

# Exploring The Attitudes and Perceptions of Bachelor of Special Needs Education (Bsned) Students Toward Their Future Careers at Libacao College of Science and Technology (Lcst)

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## Abstract

This study aimed to examine the attitudes and perceptions of Bachelor of Special Needs Education (BSNEd) students at Libacao College of Science and Technology toward their future careers in the field of special education. As the demand for inclusive education grows, understanding how future educators view their roles is critical to workforce development and educational equity. Specifically, the research sought to identify the factors influencing students' career choices, their awareness of the challenges and rewards associated with teaching learners with special needs, and the impact of their academic preparation on professional expectations. A descriptive research design was utilized, involving a census of all 16 enrolled BSNEd students. Data were collected using a validated, structured questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive statistics, including frequencies and measures of central tendency. The results showed that participants were relatively young, with a mean age of 22.31 years, predominantly female, and mostly from a medium socioeconomic background, with the majority practicing the Catholic faith. Students expressed strong enthusiasm for special education and a shared belief in its rewards, while also unanimously acknowledging the need for more resources and community support. Emotional challenges associated with the profession were highly recognized, and students perceived a growing demand for special education professionals, reflecting a generally optimistic career outlook. The findings highlighted the need for increased support systems, responsive training, and targeted policy attention to sustain and motivate future special education teachers. This study is relevant to ongoing discussions in teacher education, inclusion, and professional preparation in special education.

**Keywords:** Special Education, Career Perceptions, and Educational Support.

## Introduction

Education plays a vital role in shaping individuals and communities, and for over two decades, the Libacao College of Science and Technology (LCST) has been contributing to this mission by providing accessible tertiary education. Located in the town proper, LCST offers baccalaureate programs such as the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM), Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology (BSIT), and Bachelor of Special Needs Education (BSNEd). With fewer than 700 students, the college is funded by the Libacao Local Government Unit, ensuring that students receive affordable, quality education. Its campus is easily accessible, located just a 1.5-hour bus ride or 40

minutes by private vehicle from Kalibo, the provincial capital. LCST was founded in 2001 by Municipal Mayor Charito I. Navarosa, who ran on a platform focused on "Peace and security, the foundation of progress." During his administration, Mayor Navarosa emphasized the importance of restoring law and order, enhancing the justice system, enforcing laws, fighting poverty, and improving access to education. LCST was established with the aim of offering free tertiary education to residents of Libacao and neighboring municipalities. The college provides a range of programs, including the Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology (BSIT) with specializations in Food Services Management, Automotive Technology, and Garment and Fashion Design.

ion Design, as well as the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) and the Bachelor of Special Needs Education (BSNEd).

The Bachelor of Special Needs Education (BSNEd) program at Libacao College of Science and Technology (LCST) is a flagship undergraduate degree designed to prepare students to effectively teach and manage students with diverse learning needs in both inclusive and specialized settings. Graduates are equipped to teach basic education curricula or alternative programs tailored to individual needs and are eligible to teach in both regular and special education schools after passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Beyond teaching, BSNEd graduates have opportunities to pursue careers as learning disabilities specialists, academic advisors, therapists, intervention specialists, curriculum developers, researchers, college professors, administrators, and even opportunities abroad (UPH, n.d.). This field, requiring empathy, expertise, and dedication, presents both challenges and rewards. At LCST, students in the BSNEd program follow a rigorous curriculum that prepares them for careers in special education and inclusive teaching. Despite the growing demand for special education professionals, the attitudes and perceptions of BSNEd students regarding their future careers remain largely unexplored. Understanding these students' views on their future roles, anticipated challenges, and career influences is crucial for designing programs that enhance engagement, career readiness, and professional satisfaction. The BSNEd program aims to build a strong foundation of theoretical and practical knowledge, empowering students to teach effectively in diverse learning environments while fostering an inclusive and supportive classroom. The program also emphasizes collaborative skills, encouraging students to work with families, colleagues, and interdisciplinary teams, while promoting innovative thinking to meet the individual needs of students. Through the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, the program equips students to advocate for the rights of individuals with disabilities and address challenges in inclusive education. Additionally, the program instills a commitment to advocacy, equity, community engagement, and lifelong learning to keep students abreast of emerging trends and best practices in the field (TUA, n.d.).

Identifying the demographics of students pursuing the BSNEd degree is crucial, encompassing factors such as age, gender, race and ethnicity, relationship status, number of children, employment status, income, education, political affiliation, religious affiliation, and industry. Demographics, as explained by the Indeed Editorial Team, refer to the various characteristics of a population, including race, sex, and age, that are studied to understand trends within a group. Socioeconomic status (SES), according to the NIH (n.d.), categorizes individuals based on their education, income, and occupation, generally classified into low, medium, and high levels [1]. Those with low SES often face limited access to resources, while individuals with medium SES experience moderate financial stability and steady employment. In contrast, high SES individuals enjoy significant financial resources, as well as access to quality education and healthcare. Understanding personal traits is also key to comprehending students' behavior, with the five-factor model of personality offering insight. As defined by Darby (2023), the model includes extraversion, agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism. Extraversion, described by Barowski, involves so-

ciability, energy, and assertiveness, with extraverted individuals being approachable and energetic, thriving in social settings, and seeking gratification through interaction [2]. These individuals may dominate conversations, engage in attention-seeking behaviors, and struggle with solitude as they derive happiness from external social experiences. Agreeableness, as explained by Darby, is characterized by empathy and cooperativeness, leading individuals to prioritize others' needs and seek harmony [3]. Those with high agreeableness are more likely to help others and enjoy working in collaborative environments. Crystal (2024) defines openness as the trait that reflects a person's creativity, imagination, and willingness to consider new ideas, with individuals high in openness being more adaptable to change. Psychology Today elaborates on conscientiousness, a trait associated with responsibility, organization, and goal-directed behavior, although it can sometimes lead to rigidity [4]. Lastly, neuroticism, noted by Kendra (2023), involves emotional instability, mood swings, and a tendency toward anxiety, stress, and self-doubt. Additionally, Lopez-Garrido highlights Rotter's Locus of Control theory, which examines how individuals perceive their control over their actions, ranging from "high internal" to "high external" control [5].

Cherry refers attitude as a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviors directed toward a particular object, person, event, or idea, often influencing how we evaluate and respond to them, either positively or negatively [6]. It encompasses our thoughts, feelings, and actions in a given situation and is shaped by a combination of life experiences, upbringing, education, and social influences. The research study of Singh revealed that the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education was moderate to a favorable level [7]. Pre-service and urban teachers had a more positive/favorable attitude towards inclusive education than the attitude of In-service and rural teachers, respectively. In contrast, there was no significant difference between the attitude of male and female teachers towards inclusive education. The findings in the study of Alnahdi indicated that student-teachers tend to have positive attitudes towards teaching and a strong interest in special education [8]. However, a significant portion of participants reported that they did not intend to pursue teaching as a lifelong career, while others admitted they selected the special education major despite it not being their preferred field. His analysis revealed that female preservice special education teachers were particularly likely to show both a keen interest in the field and a positive attitude towards teaching. This study carries important implications for the preparation of special education teachers, especially in Saudi Arabia and comparable countries. The Indeed Editorial Team stated that studying special education provides candidates with invaluable teaching and life skills that are applicable in both professional and personal settings [9]. Learning to collaborate with students with disabilities equips individuals to work effectively with others in various situations. These skills, developed through special education training, can benefit individuals not only in the education sector but also in other fields such as healthcare, business, or law, should they choose to pursue them. Special education teachers and professionals play a vital role in supporting students with disabilities, ensuring they receive the services they need to succeed in educational settings. They empower students to develop essential skills, engage with new ideas, build meaningful relationships, explore personal interests, and plan for their futures. As a teacher, you serve a critical func-

tion in society, guiding individuals to interact effectively with others and lead fulfilling, successful lives. Working in this field offers the chance to make a real difference, helping individuals thrive both within the classroom and beyond. The opportunity to directly impact people's lives makes this an incredibly rewarding and meaningful career choice for many. The analysis of the research study of indicates that the faculty members consistently demonstrate an egalitarian approach, emphasizing fairness and equality in their interactions with students [10]. Furthermore, they exhibit sensitivity to the unique challenges faced by students with special needs, showing empathy and understanding in their responses. The data highlights that faculty members take responsibility for supporting these students, recognizing the importance of accountability in fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment. The findings suggest that university faculty hold positive and proactive attitudes toward students with special needs, demonstrating a strong commitment to their academic and personal growth. Soeharto et al. showed in their study that there are no significant differences across dimensions such as gender, age, and teaching experience [11]. However, significant differences were observed in attitudes toward inclusive education and teaching for creativity based on university type, with the exception of dimensions related to children's rights, teacher workload, and student potential. Pearson correlation analysis revealed both positive and negative correlations between attitudes toward inclusive education and teaching for creativity. Additionally, multiple linear regression analysis using the Stepwise method indicated that at least two dimensions of teaching for creativity significantly influenced teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education.

InfoScipedia (n.d.) explained that perception refers to the subjective cognitive, emotional, and attitudinal beliefs educators hold about their professional roles, teaching practices, and the educational environment, which can influence their decision-making and interactions with students, colleagues, and administrators [12]. Elmosaad concluded in his research study that school teachers in Saudi Arabia demonstrated a commendable level of knowledge and held a positive perception regarding school environment practices [13]. The study findings indicate that teachers who possess a positive perception and a good level of knowledge are more inclined to harbor positive perceptions toward student practices that contribute to enhancing the school environment. Therefore, it is advisable to incorporate school environment components into the school curriculum and integrate them into teacher preparation programs. Alabdallat mentioned in his study that special education teachers expressed a more favorable attitude toward inclusion than did general education teachers [14]. The current situation's implications were explored with an emphasis on the necessity for additional shared practical activities among teachers. The findings indicated in the research study of that teachers had little knowledge of inclusive education [15]. It also revealed that classroom teachers were not adequately prepared towards the implementation of inclusive education. Lambe and Bones found that while many student teachers express support for inclusive policies, they identify several key issues that need to be addressed in initial teacher education (ITE) before implementing the planned radical changes [16]. These concerns include inadequate preparation, challenges related to class size, lack of resources, difficulties in managing other adults in the classroom, and the increasing number of students with

diverse special educational needs.

This study aims to explore the attitudes and perceptions of Bachelor of Special Needs Education (BSNED) students at Libacao College of Science and Technology toward their future careers. As special education continues to gain importance in addressing the needs of students with disabilities, it is crucial to understand how prospective educators view their future roles in the field. The study seeks to identify factors that influence these students' career intentions, their understanding of the challenges and rewards of teaching special needs students, and the impact of their academic training on shaping their career expectations. By examining the attitudes and perceptions of BSNED students, this research aims to provide insights into how to better prepare future educators for the demands of special education. This study holds significant value in both academic and practical terms. By exploring the attitudes and perceptions of BSNED students, the research can inform the development of educational programs and policies aimed at improving the quality of special education training. Understanding the factors that shape students' career aspirations can help identify areas where further support, training, or resources are needed to prepare them for the challenges of teaching students with disabilities. Additionally, the findings can contribute to enhancing teacher retention in the field by addressing concerns and expectations early in their academic careers. This research is particularly important for institutions like Libacao College of Science and Technology, as it can guide future curriculum development and teaching strategies, ensuring they align with the evolving needs of students and the special education profession. While this study provides valuable insights into the attitudes and perceptions of BSNED students, it is not without limitations. First, the study is limited to a specific cohort of students from Libacao College of Science and Technology, which may not be representative of BSNED students in other regions or institutions. This limits the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study focuses solely on students' attitudes and perceptions, which may not fully capture the complexity of their career decisions or the external factors influencing them. The research also does not examine the long-term impact of these attitudes on actual career choices once student's graduate. Finally, the study relies on self-reported data, which can be subject to biases such as social desirability or lack of self-awareness among participants.

### Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research design for it accurately and systematically describes a population, situation or phenomenon, and an appropriate choice when the research aim is to identify characteristics, frequencies, trends, and categories to provide a comprehensive understanding of BSNED students' attitudes and perceptions [17]. The quantitative component involved a structured survey designed to assess students' attitudes toward special education, their career aspirations, and factors influencing their career choices. The survey will include Likert-scale items to measure students' level of agreement with statements related to their views on special education as a profession. It is a rating scale used to measure opinions, attitudes, or behaviors Respondents choose the option that best corresponds with how they feel about the statement or question [18]. Since there were handful of BSNEd students, it was deemed to include all the students in the study, meaning, a complete enumeration,

which means a complete count [19].

This study employed quantitative data collection, which involves gathering numerical data to provide measurable consumer insights, typically through surveys with a large sample size to ensure statistically reliable results that can be generalized to a broader population. Data were primarily collected through validated questionnaire set, featuring rating matrices and other quantitative question types [20]. The questionnaire set was developed based on a review of related literature, with demographic questions adapted from the Indeed Editorial Team (2022), personality traits based on Darby (2023), the locus of control (LOC) using a modified version of Rotter's scale from Lopez-Garrido, and family structure information from [21]. The collected data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in tables to summarize the findings and offer clear, actionable insights. The attitude of student-teachers toward their career in special education was drawn from the works of Cherry, Singh, Alnahdi, the Indeed Editorial Team, Ignacio & Allit, and Soeharto et al., while the perception of student-teachers was based on information from InfoScipedia (n.d.), Elmosaad, Alabdallat, Mprah et al., and Lambe and Bones. The data were analyzed using the measures of central tendency Bhandari specified that ethical considerations are crucial in this study to ensure the integrity of the research process and the protection of participants' rights [22].

Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, ensuring they are fully aware of the study's purpose, procedures,

potential risks, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Confidentiality will be maintained by anonymizing participant data and securely storing all responses, ensuring that personal information is not disclosed without consent. Additionally, the study will adhere to the principles of respect, fairness, and transparency, ensuring that participants' opinions are valued and accurately represented. The research will also aim to avoid any harm or discomfort to participants, ensuring that their involvement does not negatively impact their academic standing or future career prospects. By addressing these ethical concerns, the study seeks to uphold high standards of research integrity and protect the well-being of all participant.

### Discussion and Analysis

The data in Table 1 present the distribution of 16 students according to their ages, ranging from 20 to 25 years old. The most common ages among the students are 20 and 24, each with a frequency of four, indicating that these age groups have the highest number of students. Meanwhile, ages 21 and 25 have the lowest representation, with only one student each. The calculated mean age is 22.31 years, suggesting that the overall group is slightly younger than 23. This average reflects a fairly balanced distribution, although a modest concentration appears around the early twenties. The data shows a relatively narrow age range, with most students clustered between 22 and 24 years old, which may imply a similar academic year level or cohort. Overall, the age distribution is moderately symmetrical, with a slight lean toward the younger side.

**Table 1:** Distribution of Students as to Age

| Age  | f = 16 | $\Sigma$ |
|------|--------|----------|
| 20   | 4      | 80       |
| 21   | 1      | 21       |
| 22   | 3      | 66       |
| 23   | 3      | 69       |
| 24   | 4      | 96       |
| 25   | 1      | 25       |
| Mean |        | 22.31    |

The data in Table 2 shows the distribution of 16 students according to their sex. The majority of the students are female, accounting for 14 out of the 16 individuals, which represents 87.50% of the total population. In contrast, only 2 students are male, making up just 12.50%. This indicates a significant gender imbalance within the group, with females being the dominant

demographic. The disparity suggests that the group or program these students belong to may attract more female participants, possibly due to the nature of the course, field of study, or institutional factors. Overall, the distribution highlights a lack of gender diversity among the students surveyed.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Students as to Sex

| Sex    | f = 16 | Percentage |
|--------|--------|------------|
| Female | 14     | 87.50      |
| Male   | 2      | 12.50      |
| Total  |        | 100.00     |

Table 3 presents the distribution of students based on their civil status, with a total of 16 individuals included in the data. The overwhelming majority of the students, 15 out of 16 or 93.75%, are single, while only one student, representing 6.25%, is married. This suggests that most of the students are likely in an age group or life stage where marriage is less common, possibly in-

dicating that they are focused on their education or early in their academic and professional journeys. The data reflects a homogenous civil status profile, with single students dominating the group, which may also influence the group's social dynamics, responsibilities, and availability for academic-related activities.

**Table 3:** Distribution of Students as to Civil Status

| Sex     | f = 16 | Percentage |
|---------|--------|------------|
| Single  | 15     | 93.75      |
| Married | 1      | 6.25       |
|         | Total  | 100.00     |

Table 4 shows the distribution of students according to their socioeconomic status, based on a total of 16 individuals. The majority of students, 11 or 68.75%, fall under the medium socioeconomic level, indicating that most come from families with moderate income and access to basic resources. Meanwhile, 5 students, accounting for 31.25%, are classified under the low socioeconomic level. Notably, no students are recorded under the high socioeconomic category, suggesting an absence of individ-

uals from more affluent backgrounds in this group. This distribution implies that the student population largely comes from average to financially constrained households, which could influence their access to educational resources, learning opportunities, and overall academic performance. The data highlights the potential need for continued support or interventions aimed at assisting students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

**Table 4:** Distribution of Students as to Socioeconomic Status

| Level  | f = 16 | Percentage |
|--------|--------|------------|
| Low    | 5      | 31.25      |
| Medium | 11     | 68.75      |
| High   |        |            |
|        | Total  | 100.00     |

Table 5 presents the distribution of students based on their ethnic background, with a total of 16 individuals. The data reveals that a slight majority of the students, 9 or 56.25%, identify as Aklanon-Bukidnon, while the remaining 7 students, representing 43.75%, are Aklanon. Notably, there are no students identified as Capiznon in the group. This indicates that the student population is composed entirely of individuals with Aklanon roots, either

solely or in combination with Bukidnon heritage. The absence of ethnic diversity beyond these two backgrounds suggests a relatively homogenous cultural composition, which may reflect the regional demographics of the area or the specific community from which the students were drawn. Such a distribution can have implications for language use, cultural practices, and inclusivity within the educational setting.

**Table 5:** Distribution of Students as to Ethnic Background

| Ethnicity        | f = 16 | Percentage |
|------------------|--------|------------|
| Aklanon          | 7      | 43.75      |
| Aklanon-Bukidnon | 9      | 56.25      |
| Capiznon         |        |            |
|                  | Total  | 100.00     |

Table 6 shows the distribution of students according to their religious affiliation, based on a total of 16 individuals. The majority of the students, 12 or 75%, identify as Catholics, indicating that Roman Catholicism is the dominant religion among the group. Two students, or 12.5%, identify as Christian (non-denominational or unspecified), while the Church of Christ and Baptist faiths are each represented by one student, accounting for 6.25%

each. This data highlights a strong Catholic presence, which may reflect the broader religious demographics of the region. The remaining students belong to other Christian denominations, suggesting some level of religious diversity within the group, though limited. The predominance of Catholic students may influence religious activities, celebrations, and values within the educational environment.

**Table 6:** Distribution of Students as to Religious Affiliation

| Religion         | f = 16 | Percentage |
|------------------|--------|------------|
| Catholics        | 12     | 75.00      |
| Church of Christ | 1      | 6.25       |
| Christian        | 2      | 12.50      |
| Baptist          | 1      | 6.25       |
|                  | Total  | 100.00     |

Table 7 presents the distribution of students based on personal factors, with a total of 16 individuals categorized according to five personality traits. The most commonly observed trait is Extraversion, found in 5 students or 31.25% of the group, suggesting that a significant portion of the students tend to be outgoing, energetic, and socially engaged. Agreeableness is the least repre-

sented trait, with only 2 students or 12.50%, indicating fewer individuals who are naturally cooperative, compassionate, or trusting. The traits of Openness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism are evenly distributed, each present in 3 students or 18.75%. This balanced representation suggests a diverse range of personality types in the group, which may contribute to varied learning

styles, communication patterns, and group dynamics. Overall, the data reflects a personality landscape where extraverted traits are more dominant, while the presence of other traits in small-

er but nearly equal proportions indicates a multifaceted student population.

**Table 7:** Distribution of Students as to Personal Factors

| Personal factors  | f = 16 | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------|------------|
| Extraversion      | 5      | 31.25      |
| Agreeableness     | 2      | 12.50      |
| Openness          | 3      | 18.75      |
| Conscientiousness | 3      | 18.75      |
| Neuroticism       | 3      | 18.75      |
|                   | Total  | 100.00     |

Table 8 presents the distribution of students according to their locus of control (LOC), based on a total of 16 individuals. The majority of students, 12 or 75%, fall under the category of having both external and internal locus of control, indicating a balanced perspective where they believe that outcomes are influenced by both personal actions and external circumstances. Only one student (6.25%) is identified as having a strong external LOC, and another one (6.25%) as having a very strong internal LOC, representing the two extremes. Additionally, two

students (12.50%) are categorized as having an internal LOC, suggesting that they primarily believe they have personal control over their outcomes. The absence of students in the very strong external LOC category implies that few, if any, feel completely powerless or controlled entirely by external factors. Overall, the data suggests that most students possess a balanced view of control, which may contribute to a flexible and adaptable mindset in facing academic and personal challenges.

**Table 8:** Distribution of Students as to Locus of Control (LOC)

| Locus of Control (LOC)         | f = 16 | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Very Strong External LOC       |        |            |
| External LOC                   | 1      | 6.25       |
| Both External and Internal LOC | 12     | 75.00      |
| Internal LOC                   | 2      | 12.50      |
| Very Strong Internal LOC       | 1      | 6.25       |
|                                | Total  | 100.00     |

Table 8 illustrates the distribution of students according to their family structure, with a total of 16 respondents. A significant majority, 12 students or 75%, come from nuclear families, indicating that most are raised in households with both parents present. The remaining 4 students, each representing 6.25% of the total, come from varied family backgrounds: one from a single-parent family, one from a blended family, one from an extended family, and one from a foster care or adopted family. Notably, there are

no students identified as coming from absent or unstable families, suggesting a general trend of family stability within the group. This distribution highlights the dominance of the traditional nuclear family structure among the students, while also reflecting a modest level of diversity in family backgrounds, which may influence students' emotional development, social relationships, and academic support systems in different ways.

**Table 8:** Distribution of Students as to Family Structure

| Family Structure              | f = 16 | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Nuclear family                | 12     | 75.00      |
| Single-parent family          | 1      | 6.25       |
| Blended family                | 1      | 6.25       |
| Extended family               | 1      | 6.25       |
| Foster care or adopted family | 1      | 6.25       |
| Absent or unstable family     |        |            |
|                               | Total  | 100.00     |

Table 8 reflects students' attitudes toward a career in special education, revealing generally positive and enthusiastic perspectives. A majority of students strongly agree or agree that special education is a rewarding career and express passion for working with children with special needs, with average ratings of 4.63 and 4.00 respectively on a 5-point scale. Confidence in their ability to support students with disabilities is also high, scoring

an average of 4.19, suggesting that most feel prepared for the challenges of this field. Students overwhelmingly recognize the significant impact special education teachers have on students' lives (average 4.63) and express excitement about learning more in this area (average 4.56). The importance of patience and dedication is widely acknowledged, as indicated by the highest average score of 4.81 for this item. Additionally, most students are

open to working in diverse classrooms and believe there is a strong demand for special education professionals, reflected in scores above 4.5. While many acknowledge the challenges associated with the profession, as shown by an average of 4.50, there is unanimous agreement (average 5.00) that special education

requires more resources and community support. Overall, the total average attitude score of 4.51 highlights a strong, positive commitment among students toward pursuing a career in special education, tempered by a realistic understanding of its demands and needs.

**Table 8:** Distribution of Students as to their Attitude Toward Career in Special Education

| Family Structure                                                                           | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | $\Sigma$ |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| I am passionate about working with children with special needs.                            | 6              | 7     | 2       |          |                   | 4.00     |
| I believe special education is a rewarding career.                                         | 10             | 6     |         |          |                   | 4.63     |
| I feel confident in my ability to support students with disabilities.                      | 8              | 6     | 1       |          |                   | 4.19     |
| I think special education teachers have a significant impact on students' lives.           | 12             | 2     | 2       |          |                   | 4.63     |
| I am excited about the opportunity to learn more about special education.                  | 10             | 5     | 1       |          |                   | 4.56     |
| I feel that working in special education requires a high level of patience and dedication. | 13             | 3     |         |          |                   | 4.81     |
| I would enjoy working in a classroom with children who have different learning abilities.  | 6              | 8     | 2       |          |                   | 4.25     |
| I believe there is a high demand for professionals in special education.                   | 10             | 5     | 1       |          |                   | 4.56     |
| I am concerned about the challenges of working in special education.                       | 8              | 8     |         |          |                   | 4.50     |
| I think special education requires more resources and support from the community.          | 16             |       |         |          |                   | 5.00     |
| Total                                                                                      |                |       |         |          |                   | 4.51     |

Table 8 presents students' perceptions toward a career in special education, revealing generally positive views with some areas of concern. Most students strongly agree or agree that a career in special education is fulfilling (average score 4.50) and that it is an important and valuable field (4.13). There is a shared belief that special education teachers are well-respected (4.50) and that careers in this field offer good job stability (4.13). Students recognize that special education requires a unique skill set (4.25) and acknowledge the emotional challenges involved, reflected in the highest average score of 4.88. The perceived demand for special education professionals is strong, with an average of 4.75, indicating confidence in job availability. However, some

students express mixed feelings about the level of preparation teachers receive (4.44) and the societal appreciation of the profession, which scored lower at 3.75, suggesting that many believe special education is underappreciated. Personal growth opportunities (4.13) and manageable challenges (4.25) are generally acknowledged, while financial rewards scored slightly lower at 3.94, indicating some uncertainty about the economic benefits of the career. Opportunities for career advancement are seen positively with a score of 4.25. Overall, the total average score of 4.30 reflects a generally favorable perception of special education careers, balanced by recognition of emotional demands and societal challenges.

**Table 8:** Distribution of Students as to their Perception Toward Career in Special Education

| Family Structure                                                      | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Mean |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|------|
| I believe a career in special education is fulfilling.                | 8              | 8     |         |          |                   | 4.50 |
| Special education is an important and valuable field.                 | 9              | 7     |         |          |                   | 4.13 |
| I feel that special education teachers are well-respected in society. | 8              | 8     |         |          |                   | 4.50 |
| Special education careers offer good job stability.                   | 9              | 7     |         |          |                   | 4.13 |
| I perceive that special education requires a unique skill set.        | 9              | 5     | 2       |          |                   | 4.25 |
| I think working in special education is emotionally challenging.      | 11             | 4     | 1       |          |                   | 4.88 |

|                                                                                   |       |   |   |   |   |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---|---|---|---|------|
| I perceive that there is a strong demand for special education professionals.     | 12    | 4 |   |   |   | 4.75 |
| I feel that special education teachers are well-prepared for their roles.         | 8     | 3 | 5 |   |   | 4.44 |
| I think special education is underappreciated by society.                         | 5     | 7 | 1 | 2 |   | 3.75 |
| I believe a career in special education can lead to personal growth.              | 6     | 8 | 1 |   | 1 | 4.13 |
| I perceive the challenges in special education as manageable.                     | 6     | 8 | 2 |   |   | 4.25 |
| I believe special education careers are financially rewarding.                    | 6     | 9 | 1 |   |   | 3.94 |
| I think there are many opportunities for career advancement in special education. | 7     | 6 | 3 |   |   | 4.25 |
|                                                                                   | Total |   |   |   |   | 4.30 |

### Summary

This study explores the attitudes and perceptions of Bachelor of Special Needs Education (BSNEd) students at Libacao College of Science and Technology concerning their future careers. As special education becomes increasingly crucial in supporting students with disabilities, gaining insight into how these future educators view their professional roles is vital. The research aims to investigate the factors influencing their career choices, their understanding of the challenges and rewards involved in teaching students with special needs, and the impact of their academic preparation on their career expectations. Employing a descriptive research design, the study collects quantitative data primarily through a validated questionnaire that includes rating scales and other structured question types. Given the relatively small number of BSNEd students, a census approach was utilized, involving all eligible participants. Descriptive statistics are applied to analyze the survey data, identifying key themes and patterns. Specifically, status and classification questions are examined using percentages, rankings, and measures of central tendency to provide a comprehensive overview of the respondents' perspectives. Ethical considerations were strictly observed: the study received approval from LCST's ethics review board, informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality and cultural sensitivity were maintained throughout the research process [23-28].

### Findings

The study included 16 BSNEd students of LCST, whose demographic profile leaned slightly toward a younger age group, with the majority being female, single, and of medium socioeconomic status. Most participants identified as members of Indigenous Peoples (IP) communities and practiced the Catholic faith. Notably, students came from nuclear families, suggesting that a significant proportion were raised in households with both parents present. In terms of attitudes toward their future profession, the majority of students either strongly agreed or agreed that special education is a rewarding career. Many expressed a genuine passion for working with children with special needs. There was unanimous agreement that special education requires substantial resources and community support. Furthermore, the emotional demands of the profession were widely acknowledged. Additionally, students perceived a strong and growing demand for special education professionals, indicating a positive outlook on

career opportunities in the field.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that educational institutions and policymakers prioritize enhancing resource allocation to better support special education programs, ensuring that future educators have access to adequate materials, training, and community support. Strengthening partnerships with Indigenous communities and other local stakeholders can foster greater community involvement and promote inclusivity, addressing the critical need for broader support systems. Given the emotional demands of the profession acknowledged by the students, providing accessible mental health resources, counseling services, and stress management programs within the academic environment is essential to help students and educators cope effectively. Additionally, tailoring the BSNEd curriculum to incorporate culturally responsive teaching strategies will better prepare students, particularly those from Indigenous backgrounds, to serve their communities with sensitivity and understanding. With students expressing a positive outlook on the demand for special education professionals, it is important to enhance career guidance and professional development opportunities to support their transition into the workforce. Finally, encouraging greater gender diversity in the program may enrich the field by attracting more male students, thereby promoting varied perspectives and approaches within special education.

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