and calls on them one by one to answer activities on the board. This arrangement suits a small class of more or less ten students.

3.3 Personnel Dimension

The problem of setting and maintaining teacher's authority is just an effect of the personnel problem in the Philippine public school system—both regular schools and SPED centers. Because of the lack of financial support from the government, it resulted to lack of classrooms and teachers. If only there would have been more teachers, then there would have been small class sizes. But the reality is that teachers are few, and classes are big.

In the United States, which is the favorite destination of the exodus of SPED teachers of the Philippines, they do not only have small classes but they also have more teachers in a class.

Besides the main teacher, they have teaching assistants. As Virginia Enricosso laments, "...Unlike in the US, they have assistants, if you do this group activity or group sessions for example, circle time, you have to do the activity which all of them can benefit.... Each one has to be assisted but here, no one will assist you because you're the only one handling and when you are the only one teaching this child, the other children will misbehave."

Since the Philippine schools are not as well funded as those of the United States and other developed countries, it makes use of other resources. Once in a while, for a few months, the SPED teacher is blessed with some help, a teaching assistant of her own. They come in the form of interns or practicum students studying also to become SPED teachers. Although they still lack the expertise and experience of a professional teacher, they make it up with their enthusiasm. Most of them are very eager to apply what they have learned from their studies. Others too are trying to make an impression among the SPED teacher who stands as their supervisor during the internship.

In Mandau City, a couple of practicum students from Cebu Technological University were trying in earnest to manage a combined class of levels 3 and 4 mentally challenged students. Their lesson was about 'This is' and 'these are' and they carried this out through an activity with a prize to whoever gives the correct answer. However, there were just too many students for that class so they had a hard time. The kids became a bit unruly.

4. Management of SPED Classrooms

Once the SPED teacher has organized his or her class and classroom, the next task will be to manage it. Classroom management includes all teacher-directed activities that support the efficient operation of the classroom and establish optimal conditions of learning and order (Smith, et al, 1995). It involves rules and procedures that the students need to follow, and the ways to manage the behaviors of the learners.

B.F. Skinner's theory of classroom management is based on operant conditioning and reinforcement schedules. He believes that education enjoyable and effective for all students and the best way to modify behavior was to modify the environment.

On the other hand, Jacob Konini, another proponent of classroom management, believed that how a teacher handled one student's misbehavior influences the other students who were not

misbehaving. This effect is known as the “Ripple Effect”. His theory is based around the teacher’s ability to organize and plan in their classrooms while using proactive behavior and high student involvement.

And just like in the organization of the classroom, it takes a little bit more management effort and strategies to manage a class of mentally challenged students.

4.1 Sequence of Classes

Like regular classes, SPED classes follow a program or sequence in proceeding with their classes. They also start their class with some cleaning and arranging of the classroom. The class roll calling of names is also done to check their attendance and to call their attention. The lessons follow, though these are individualized to suit each student.

In Zapatera SPED Center, Enricosso begins her class with mentally challenged children with a prayer—and they have to kneel down for the prayers. After, they all have to do some cleaning. The students mop and sweep the floor, clean the windows, and fetch water for the plants. She teaches them chores so that they can use it for their daily living. Although, she also admits that she asks the children to clean because if not “she will become the teacher, the janitress and everything” In Philippine public schools, this is a common practice. The students clean their classrooms and the surrounding areas because there aren’t enough janitorial personnel to take care of the whole school. This is another effect of the lack of finances of public schools.

4.2 Rules Established Patterns

A myriad of rules governs a mentally challenged class. This makes it easier for these intellectually limited students to make sense of the activities inside their classroom. An orderly class results to less stress on them. SPED teachers orient their students about these rules at the beginning of classes, post pictures depicting these in the bulletin boards inside the classrooms, and remind them of these every day. There is a need for constant reminders because the MC students easily forget, says Abing of Consolacion SPED Center.

In Consolacion, they have many classroom rules: Don’t be late, don’t be absent, be friendly all the time, don’t quarrel your classmates, Do your lessons and activities. In Zapatera, the children are required to eat in the class dining table. This is situated in one section of the classroom. They must also get their own plates and wash it after eating.

Mandaue Central School SPED Center has a creative way of enforcing these rules. In the

beginning of every school year, the teacher, her MC pupils, and their parents enter into a contract on the rules and procedures inside the classroom. After discussing it together, they all sign the contract. Some of the rules in the contract are: “While the lessons are in progress, speak or talk only when asked or permitted to do so; speak or talk in a moderate volume of voice and do not to shout for attention; refrain from getting the things of your classmates without their permission....”

4.3 Managing Disruptive Behavior

A big headache for the teacher of mentally challenged students is keeping the class in order and not so noisy. Disruptive behavior is a daily challenge. Managing it greatly contributes to the learning in the classroom. Although there are generic steps on dealing with this, teachers employ different techniques.

For Virginia Enricoso of Zapatera, what management technique to employ depends on the mood of the child and the situation? Like with her AD/HD pupils in her morning session, she remarks, “You have to apply all approaches and management techniques. They are really disruptive. Attention seeker... they will do something to get your attention.” It distracts both the class and the teacher. She says most of the children who are disruptive are AD/HD. One way of dealing with this is through positive reinforcement/reward style.

The positive reinforcement/reward style is also being employed in Mandaue SPED Center. Their MC class was having a lesson on ‘this is’ and ‘these are’. During the lesson, the teacher held a question and answer activity. The students wrote the answers in the board. Then prizes or rewards were given to those who gave the right answer.

However, this style does not always work. As Enricoso experienced, when the children are used to it already, they will not behave anymore. That time, she has to show her students a very strict face. Sometimes you have to be mad, she says. If you really get irate; if they see that you are very mad, then they will behave.

When asked if there is corporal punishment, she admits: “Sometimes, you can’t get rid of it.... When you are really angry. But it should not be too much.” But she reflects that it is not really right to do that because “...the harder you are to these children, the more they are furious, they will not learn and they will hate you.” Managing the behavior of these children is very important so that they will be mainstreamed if not totally be included in the regular classroom,

explains by her. “How to include the child starts here in special education. In a self-contained classroom, you cannot include the child among regular students if the child cannot behave,” she adds.

The contract employed by the teachers in Mandaue SPED Center is also used in combination with punishment. Despite the contract, the children will still display some disruptive behaviors. First, she makes use of reinforcement and rewards. If worse comes to worst, she also uses punishment. But she reasons out, “I do believe that when some people hear about punishment they will disagree right away. What they are thinking about punishment, what they have in their minds is corporal punishment, but there are many kinds of punishment that are not of the physical type.” If a child gravely violates a rule in the contract, Minoza reminds the child of this. She explains to him the reason why he will be punished. After that “they will understand, follow instructions and behave.”

For Abing, managing the tantrum of a child is sometimes done just by letting them be. She narrates this story: “One time we have a child who was having tantrums. I just left him alone. Even if he wants to cry, wants to roam around, and complains, I was still talking to him. I said, ‘Darling, if you are not upset anymore, you sit down here.’” She has observed that these children will eventually go back to their seats. What is much harder to deal is when the child that has tantrums is epileptic because it leads to seizures. She laments, “Our class will really be disturbed. We will move the chairs and tables to the side to give space to the child with seizure. It is so pitiful. Our focus will be the child with tantrums. It takes 30 minutes for him to calm down.” The session becomes so distracted that the class will be dismissed and the children have to go home early when that happens.

4.4 Improvements in the Child

With patience, the SPED teachers’ efforts in classroom management pay out. The children will really display differences from that day when they started attending classes; improvements will be evident in their behaviors.

In Consolacion SPED Center, the children who at the beginning of classes will not sit down, who will just roam around and will just go home right away have displayed positive improvements. A few months later they will already sit down, will trace and color, and will perform the activities. Many children who were disruptive and off-tasked before are becoming

better learners. Some of them are the SPED center's athletes during Special Olympics. Abing opines, "There are really changes. It's really different when the child goes to school although they are special.... Once the behavior of our MC is changed, we can start teaching them. We have a child who goes to school before, the moment she arrives, she will remove her shoes, her skirt, and then she will climb on top of the table and lie down. But now she has changed already. Once the behavior of the MC is changed, it would be very nice [to start teaching them]."

The same is also experienced by the teachers in Mandaue. Through SPED classes, the children have shown improvements like their behavior. As Minoza relates, "In the beginning if they don't have attention, little by little they will improve from one minute to 30 minutes up to the whole day. They can already stay 6 hours inside the classroom."

5. Teaching Strategies in SPED Classrooms

Different folks, different strokes Different teachers, different teaching strategies employed so that the mentally challenged children would learn their lesson. Teaching strategies refers to the techniques used by teachers in carrying out the subject matter for their students. Teaching strategies for mentally challenged students are not that different to the regular students, but often the techniques used are for the younger kids.

5.1 Motivating the Students

Motivation is the foremost teaching strategy. This is truer in the case of the mentally challenged students. They are harder to motivate than regular students so the teachers' success here determines the next steps she employs in the class.

In Zapatera, from the beginning of class in the morning, Enricoso already utilizes techniques to motivate her students. She shares that the first thing they do at the start of the class is "here, we usually pray and we kneel, that's how we pray here." To motivate her pupils, she uses pictures about the lessons and the class sings songs related to the subject matter for that day.

It seems that prayers are reliable starters of any class because most teachers use this. Songs are effective too. There are also other activities done to lead the way for the lessons later. In Mandaue City Central School Sped Center, the first thing levels 3 and 4 intellectually disabled children do at the start of the class is opening prayers, then health check-up, then name roll call. After that, they will proceed to the morning activities.

For Minoza, the other ways of motivating her pupils in Mandaue are "...to encourage them to go to school every day, to attend activities in school like joining a sport so that they can be participants of [competitions] like Special Olympics."

Singing songs, telling stories—these are some of the motivating ways employed by Leonora Abing of Consolacion to her MC pupils. But she asserts that the best motivation is "that you should greet them even though they are still on the door, greet them 'Hi!' the moment they arrive, individualized, you should greet them one by one so that you will catch their attention." There are some children who will just go home if they are not greeted by her. Also, this is one way of showing that you love them, as Abing shares.

5.2 Eclectic Teaching Strategy

When asked what her specific strategy in teaching these children is, Enricoso of Zapatera says, "You have to use an eclectic combination of one or two or many strategies depending on the child..." Eclectic strategy of teaching incorporates different or various teaching methods that will suit the needs of these mentally challenged children. This include lecture, board task, oral participation, group work, cooperative learning to mention a few.

In her classroom in Mandaue, Minoza also adopts an eclectic method. She maintains that there is no specific strategy she is using. In her own words: "For me, I am using my natural way of teaching. If you will ask me to define natural way of teaching, it's a mix of what I've learned on many kinds, different kinds of teaching strategies." But she adds that what strategy to use really depends on the ability of the learners.

Abing also teaches through a combination of strategies and techniques in her Consolation classroom.

5.3 Modification of Lessons and Individualized Instruction

Because Enricoso has taught in the regular class, she can compare how it is teaching in the regular to that in the special education. The big difference according to her is that in regular class, they are normal children. She claims, "You don't have to modify your activities including the way you deliver." The pace and the subject matter in the regular class are also distinct to that in SPED. In a regular class, the pace and the subject matter relies more on the lesson plan, while in SPED it depends on the capacity of the students. As she explains, "Usually in a SPED class, you have building goals and discussions, speak English and translate it in dialect."

The SPED teacher in Mandaue has a similar experience because she has also once taught in the regular class prior to teaching in SPED. She affirms that there is a difference between the two; it's the curriculum because "we are using the different kind of curriculum; we are using the different kind, the modified, the special curriculum." The learning areas she is teaching cover the academics, modified subjects like vocational skills, motor and recreational skills, social competence, and also writing.

Modification of lessons is a trait of the individualized programs used in special education. The Zapatera SPED Center uses an IIP or Individualized Instruction Plan. Based on the experienced of SPED teachers, an individualized program is suited to the special learners. Abingclaims that "the best for my visually impaired and mentally challenged students is individualized instruction" Because, she explains, in the individualized instruction, each child is given an activity, one on one approach. "[T] They are more comfortable if this is the one we will be using; they will feel that they are loved by the teacher. In that time, you can touch the children, you can go near at them and you can talk to each of them.

6. Conclusion

Teaching-learning process takes place in the "klase" for mentally challenged in the three public schools SPED centers in Cebu, Philippines. Classroom organization and classroom management pose a great impact on the learning of these mentally challenged students. Also, SPED teachers are key persons in improving the lives of these children despite the disabilities these children have. How they are taught, what strategies to be used, what educational materials to be utilized are very crucial in the learning of these special learners. Although problems arise, teachers think of creative ways to address all these in order to meet the needs of their mentally challenged students.

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