



Exploring the Perception of Parents on the Participation of Learners with Special Educational Needs in a Virtual Talent Show

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ABSTRACT

There is a paucity of research that focuses on understanding the perception of parents in supporting the talent development of their children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Considering the gap in the literature, participants in this study are purposely sampled from the parents whose children with SEN participated in a virtual talent show (VTS) organised by National Association of Special Education, Malaysia (NASE) during the pandemic lockdown. A total of six parents responded to the survey questionnaires and participated in the semi-structured interviews which were transcribed verbatim. The thematic data analysis revealed three categories: 1)Parents as partners, 2)Roles of NGOs and 3)Resources. This study contributes to the literature from parents' perception on how they provided exposure in VTS that impacts the development of their children. The findings also provide new insight into what drives the parents into enrolling their children in VTS and revealed how parents agreed that participation in VTS provided positive impact and progress for their children. In addition, the result from this study highlights the positive perception of parents regarding the participation of learners with SEN in VTS. It underscores the importance of NGOs in providing opportunities for their children's involvement and emphasises the need to address the barriers and challenges that exist. Additionally, the study demonstrates that parents strongly desire more NGOs to offer opportunities for their children with SEN to be involved in talent show performances. Despite the barriers and challenges faced, parents recognise the value and potential impact of such experiences on their children's overall

development. The findings contribute to the existing knowledge and call for further research to promote inclusivity and support the talent development of learners with SEN. It also demonstrated that parents want more NGOs to provide the opportunity for their learners with SEN to be involved in more talent shows performances, despite the barriers and challenges that arise. Future study could explore strategies to address the identified barriers and challenges and evaluate the long-term effects of participation on the well-being and self-esteem of learners with SEN. The suggestions for future studies aim to inform the development of more inclusive practices and policies that support the talent development and empowerment of learners with SEN in talent show settings.

Keywords: parents' perceptions, learners with SEN, virtual talent show, pandemic

1. Introduction

The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic across the world has profoundly impacted many aspects of life, including the opportunity for talent show performances and learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Malaysia is not an exception to the impact. Previous studies have demonstrated how sedentary lifestyles during the lockdown can lead to negative consequences, more particularly on the quality of life (QoL) of learners with SEN. Furthermore, according to Yarimkaya and Esenturk (2020), being locked down at home for a long period of time may result in distress and anxiety for learners with SEN which can also cause more severe mental health issues. A study by Esentürk (2020) also stated how parents of learners with SEN perceived the duration of the quarantine process as a factor of their increased anxiety levels. Hence, according to the European WHO, implementation of activities are highly recommended as an effort to protect any individuals with or without disabilities from possible risks of mental health and to improve their QoL due to sedentary life during the lockdown (EWHO 2020). Moreover, Healy et al., (2018) stated that participation in activities are beneficial and advantageous both physically and mentally for learners with SEN. Furthermore, according to Singleton and Darcy (2013), the United Nations Conventions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

(United Nations, 2006) has built the foundations for the implementation of inclusion that includes other aspects of life, namely culture and leisure. Meanwhile, one of the major tasks of Malaysia Ministry of Education (MOE) in an effort to increase the quality of learners with SEN, is to ensure the objectives in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (MEB 2013- 2025) are achieved. However, Rosmalily and Woollard (2019) stated that the effort in improving the QoL for learners with SEN in Malaysia is a continuous and ongoing journey for the Ministry of Education (MoE). That being said, not many platforms and opportunities were given for them to showcase their talents, particularly during the lockdown.

Nevertheless, despite the lockdown, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Australia and New Zealand, for instance, have each organised their own virtual talent show (VTS) for their communities. According to Newsdesk of Australia (2021, October 6) the VTS organised had lifted up the spirit of the residents there despite no prizes being offered. Additionally, as for Te Ao- Maori News, (2022, November 21), the VTS organised was specifically for people who do not have the confidence as it provides platforms for them “to put their best foot forward”. As a result, it is found that both efforts carried out by the countries have provided joy as well as opportunities for talent enhancement in their respective communities. However, learners with SEN, do not have the same opportunity to maximise their talents and develop to their full potential due to low expectations and a lack of consideration for or understanding of children's rights (MacKenzie et al., 2020). Further affecting the problem is a disregard for their rights as individuals, which prevents them from enjoying the same chances and benefits as their peers who are not disabled. These difficulties have significant effects for learners with SEN. They are unable to completely explore and develop their talents without equal opportunities, which can cause them to feel excluded, frustrated, and unappreciated. Their entire wellbeing and sense of self-worth may suffer due to the society's and the educational system's poor understanding and support (Healy et al., 2018).

Figure 1 demonstrates the integration of two influential models, the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and the Ecological Systems Model, in understanding the factors that shape the participation of learners with SEN in a VTS organised by National Association of Special Education (NASE), Malaysia from the perspectives of parents. The figure depicts the interconnectedness of these models, highlighting the complex

interplay between personal factors, behaviours, and the environmental context.

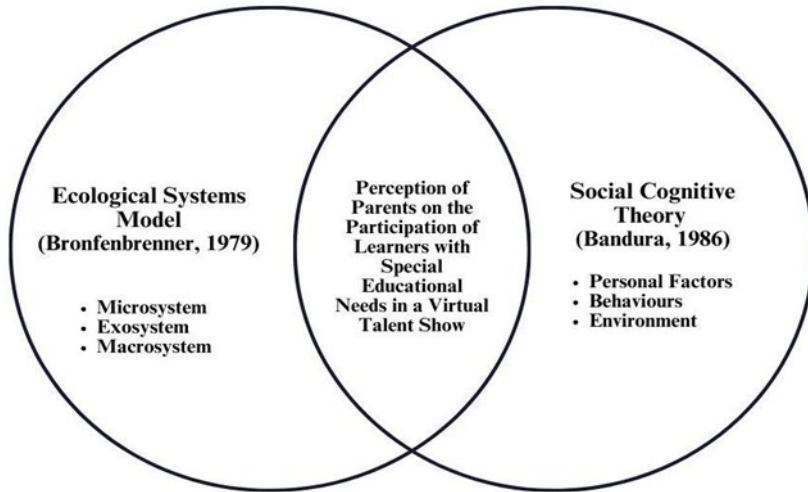


Figure 1: Ecological Perspective on the Participation of Learners with SEN in VTS

The Social Cognitive Theory, as proposed by Bandura (1986), emphasises the interaction between personal factors, behaviours, and the environment. In the context of the VTS organised by NASE, personal factors play a significant role as perceived by parents in influencing their children's participation. These personal factors encompass the beliefs, attitudes, self-efficacy, motivation, and cognitive processes of both the learners and their parents. They shape how parents perceive their children's abilities, interests, and potential contributions to the talent show. Additionally, the behaviours exhibited by the learners, as observed by parents, impact their active involvement and engagement in the VTS.

The Ecological Systems Model, developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), expands the understanding of the learners' participation by examining the broader ecological context, including the parents' perspectives. The environment encompasses various systems, including the microsystem, exosystem and macrosystem as experienced and influenced by parents. The microsystem represents the immediate environment

directly influencing the learners, such as their family, school, peers, and community. The exosystem involves external influences that indirectly affect the learners, such as policies, media, and the role of NASE, the NGO organising the talent show. The macrosystem encompasses the broader cultural, societal, and political values and beliefs that shape the talent show's context. By integrating the Social Cognitive Theory and the Ecological Systems Model, this figure provides a comprehensive framework to understand the personal factors, behaviours, and ecological context influencing the participation of learners with SEN in a VTS organised by NASE, as seen through the perspectives of parents. It underscores the importance of considering both individual characteristics and the broader environmental influences, as perceived by parents, in promoting their children's active engagement and empowerment within this inclusive setting.

With reference to Norqobilova (2022), social talent becomes an excellent platform in the development of relationships with others in addition to it becoming a necessary circumstance towards the accomplishment and the development of other social skills. Besides, according to Jarosewich and Stocking (2003), participation in a talent search offers the opportunity to learn about one's own abilities, while Horowitz (2017) highlighted that the developmental opportunities and potential of children, with or without disabilities in social domain can be achieved through arts as it provides the mechanism for their creative expression of ideas and feelings. In a study involving groups of diverse children by Amabile and Kramer (2012), it is found that people are more creative when they are highly encouraged by interest and enjoyment, while Gruber (1982), stated that the development of any talent requires considerable amount of attention and nurturing.

Compared to the school-based programs, previous studies have provided indications on how outside-of-school setting and learning through parental enhancement plays a more essential role in the talent development of children (Olszewski-Kubilius et al., 2004). Parenting is one of the most prominent factors, particularly during the early years of childhood, as it contributes directly to the talent performance, development of children and QoL (Freeman, 2001) while Olszewski-Kubilius (2021) confirmed that family plays pivotal roles in influencing the talent development of their children. Hence, it is significant to make parents understand the roles they play in their children's development that critically affect the fruition of talent. Similarly, the

positive effect of parental support for achievement through enrichment in the home has also been discussed in literature on talent development (Subotnik and Steiner, 1994).

A study by Akoto et al., (2022) indicated that the synergy between learners with SEN and their immediate environment can give a prediction of what would happen in the future. Therefore, according to Stanley and Kuo (2022), by applying the Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological systems theory, stakeholders understanding can be obtained specifically on how the internal and external factors can be impactful towards a learners' overall performance as well as in raising the awareness of families and communities on their roles. More particularly, the microsystem which is the first system, where the child and their immediate environments, namely the families and communities are focused and further elaborated on. In this study the Bronfenbrenner's theory was applied in portraying the significance of the involvement of NGOs in bridging the gap between learners with SEN and their participation in talent show performances. A study by Low et al., (2020) has found that, in order to assist learners' social and psychological development, partnership between parents, schools, and communities which include NGOs must be established.

NGOs are playing an increasingly significant role in raising greater awareness, initiating, and facilitating social change processes which emphasise equity and inclusive human development (Yan, Lin and Clarke, 2018). NASE is an NGO which firmly believes in equal access for all, including learners with SEN through its effort in organising conferences, workshops, dissemination of published materials, and social events (NASE President's Message, n.d.) Since regular talent show performances were interrupted during lockdown, virtual talent shows (VTS) were first launched by NASE in 2020, followed by another one in 2021. Through VTS, talent videos submitted were shared on the social media platform of NASE as well as to the organisers of International Special Education Exhibition (iSEE) of 2020 and 2021. According to Patel (2017), media plays an important role in the dissemination of information, knowledge, imparting education and creating awareness among the masses, hence in its opening statement, the President of NASE highlighted, through the implementation of VTS, the talent of learners with SEN are acknowledged, recognised and celebrated globally, without barriers or limitation of physical and local interferences. Although VTS was organised virtually, the impact it had on the

global audience was tremendous with a great amount of support and encouragement. On top of that, the number of participants in 2021 has increased with participants from other Southeast Asia countries, namely the Philippines as more parents become more aware of the significance of their child's involvement, the exposure as well as the influence NASE has towards the community of SEN. Table 1 demonstrates the differences of VTS videos submitted, categories of participants and talent showcased in VTS organised in 2020 and 2021.

Table 1: Differences of Participation in VTS between 2020 and 2021

Year	VTS Videos Submitted	Categories of Disabilities	Talent Showcased	Total (f)
2020	30	3 (autism, down syndrome, learning disabilities)	10 (singing, dancing, role playing, playing musical instruments, poetry recitation, magic show, martial art performance, baking, Quran memorisation, motivational speech)	
2021	34 (including international participation)	5 (autism, down syndrome, learning disabilities, deaf and visual impairment)	11 (singing, dancing, cooking, role playing, painting, playing musical instruments, gymnastic performance, performing balloon sculpture, storytelling, pantomime, expressive dancing)	
		Increased of VTS videos submitted (2020-2021)		4
		Increased of categories of disabilities (2020-2021)		2
		Increased of categories of talent showcased (2020-2021)		1

1.1. Research Questions

These are the research questions that guided the study:

1. How do parents perceive their children's involvement in the NASE VTS?
2. What are parents' perspectives on the involvement of the community in encouraging the talent development for learners with SEN?
3. What are the challenges and issues faced by the parents in the participation of their children with SEN in VTS?

2. Procedures

The researcher emailed the intended letter to the President and Secretary of NASE to request for their permission to obtain contact details of the participants of VTS organised by NASE. Once ethical approval from NASE was obtained, the researcher contacted the parents and emailed them the questionnaires via Google Form. With their consent, consequently, dates and times were set for online interview sessions with each of them individually.

2.1. Participants

The participants in this case study consisted of six parents of children with SEN who participated in the Virtual Talent Show (VTS) organised by NASE in categories namely singing, dancing, and playing musical instruments. The participants breakdown as two fathers and four mothers. In terms of educational background, five parents have a degree and one parent holds a PhD. All of the parents are working in the government sector, with one parent each from Pahang, Sabah, Pulau Pinang, Perak, Kedah and Kuala Lumpur. Participants answered survey questions on their perceptions towards talent shows in general as well as their children's participation in the VTS organised by NASE specifically. The survey questions were also used to address the parents' decision to enroll their children in the talent show organised by NASE. The interview questionnaires used in the study, as demonstrated in Table 2, were semi-structured.

2.2. Data Collection

This study employs qualitative design with a case study method. Semi structured interviews with parents were conducted online with approximately 60 minutes individually for each session. In order to overcome the language barriers, the

interview sessions were conducted in Malay language. In the study, the data obtained from the participants was analysed using the thematic analysis method. The interview text was transcribed verbatim and then translated into English. Interview data were triangulated with member checking and follow-up conversations. Additionally, in order to eliminate biases, this study included data that was obtained without judgments and participants were also given the opportunity to review the results from the data collected. For data triangulation, content analysis method was used to analyse the talent videos obtained from the participants of VTS.

2.3. Instrument

A survey, consisting of 15 questions, was disseminated to the parents of the participants of NASE. The first section comprises ten demographic questions, such as parent ethnicity and educational background, while the second section of the survey comprises five questions on the parents' perspectives towards their children's talent performances. Participants viewed VTS opportunities as a beneficial concept to be consistently promoted and implemented. The illustrated excerpts are cited from individual interviews with each of them. Table 2 demonstrates the interview questions asked to the participants.

Table 2: Sample Interview Questions

Sample Interview Questions

1. What do you think are the importance of VTS and the importance of VTS for your child?
2. How many hours a day would you and your child spend on talent performance before the lockdown? How many hours during the lockdown? How has the participation in VTS during the lockdown affected your child?
3. What are the challenges faced in your effort for your child's participation in VTS during the lockdown?
4. What kind of support do you need to ensure your child continues to participate in VTS or conventional talent shows post pandemic?
5. Would you encourage other parents to also enrol their child in VTS? How would you go about encouraging them? How will you ensure that their child will be impacted positively from their participation in VTS?

3. Findings

Firstly, this study explores how participation in the NASE's VTS has impacted the parents and the activities of their children with SEN during lockdown. Secondly, this study explores the parents' perspectives on the involvement of the community in encouraging more talent development for learners with SEN. Finally, this study explores the challenges and issues faced by parents in the participation of their children with SEN in VTS. From the survey conducted, all of the respondents mentioned that VTS has impacted their children positively with 40% of them spending 1-2 hours per day for their child's talent development, while 45% of them spend between 3-4 hours per day and the rest of the 15% of the parents spend between 5-6 hours per day with their children in terms of training and practising. 85% of the respondents stated that talent development is not just merely the responsibilities of teachers in school, parents themselves play an important role too in enhancing their skills and talent at home.

On the other hand, 85% of the respondents agree that there should be more VTS organised by NGOs for learners with SEN, while 15% stated that face-to-face talent shows would be more impactful. 85% of the respondents also agree to the fact that talent show should not just be limited to dancing, singing, role playing and playing musical instruments, as more categories of talent should be opened and accepted for VTS as learners with SEN are unique and have their very own talent to highlight. 40% of the respondents agree to the suggestion that participation in VTS should be rewarded with prizes in order to motivate the participants involved, however the rest of 60% of the parents stated that with or without prizes, being awarded with exposure, certification and acknowledgement are sufficient for the participants in VTS. Lastly, when asked if they would recommend VTS to other parents of learners with SEN, all of the parents answered yes.

This next section presents the emerging key findings from the interviews. The themes derived from the interview session were both common and highly relevant. With reference to the research questions, results from this study were divided into three sections: 1) Parents' perceptions on the importance of their roles in the involvement of their children's participation in VTS, 2) Roles of the NGOs in inculcating and providing more opportunities in the talent development of learners with SEN, and 3) The responses to what are the issues and challenges parents dealt

with in their effort for their children's participation in VTS.

3.1. Answer to RQ1: How Do Parents Perceive Their Children's Involvement in VTS?

Parents as Partners

The findings of the interviews which were conducted with the parents revealed that involving their children with SEN in VTS is significant within the home settings. The parents indicated that talent development is not merely a school agenda and only done by the teachers. They see that their roles and the parent-teacher partnership can contribute and influence the development of their children with SEN impactfully.

When parents are interviewed, most of them emphasise on their significant roles in becoming proactive towards their children's activities, most particularly during the lockdown. They believed that, apart from their usual responsibilities, they need to have a mindset of becoming a partner to their children so that the children will not feel the barriers with their parents. This was mentioned as follows:

"Who else will support and guide them if not us the parents? That's why parents must think of themselves as partners and become responsible for their children's talent development". (P2)

"At school, the teacher will help assist my son with her talent, but I believe that it all started from home where my husband and I helped shape the development of my child. Maybe at school they have the platform but at home, we have more time and us parents give them moral support and confidence." (P3)

Additionally, it was also elaborated in the statement below:

"At home, we have a karaoke set and since we spend a lot of time together during the lockdown, my daughter and I sing and dance a lot together. That actually brought us closer together, so we not just as parents, but also as somewhat of a friend - someone who she can have fun with". (P5)

Furthermore, with reference to the talent videos submitted by the participants, as demonstrated in Table 3.1 for the theme Parents as Partners, 3 sub themes emerged namely, 1) Moral support, 2) Provide space and home-based facilities 3) Provide talent training. It is found that the majority of the parents of the participants

involved provided significant support, space, home based facilities and training for their children prior to their enrolment in VTS. Nevertheless, 1 parent of the participants involved relied on the child to train on their own at home by referring to other videos on Youtube.

Table 3: Video Analysis on Parents as Partners

Theme	Sub-themes	Participants	<i>f</i>
Parents as Partners	Moral support	P1,P2,P3,P4,P5,P6	6
	Provide space and home-based facilities	P1,P2,P3,P4,P5,P6	6
	Provide talent training	P1,P2,P3,P5,P6	5

3.2. Answer to RQ2: How do parents perceive the role of schools and the community in encouraging more talent development for learners with SEN?

Roles of NGOs

The findings also revealed that parents who signed up their learners with SEN in VTS indicated that talent development can be enhanced, developed and organised by more NGOs in Malaysia. They see that NGOs can proactively provide more opportunities and platforms for more learners with SEN to participate in.

During the interview, most of the participants also spoke about the roles and responsibilities of other NGOs towards learners with SEN, most particularly during the lockdown. They believed that, apart from their children's schools, more NGOs should promote more online activities and programmes for learners with SEN which could contribute to the enhancement of communication and social interaction:

"It is hard for parents when teachers in schools only teach a limited amount of subjects and conduct limited online activities. Can't blame them! They also have more important matters for education! That's why NGOs must play their roles in encouraging more activities like this". (P1)

“I don’t come across other fun activities for my son. He loves to play drums, but the teacher in his school does not really highlight his talent. Good thing NASE organised this program, even though online, it is a good start and more NGOs also should do that for all learners with SEN.” (P2)

In the extract, it is obvious that the participants acknowledged the efforts made by NASE and it was considered a unique event for an NGO in Malaysia to amplify the talent of learners with SEN. Another participant stated:

“I am truly thankful that my daughter was able to showcase her talent and participate in the talent show... It is a very rare opportunity too. It is a very good effort from NASE and I hope more NGOs will provide that kind of opportunity for learners with SEN too”. (P4)

NGOs can make a significant impact on the cultural climate for learners with SEN by expanding opportunities and platforms for talent development. The involvement of more NGOs will enable parents to engage their children in more social activities within the community, which will positively impact their development. This was further elaborated as follows:

“During lockdown, my children and I were happy that NASE organised this event. We wanted to send more videos (laughs). So far I only know that NASE organised VTS, and other NGOs need to organise too. That will be more beneficial for the children (of SEN)” (P6)

In addition, when the talent videos were analysed, it was evident that the NGO played an important role in providing the platform needed for the participation of learners with SEN in VTS. Table 3.2 demonstrates the significant sub-themes that emerged, namely 1) Platform provider, 2) Guidelines and online assistance and 3) Communication.

Table 4: Video Analysis on Roles of NGOs

Theme	Sub-themes	Participants	<i>f</i>
Roles of NGOs	Platform provider	P1,P2,P3,P4,P5,P6	6
	Support through guidelines and online assistance	P1,P2,P3,P4,P5,P6	6
	Communication	P1,P2,P3,P4,P5,P6	6

3.3. Answer to RQ3: What are the challenges and issues that parents face when their children with SEN participate in VTS?

Resources

Finally, the findings also revealed that parents who sign their children up for VTS faced some challenges and issues, namely resources. As parents who have experienced the lockdown and quarantine process with their children, it is important to take their experience and the issues they faced into consideration.

From the interview conducted, parents stated that having a good internet connection is crucial as the videos need to be uploaded and submitted to the organiser. Additionally, they also considered the quality of cameras and mobile phones to be an important source of help and support in ensuring that the videos taken are of high quality. It was noted that most parents had access to good cameras via their own mobile phones. On the other hand, parents expressed their concern about the internet connection since all of them had to rely on WIFI or mobile data which can sometimes be “slow”. Parents’ responded as follows:

“A lot of times the internet connection in my area is not so good. Maybe because a lot of people are locked down at home so everyone uses the internet (laughs). So when I want to upload videos, sometimes it takes a very very long time.” (P2)

“But for me, wifi is good, only that during lockdown, the usage is higher so I have to pay more than usual (laughs)” (P1)

Additionally, it was also elaborated in the statements below:

“In my area, the internet is good. I need them because if there is no internet, then no access to watch Youtube or Facebook. Want to upload videos also difficult.” (P5)

“It will be good if we have free internet access all the time during lockdown. There is nothing much we can do, the only way to entertain ourselves is all in the internet.” (P4)

When the talent video content as demonstrated in Table 3.3 below was analysed, it was evident that accessibility to efficient internet connection is essential to the participation of VTS, especially when most of the participants were in locked down at their respective homes during the pandemic. However, 2 of the participants had to rely on the WIFI connection outside their homes due to poor connection, hence the talent videos were shot outside of their homes.

Table 5: Video Content Analysis on Resources

Theme	Sub-themes	Participants	<i>f</i>
Resources	Home internet connection (mobile data, wifi)	P1,P2,P3,P6	4

3.4. Summary on Talent Video Content Analysis

With reference to the content analysis of the talent videos submitted by the participants, it was evident that each of the learners with SEN involved demonstrated unique talents calmly and confidently throughout their respective performances. From singing and dancing to playing musical instruments, their talents were clearly shown in each of their talent videos. Throughout each of their talent performances, they also managed to prove that they were able to maintain eye contact with the camera. Additionally, different aspects of skills and routines displaying their talent development, which was undertaken as part of their activities with their parents during lockdown, were also depicted in the videos. The experiential display of their talents in the videos allowed the researcher to explore the coordination of movements and it was evident that they had mastered the area

of their talents, namely singing, dancing and musical instruments over a long period of time.

4. Discussion

This study observed that when more NGOs are proactive in organising and creating opportunities, then the larger the capacity building for learners with SEN. According to UNESCO (2009), NGOs are no longer filling up the vacuum left by governments as they have developed into powerful voices of society. It is also found that all the parents involved were aware of the beneficial contributions of VTS to the development of their children with SEN. Furthermore, parents involved play the more pro-active role, particularly in encouraging and effective communication, which highly encourages the engagement between them and their children with SEN. Parents also expressed that in addition to being engaged with their children's participation in VTS, there is also the need to ensure that the aspects of self-confidence and mental health are also taken into consideration. Parents in these circumstances are persistent and supportive of their children's skill development because they are fully aware and understand their duties and responsibilities in fostering their children's sense of self-worth and mental wellness. However, this does not necessarily imply that parents are not concerned with their children's education or that they are pressuring them to participate. The reason these parents encourage their children to get involved in VTS is due to the child's favourite pastime, which has been manifested in the development of their talents namely singing, dancing and playing musical instruments .

Many previous studies have also highlighted that active participation, specifically for nurturing talents, have immensely benefitted learners with SEN as it is engaging and interactive, thus providing meaningful experiences. Despite encountering challenges during lockdown, they found ways to overcome them. The majority of parents believe that they have an effective role in helping their children in early talent development. This is in line with a study by Olszewski-Kubilius (2018), which stated that family dynamics provide support for the development of high creativity. It was suggested that parents can set a perfect example for their children by tapping on their children's potential and encouraging their children to identify their interests and passion because "parents are always in the center of their children's training" (Hosseinpour et al., 2015). Olszewski-Kubilius (2021) also stated that family

plays a pivotal role in influencing the talent development of their children. On the other hand, the study also proposed that parenting skills, namely in supporting and assisting the ideal talent development of their children, can be fostered through schools via workshops for parents as part of their activities.

5. Implications of Findings

The foremost are the core values of parents on the significance of talent development of their children with SEN. Parents themselves are responsible in engaging their children for the sake of their development that would consequently benefit them. Through inclusiveness, more NGOs would be able to embark on the journey to enhance the talent development of learners with SEN and provide equal opportunities for them, both socially and culturally. This study highlights some implications that may have been overlooked by many NGOs, namely creating opportunities for online social participation for learners with SEN, including VTS which plays an important role in the success of their talent development. The foremost aspect highlighted in this study are the core values held by parents when it comes to the talent development of their children with SEN. Parents play a vital role in encouraging their children to participate in talent-development activities as they understand the long-term advantages it has for their children's general development and wellbeing. This highlights how crucial parental support and involvement are in developing children's talents.

This study also emphasises the need for more NGOs to actively foster talent development of learners with SEN. By embracing inclusivity, these organisations have the ability to create equal opportunities for learners with SEN, both socially and culturally. The findings suggest that NGOs should consider incorporating online platforms, such as VTS, as a means of fostering social participation for learners with SEN. VTS provides an accessible and inclusive avenue for learners with diverse abilities to showcase their talents, which is crucial for their talent development. The implications derived from this study highlight the importance of parental involvement and the role of NGOs in promoting talent development for learners with SEN. The results also highlight the need for close collaboration between parents and NGOs to create a welcoming atmosphere that supports and fosters the skills of learners with SEN.

The study also highlights the opportunity for additional investigation in this area of study. Further investigations could examine deeper into the specific ways in which parental involvement and NGO initiatives impact the talent development of learners with SEN. Moreover, exploring the experiences and perspectives of learners with SEN themselves can provide valuable insights into their own participation in talent development activities and the effectiveness of such programs. Overall, this study brings attention to the significance of parental involvement, the role of NGOs, and the implications for fostering talent development opportunities for learners with SEN. It sheds light on the importance of creating inclusive platforms, such as VTS, and opens up avenues for further research and collaboration in this field.

6. Conclusion

In this study, parents also mentioned that if they had more time, knowledge, skills and resources, they would be able to provide more opportunities to develop the talents of their children with SEN. Parents' perceptions of VTS also depend on the specific interest of their child. Participants who took part in the VTS mostly belong to supportive families with parents who are committed to the talent development of their children. In addition, parents mentioned that they were, at times, not given important updates and information, or lack capabilities in terms of time and effort, to support and provide more opportunities for their children to participate in talent shows. Despite increased time and workload when it comes to their children, coupled with their own responsibilities during lockdown, parents felt that they should make their child's talent development a priority.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding the limitations, the results indicate a notable awareness from parents on their children's involvement in VTS. This appears to be equally evident across all levels of parental education, ethnicity and gender participants. The findings reflect a general shift in parents' perceptions towards online participation, following the increase in online engagement during lockdown. To conclude, while parents of learners with SEN should provide the most ideal family environment, motivate them to reach their optimal potential, support them by providing the best opportunities for their personal growth and development, the ultimate goal for all parents, particularly that of learners with SEN, is to provide them with a memorable childhood.

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