



## TRANSITION SERVICES AND POST-SECONDARY OUTCOMES FOR FILIPINO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: FROM SECONDARY EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT AND INDEPENDENT LIVING

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### Abstract:

This study examined how transition services components predict post-secondary outcomes among Filipino Students with Disabilities in Metropolitan Cebu during SY 2024-2025, specifically investigating Individualized Transition Planning (ITP) effectiveness, employment preparation adequacy, independent living skills (ILS) quality, and inter-agency coordination. A descriptive-correlational approach utilizing the Input-Process-Output model was employed. Data were collected from school personnel and parents/guardians using adapted instruments from Fournier (2014), Morningstar *et al.* (1994), and Lombardi *et al.* (2011), analyzed through Frequency Count, Weighted Mean, and Correlation Analysis. All four service domains rated Very Effective or Very Adequate, producing Very Successful outcomes across education, employment, and independent living. However, predictive inference revealed that only ITP and Inter-

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Agency Coordination significantly predicted overall transition success, establishing them as core drivers. Minor gaps included Adequacy ratings for entrepreneurship training. While the transition services model is vigorous, ITP and Inter-Agency Coordination fundamentally determine success. The Comprehensive Evidence-based Transition Services Plan was developed to institutionalize these predictive strengths and address identified gaps. Recommendations include adopting the plan and conducting further research on employment preparation and ILS as potential mediating or moderating variables.

**Keywords:** special education, Filipino students with disabilities, transition services, post-secondary outcomes

## 1. Introduction

Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a comprehensive transition services infrastructure that effectively bridges secondary education with post-secondary life domains, including higher education, competitive employment, and independent living. A national news agency reported DepEd's chronic lack of special education funding—resources essential for converting existing SPED centers into fully-operational Independent Living Resource Centers capable of offering integrated services, including speech therapy, occupational therapy, mobility training, assistive technology access, and comprehensive transition support services (Phil. Star, 2022). These specialized centers would provide crucial stepping stones for students transitioning from structured educational environments to independent adult living, offering the therapeutic interventions and skill-building opportunities necessary for successful community integration.

Conversely, another report detailed DepEd's organizational commitment to strengthening inclusive education programs, suggesting that foundational policy elements and administrative frameworks for effective transition services delivery exist within the Philippine educational system (Bajo, 2025). This juxtaposition reveals the persistent tension between administrative intentions and resource realities, where policy frameworks, legislative mandates, and institutional commitments exist, but implementation mechanisms remain underdeveloped, inadequately funded, or insufficient to meet the documented needs of Filipino students with disabilities transitioning to post-secondary life.

Nevertheless, while policy directions and administrative commitments toward inclusive education have been clearly articulated through various memoranda, legislative acts, and institutional initiatives, there remains a critical gap in empirical research systematically examining how specific transition services components predict measurable post-secondary outcomes for Filipino students with disabilities. International literature extensively documents significant relationships between structured transition

planning processes, evidence-based employment preparation programs, systematic independent living skills development curricula, effective inter-agency coordination mechanisms, and documented post-secondary success across education continuation, competitive employment attainment, and independent community integration domains. These international studies provide robust conceptual frameworks and empirical evidence demonstrating that comprehensive, well-coordinated, and adequately-resourced transition services significantly improve post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities across diverse cultural and economic contexts.

However, Philippine-based empirical studies systematically investigating these predictive relationships through rigorous quantitative methodologies, comprehensive mixed-methods research designs, or systematic program evaluation approaches remain notably absent from academic literature and policy discussions. This research vacuum creates a problematic situation where Philippine educators, policymakers, service providers, and disability advocates lack locally-generated empirical evidence to guide transition services development, relying instead on international models that may not fully account for Philippine-specific cultural values, economic constraints, infrastructural limitations, familial support systems, and social contexts uniquely affecting Filipino students with disabilities as they navigate transitions to post-secondary life.

Moreover, the researcher posits that transition services were fundamentally designed and internationally implemented to strengthen post-secondary outcomes for learners with disabilities across multiple life domains, yet accumulating evidence from Philippine educational contexts suggests that actual ground-level implementation often falls significantly short of this aspirational goal. Contemporary reports note several persistent systemic issues, including severe funding constraints limiting program comprehensiveness and sustainability, inadequate pre-service and in-service teacher preparation for specialized transition services delivery, insufficient inter-agency collaboration mechanisms connecting education, employment, social welfare, and health sectors, and parallel efforts to expand general inclusive education that sometimes unintentionally divert limited resources from specialized transition programming.

However, scholarly assessments employing rigorous quantitative methodologies, comprehensive mixed-methods approaches, longitudinal tracking studies, or systematic program evaluations to empirically determine how specific transition services components—such as individualized planning quality, employment preparation intensity and relevance, independent living skills instruction effectiveness, or inter-agency coordination efficiency—actually predict measurable post-secondary outcomes remain conspicuously scarce in Philippine educational research literature. This gap in systematic, evidence-based evaluation becomes particularly pronounced when Philippine transition services research is compared with extensive international research traditions documenting transition services effectiveness, implementation fidelity, and outcome predictors. This comparison emphasizes the urgent need for empirical research that systematically examines the predictive influence of transition services components

on actual, measurable post-secondary outcomes, specifically within the Philippine educational, cultural, economic, and social context, accounting for unique challenges Filipino students with disabilities encounter during their transitions.

Therefore, given these deeply interconnected challenges spanning educational access inequities, employment discrimination patterns, independent living barriers, infrastructure inadequacies, and research gaps, this research determines how transition services components—specifically individualized transition planning, employment preparation and vocational training, independent living skills development, and inter-agency coordination—directly influence post-secondary outcomes among Filipino students with disabilities from selected Metropolitan Cebu institutions during the 2024-2025 academic year, serving as empirical basis for developing evidence-based, contextually-appropriate transition services plans. The current study specifically examines the level at which individualized transition planning services are effective in preparing Filipino students with disabilities for successful post-secondary education outcomes.

The research investigates the extent to which employment preparation and vocational training services are adequate in equipping Filipino students with disabilities for competitive employment opportunities. Also, the study determines the degree to which transition services develop independent living skills among Filipino students with disabilities for successful community integration. Additionally, the research assesses the extent to which coordination among educational institutions, government agencies, and community organizations is effective in delivering comprehensive transition services to Filipino students with disabilities. Moreover, the study evaluates the degree to which Filipino students with disabilities achieve successful post-secondary outcomes in education, employment, and independent living following transition services. Finally, the research establishes the extent to which individualized transition planning effectiveness, employment preparation adequacy, independent living skills development, and inter-agency coordination significantly predict post-secondary outcomes among Filipino students with disabilities

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical Foundations for Understanding Career Development and Transition Success

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), developed by Lent, Brown, and Hackett in 1994, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals develop career interests, make choices, and achieve performance outcomes. Rooted in Bandura's social cognitive theory, SCCT emphasizes the interplay between personal factors, behavioral patterns, and environmental influences in shaping career trajectories (Wang *et al.*, 2022). SCCT posits that career trajectories emerge from dynamic interactions between personal beliefs, environmental conditions, and behavioral patterns, with core elements including

self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Wang *et al.*, 2022). As a refined version of Bandura's social cognitive theory, SCCT emphasizes that contextual, personal, and behavioral factors shape career and educational development across the lifespan (Wu *et al.*, 2024). According to SCCT, four main learning experiences—performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and physiological arousal—contribute to self-efficacy development.

Within the Philippine context, career choices of post-secondary Filipino students with disabilities are heavily influenced by parental outcome expectations shaped by cultural norms and perceived disability limitations, underscoring the importance of individualized transition planning. SCCT has proven vital for explaining career-related interests, choices, and outcomes, particularly during late adolescence and early adulthood (Yao & McWha-Hermann, 2025). SCCT is widely recognized for its comprehensive approach, positing that self-efficacy and outcome expectations are key behavioral determinants (Pham *et al.*, 2024). In the Philippine educational system, self-efficacy among Filipino students with disabilities is often bolstered by strong social support from family and teachers offering positive social persuasion, emphasizing why inter-agency coordination becomes a critical research variable.

Literature supports SCCT's significant potential for advancing understanding of career development across diverse cultural backgrounds (Damodar *et al.*, 2024). This framework extends beyond general populations, serving as an effective tool for understanding the career development of young individuals with disabilities (Sung & Connor, 2017). Research highlights that key SCCT constructs—self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and environmental supports—are powerful predictors of professional engagement, recommending that rehabilitation professionals use the SCCT model to design holistic interventions (Appling *et al.*, 2022). SCCT incorporates a Career Self-Management model explaining how individuals proactively navigate careers in evolving work landscapes (Wendling & Sagas, 2020). Research indicates that career interventions for Filipino students with disabilities are most effective when focusing on building self-efficacy through hands-on performance accomplishments.

SCCT was developed as a unifying framework adopting Bandura's concept of triadic reciprocal causation (Lent & Brown, 2019). Empirical observations indicate that many post-secondary students with disabilities in the Philippines have limited vicarious learning experiences related to career success because they rarely see individuals with similar disabilities in professional roles. The socioeconomic location of Filipino students with disabilities significantly impacts post-secondary transition, with students from affluent families having better access to specialized education and networks.

Complementing SCCT, Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory provides essential framework for understanding human development by examining environmental factors and their developmental impact, emphasizing dynamic interactions between developing individuals and their proximate and distant social environments (Panopoulos & Drossinou-Korea, 2020). This theory is essential for

understanding how inter-agency coordination and family involvement operate across multiple environmental levels to influence post-secondary outcomes. The original framework established a topological structure featuring four interconnected systems: microsystem, mesosystem, *exosystem*, and macrosystem (Fanshawe, 2025). Empirical evidence indicates that intervention effectiveness increased substantially when multiple system levels were addressed simultaneously.

The microsystem encompasses immediate environments involving direct interactions, while the mesosystem represents connections between multiple microsystems. Socioeconomic status significantly influences mesosystem interactions, particularly family-school relationships, with higher SES families possessing greater resources and social capital (Sheppard, 2023). The *exosystem* includes external factors beyond direct student interaction, with school leadership decisions regarding resource allocation determining support quality (Gajewski, 2017). Youth with physical disabilities face substantial macrosystem obstacles through societal stigma and discrimination, with students experiencing stereotyping and diminished expectations from educators (Lindsay *et al.*, 2018). The chronosystem demonstrates how temporal factors affect postsecondary education transitions, with service discontinuation policies creating problematic gaps during critical transition periods (Lindsay *et al.*, 2018).

Research utilizing the Kohler and Field (2003) taxonomy identified qualifying transition studies through specific inclusion criteria. Originally created in 1996 and revised in 2016, this framework contains 133 research-supported practices within five essential domains: student-focused planning, student development, interagency collaboration, family involvement, and program structure (Chandoo *et al.*, 2018). Student-focused planning emphasizes recognizing learners' capabilities through active program participation and self-advocacy development (Razak *et al.*, 2022). Student development involves evaluating and teaching functional, academic, social, and vocational competencies, preparing learners for adult responsibilities (Ookeditse, 2018). Interagency collaboration incorporates business and community organizations throughout all transition programming components (Abdullah *et al.*, 2015). Family engagement proves vital from special education service initiation, with research indicating young adults with actively involved parents achieving superior post-school employment results (Young *et al.*, 2016). Program structure involves systematic transition-focused education and service delivery encompassing philosophy, planning, policy, evaluation, and resource development elements (Ookeditse, 2018).

## **2.2 Legal and Policy Framework Governing Transition Services in the Philippines**

Republic Act 7277, or the Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities, is the foundational law establishing the rights of persons with disabilities in the Philippines. It adopts a rights-based approach, aiming to provide PWDs with equal opportunities and protect them from discrimination, covering education, employment, health, and accessibility (Custodio, 2025). By prohibiting discrimination and mandating reasonable

accommodations, the Magna Carta sets the stage for a society where PWDs can pursue personal and professional goals without being marginalized.

The Magna Carta provides the overarching legal and philosophical framework for transition services. Its provisions on vocational rehabilitation and the right to gainful employment are especially relevant as the ultimate goals of transition programs. While later laws like RA 11650 provide specific mechanisms for delivering these services in schools, RA 7277 gives them their core purpose: to fulfill the constitutional right of every PWD to live an independent, productive, and dignified life (Rementina, 2025). This legal basis establishes the fundamental rights framework justifying the examination of employment and independent living outcomes as dependent variables.

DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2021 is the most specific and practical legal basis for transition services, operationalizing the broad mandates of RA 11650. This policy provides concrete guidelines for how schools within the K to 12 Basic Education Program should implement transition services, formalizing the creation of an Individualized Transition Plan for each learner with a disability (De Arao & Fontanilla, 2024). This DepEd Order connects legislative ideals of inclusive education to actual practices in schools, providing a roadmap emphasizing that transition services should be a continuous process. By explicitly linking school activities to post-school outcomes, the order serves as a practical blueprint for research on service effectiveness (Gonzaga *et al.*, 2024).

These anchored theories and legal bases provide a theoretical foundation and practical guidance essential for developing comprehensive, culturally responsive transition services. SCCT explains how employment preparation builds self-efficacy and outcome expectations; Bronfenbrenner's theory elucidates how multi-level environmental factors influence transition success; and Kohler's taxonomy operationalizes the specific evidence-based practices constituting effective transition services. Together with Philippine legal mandates, these frameworks justify the study's examination of how transition services components predict post-secondary outcomes.

### **2.3 Core Components and Implementation of Transition Services**

Transition planning represents systematic preparation of students for post-graduation life, encompassing successful engagement in higher education, vocational training, employment, and independent living activities (Forbes Road School District, 2013). Within special education contexts, transition planning describes the structured process enabling students with disabilities to navigate between educational levels while developing workforce readiness and independent living capabilities. Transition planning encompasses systematic, outcome-focused activities preparing individuals with disabilities for autonomous living by facilitating movement from educational environments to post-graduation pursuits (Paguio, 2021). Earlier studies identified three essential transition planning components: establishing student objectives, identifying required supportive services, and establishing connections with external organizations

(Bates *et al.*, 1992). These elements inform structured activities designed to cultivate independent living competencies (Loh & Yahya, 2013).

The Philippines' Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities establishes legal protections, yet transition program implementation in rural communities lacks comprehensive examination. Informal observations indicate that resource limitations, social stigmatization, and insufficient educator preparation frequently compromise program effectiveness. Such findings reinforce critical needs for stakeholder education about transition processes (Martin & Boon, 2007). Parents frequently experience uncertainty about their children's future independence, with community enablers developing the Special Education Transition Enrichment Program to address these gaps (Paguio, 2021).

Philippine transition program quality faces multiple implementation challenges, including inadequate teacher competency and insufficient collaboration among educational and community partners. Additional barriers include resource scarcity, funding limitations, and inadequate facility infrastructure. Prevailing negative attitudes create diminished expectations and reduced educational prioritization for students with disabilities (De Arao & Fontanilla, 2024). Effective transition service delivery requires comprehensive transition planning; however, educators maintain disproportionate control over these processes while students and families experience minimal participation. Student self-determination skills must be actively developed within transition planning to promote employment outcomes aligning with individual preferences (Best & Burke, 2024).

Educational institutions fundamentally aim to develop career-ready graduates equipped for workplace integration. Students with learning disabilities share identical employment preparation expectations, requiring access to specialized vocational training and employment opportunities (Puzon, 2025). Employment serves as a fundamental component of human existence, providing both economic sustainability and personal fulfillment. Students with special needs frequently encounter significant obstacles when seeking employment opportunities, as many employers lack inclusive hiring practices. Transition programs address these employment barriers by preparing students for workforce entry while establishing professional networks with disability-inclusive employers (Puzon, 2025).

Students with learning disabilities experience diverse obstacles extending far beyond academic difficulties, including social communication barriers, problem-solving limitations, and decision-making challenges hindering independence in employment settings. Local educators and families report students facing employment and higher education difficulties due to insufficient educational support systems (Puzon, 2025; Ysseldyke *et al.*, 2022). Significant concerns emerge regarding the limited involvement of youth with disabilities and their families in vocational transition service selection processes (Best & Burke, 2024). Additionally, transition strategies often overlook experiences of students with intersecting identities, failing to address systemic barriers,

including ableism, sexism, and racism affecting employment outcomes (Scott & Shogren, 2023). Academic literature reveals significant knowledge deficits regarding employment preparatory experiences within educational and community contexts for students with disabilities (Trainor *et al.*, 2020).

Individuals with intellectual disabilities require comprehensive adaptive and functional competencies to effectively perform daily living activities across conceptual, academic, social, and practical domains. Mastering these foundational skills directly determines the level of independence achievable by adults with disabilities in their daily functioning (Green & Losh, 2024). Essential life skills, including personal care, financial management, and household maintenance, directly determine supervision requirements for adults with intellectual disabilities (Woodman *et al.*, 2014). Emerging adults with Down syndrome and their families face critical decisions regarding optimal living arrangements promoting appropriate independence levels (Loveall *et al.*, 2022). Living arrangements frequently change as caregivers age, with some individuals struggling with complex daily tasks such as meal preparation or financial transactions (Van Gameren-Oosterom *et al.*, 2013).

Educators must consider community skill requirements alongside learners' developmental capabilities when designing independent living curricula. Family members and teaching professionals should implement combined simulated and community-based instructional approaches to effectively achieve essential community living competencies (Barczak, 2019). Personal development initiatives specifically help students with intellectual disabilities cultivate individual growth while progressing toward independence goals, focusing on building self-awareness, decision-making capabilities, and personal responsibility (Sigstad & Garrels, 2023). Transition programs throughout the Philippines encounter substantial implementation obstacles, including insufficient resources, limited teacher preparation, and persistent societal misconceptions about disability capabilities. Effective transition programming requires extensive collaboration among educators, families, and community stakeholders.

External success factors often exceed individual control and surpass institutional resource capacities, necessitating comprehensive community involvement in post-secondary preparation. Community stakeholders, including families, service agencies, and potential employers, assume vital responsibilities in creating educational and employment opportunities for students with disabilities (Schutz & Carter, 2022). Collaborative professional networks encompass diverse specialists, including special education teachers, transition coordinators, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and rehabilitation professionals working together for student success (Oertle *et al.*, 2013). The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 established formalized interagency collaboration between educational institutions and vocational rehabilitation services through Pre-Employment Transition Services to promote competitive integrated employment outcomes (Taylor *et al.*, 2019).

Non-profit organizations and private rehabilitation centers frequently contribute to transition processes by addressing community-identified needs, providing supplementary services complementing traditional educational programming (Paguio, 2021). Philippine transition programming encounters substantial coordination obstacles, including insufficient policy frameworks, limited implementation guidance, curriculum gaps, inadequate assessment resources, and shortages of qualified teaching personnel (Pawilen *et al.*, 2018). Additionally, disability-related stigma and negative family attitudes restrict students' community, social, and religious participation opportunities (Marella *et al.*, 2016). Collaboration complications involve business partnerships, agency relationships, and vocational rehabilitation coordination issues challenging comprehensive service delivery efforts, with rural area caregiver engagement presenting particular difficulties (Awsumb *et al.*, 2020).

#### **2.4 Implementation Challenges and Systemic Barriers in the Philippine Context**

Previous research analysis revealed significant knowledge gaps among parents and professionals regarding transition planning methodologies and implementation (Quijano, 2007). Prevalent transition planning obstacles encompass insufficient communication, inadequate guidance provision, resource shortages, and limited program alternatives or experiential opportunities matching student requirements (Benson *et al.*, 2021). These challenges mirror Philippine transition issues, where resource constraints and inappropriate program placements fail to accommodate students' unique abilities and individual needs effectively. Maria, a dyslexic graduate, experienced inadequate vocational preparation resulting in continued family dependency for financial and emotional support, reflecting broader rural community challenges (Puzon, 2025; Ysseldyke *et al.*, 2022). Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities frequently report inadequate employment preparation during their educational experiences, leading to significant difficulties maintaining workplace positions (Sigstad & Garrels, 2022).

Transition stakeholders, including families, students, and educators, consistently identify misalignment between available programs and individual interests or vocational needs (Villareal *et al.*, 2022). Despite institutional mandates requiring transition services, program quality and responsiveness vary considerably, creating substantial disparities in post-graduation employment success compared to peers without disabilities. Natural workplace supports, including colleague mentorship and supervisory guidance, demonstrate significant benefits for employees with intellectual and developmental disabilities by enhancing both social and vocational competencies (Athamanah *et al.*, 2024).

Filipino public-school research investigating disability transition programs revealed that vocational skills instruction remains minimal due to safety concerns, inadequate facility infrastructure, and resource constraints. Consequently, educators prioritize teaching functional academic competencies, community relationship

development, daily living skills, and personal hygiene practices rather than direct employment preparation, reflecting institutional limitations in providing comprehensive vocational training services (Capinpin & Rabara, 2023). Research indicates that only five percent of students with moderate to severe disabilities successfully transition to independent living programs following high school completion, with the majority continuing to reside with family members after graduation (Bouck *et al.*, 2021). These statistics highlight significant gaps in transition programming effectiveness and suggest that current educational approaches may inadequately prepare students for autonomous living.

Research demonstrates that carefully monitored and differentiated instructional methodologies effectively develop essential life and vocational competencies among learners with special educational needs. Educational professionals emphasize transition program importance of transition programs and highlight well-equipped laboratory facilities essential for effective independent living instruction. They document significant achievements among learners with special educational needs in developing practical capabilities, including culinary skills, commerce activities, entrepreneurship, transportation navigation, and measurement competencies (Manalaysay, 2021).

Educational settings experience ongoing interagency collaboration difficulties, compromising post-secondary outcome support effectiveness. Coordination obstacles include inconsistent service role understanding and limited communication frequency between school-based and community professionals (Plotner *et al.*, 2024). Additional barriers encompass inadequate coordination between educators and vocational rehabilitation specialists in Pre-Employment Transition Service delivery due to time constraints, funding limitations, conflicting information, insufficient collaborative spaces, and absent community service providers (Carter *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, educational professionals document remarkable achievements among learners developing practical capabilities through coordinated stakeholder efforts that combine educational instruction with community-based learning opportunities (Manalaysay, 2021).

Successful transition planning requires comprehensive integration of cultural considerations, available resources, and quality-of-life factors to optimize student outcomes. Research demonstrates that while educational background influences pedagogical methods, it doesn't significantly impact the operational effectiveness of transition frameworks (Choi & Lee, 2021). Vocational training programs must examine multiple contributing factors, including curriculum design, community partnerships, and individual student characteristics, to enhance career readiness outcomes. Evidence suggests that demographic variables, while important considerations, do not consistently predict program effectiveness across diverse educational environments.

Independent living skill development faces distinct implementation challenges operating independently from identified success factors (Johnson & Smith, 2018). Research reveals that program design excellence, robust community support, and strong

student engagement don't automatically eliminate operational difficulties, resource limitations, or stakeholder coordination issues during execution. Stakeholder coordination research indicates that established success factors don't guarantee seamless implementation, as challenges often emerge from organizational and systemic issues beyond direct programmatic control. There were previous studies which show that crucial success elements may not directly address logistical or administrative barriers that arise independently during program delivery.

## **2.5 Evidence of Current Realities and Post-Secondary Outcomes**

Research demonstrates that diverse post-secondary transition programs significantly benefit youth with disabilities in achieving successful outcomes. These interventions utilize various delivery approaches across multiple environments such as schools, digital platforms, and healthcare settings (Lindsay *et al.*, 2019). Secondary findings revealed enhanced employment achievements, improved perspectives toward educational accommodations, and demonstrated program viability in transition services (Lindsay *et al.*, 2019). College readiness initiatives helped participants develop self-assurance, peer connections, and essential collegiate navigation abilities (Hsieh, 2018). Intervention studies showed substantial improvements in transition competencies, including objective formation and college awareness, compared to control participants (Izzo, 2019). However, three investigations documented unchanged outcomes in specific areas with minimal differences in career-related social cognition and self-determination measures between groups (Doren *et al.*, 2017).

The comprehensive review of related literature has established theoretical frameworks articulating what effective transition services should encompass—comprehensive individualized planning honoring student voice and self-determination, employment preparation addressing both individual competencies and systemic workplace barriers, independent living skill development spanning conceptual and practical domains, and coordinated stakeholder collaboration transcending traditional institutional boundaries. Conversely, related studies have documented what actually occurs during implementation—persistent resource constraints limiting vocational training delivery, inadequate stakeholder coordination despite legislative mandates, minimal student and family participation in planning processes, significant gaps in employment preparation, leaving graduates unprepared for workforce integration, and alarmingly low rates of successful transition to independent living arrangements.

These empirical findings reveal substantial disconnects between theoretical ideals articulated in literature and practical realities documented in research studies, particularly within resource-constrained contexts where implementation barriers compound to prevent effective service delivery despite stakeholder commitment and theoretical knowledge of best practices. The distinction between what literature prescribes and what studies document becomes especially pronounced in Philippine contexts, where systemic obstacles, including insufficient policy frameworks, limited

implementation guidance, curriculum gaps, inadequate assessment resources, shortages of qualified personnel, disability-related stigma, and negative family attitudes create multilayered barriers that theoretical frameworks alone cannot address.

Given these persistent gaps between transition service ideals and implementation realities, coupled with documented evidence that current approaches inadequately prepare students with disabilities for post-secondary success in employment and independent living, critical questions emerge regarding how transition services actually function within specific educational environments, what factors most significantly influence post-secondary outcomes, how students and families experience existing programming, and whether current approaches fulfill the fundamental promise of preparing all learners for meaningful participation in employment, independent living, and community life beyond formal education. These questions necessitate systematic investigation examining transition service implementation and outcomes within specific contexts where theoretical principles confront resource constraints, where legislative mandates encounter implementation barriers, and where the lived experiences of students with disabilities reveal whether existing services adequately prepare them for the complex, multifaceted challenges they will inevitably encounter as they navigate from educational environments to post-secondary life demanding employment readiness, independent living capabilities, and sustained community participation essential for personal survival and individual progress.

### **3. Material and Methods**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to measure, describe, and examine relationships among naturally occurring variables without manipulation (Punzalan *et al.*, 2025; Novosel, 2022). This methodological approach effectively addressed all six research sub-problems. The descriptive component assessed current levels of transition service effectiveness (Sub-problems 1-5), while the correlational component examined variable relationships and predictive power (Sub-problem 6).

#### **3.2 Research Setting**

Philippine transition services for students with special educational needs (SPED) facilitate movement from basic education to post-secondary opportunities, including employment, vocational training, and further education. Republic Act 11650 mandates these services, emphasizing inclusive education and disability learner support. However, implementation varies across schools and divisions due to resource constraints, teacher training limitations, and infrastructure challenges.

This investigation targeted schools within identified divisions under the supervision of DepEd Region 7 in Cebu Province. Limited specific transition service

reports necessitated drawing from available SPED program documentation and general educational practices to infer implementation status. Given the researcher's offshore work constraints, only schools whose personnel could participate via online survey were considered research locales.

### 3.3 Study Respondents

Strategic respondent selection ensured data validity and depth. The study included school personnel (subject teachers, class advisers, year leaders, head teachers, master teachers, and school heads) and parents, guardians, or Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) officials from identified DepEd divisions in Cebu, regardless of demographic profiles. These stakeholders were optimally positioned to evaluate transition service indicators given their frontline roles.

The study employed combined purposive and convenience sampling methods, acknowledging respondent clustering and role-based participation influences. Purposive sampling enabled efficient targeting of study-relevant participants through non-random selection without requiring predetermined sample sizes (Thomas, 2022). Convenience sampling facilitated data collection from readily accessible populations, offering methodological versatility across diverse research contexts (Golzar *et al.*, 2022).

Natural disasters significantly impacted data collection. A 6.9 Richter scale earthquake and two hard-hitting typhoons caused substantial internet connectivity disruption and community trauma. Consequently, only 37 of 50 targeted respondents from various private and public schools completed surveys, highlighting data collection challenges during regional disasters (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Distribution of Respondents

Mode of Survey	School Personnel		Parents or Guardians		Total	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Online Survey	15	40.54	10	27.03	25	67.57
In-Person Survey	5	13.51	7	18.92	12	32.43
Sub-Total	20	54.05	17	45.95	37	100.00

### 3.4 Research Instrument

Survey indicators for key research areas were derived from established research instruments. Indicators for Individualized Transition Planning Effectiveness, Employment Preparation and Vocational Training Adequacy, Independent Living Skills Development Quality, and Inter-agency Collaboration and Service Coordination originated from the revised Parent Transition Survey, adapted with permission by Fournier (2014) from Morningstar *et al.* (1994). Post-Secondary Outcome Indicators were anchored on the instrument developed by Lombardi *et al.* (2011).

Each sub-problem comprised 10 survey indicators specifically contextualized for Filipino students with disabilities: *Individualized Transition Planning Effectiveness* evaluated transition plan effectiveness, incorporating cultural values, language

preferences, family involvement, post-secondary linkages, academic alignment, scholarship opportunities, religious considerations, community college options, persons with disability (PWD) documentation, and policy-responsive updates. *Employment Preparation and Vocational Training Adequacy* assessed adequacy of employment preparation covering Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) alignment, workplace culture, Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) opportunities, industry partnerships, entrepreneurship training, PWD rights awareness, digital literacy, language proficiency, civil service preparation, and social enterprise inclusion. *Independent Living Skills Development Quality* measured training quality encompassing Filipino household management, market navigation, community participation, religious practices, public transportation use, healthcare access, family dynamics, financial management, disaster preparedness, and cultural event engagement. *Inter-agency Collaboration and Service Coordination* evaluated coordination effectiveness among Department of Education (DepEd), TESDA, Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), local government units (LGUs), Department of Health (DOH), National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector entities, and faith-based organizations in delivering comprehensive transition services. *Post-Secondary Outcome Indicators* assessed success across post-secondary education enrollment, competitive employment, independent living, community integration, self-advocacy, financial independence, health management, transportation navigation, social relationships, and goal attainment.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

During the *preliminary stage*, initial approval was secured from the DepEd Regional VII Office for multiple division inclusion as research locales. The research proposal and survey instruments underwent Regional Research Committee (RRC) review to assess ethical soundness, particularly critical given the study's focus on students with disabilities. Submission requirements included a formal request letter, a complete research proposal, survey instruments, and informed consent forms. However, at the *data gathering stage*, following DepEd approval and informed consent acquisition, survey administration proceeded through online platforms, primarily Google Forms. A compensated research assistant facilitated efficient questionnaire completion and retrieval, assisting with data collection and initial tabulation from online channels, including Google Docs and Messenger. Finally, *within the post-data gathering stage*, collected data underwent statistical treatment and analysis, with results presented in subsequent research chapters.

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

The study maintained rigorous ethical standards throughout all research phases. Ethical clearance was obtained from the college ethics committee or university ethics board

where the researcher pursued graduate studies, ensuring compliance with DepEd guidelines and established protocols. Respondent recruitment adhered strictly to ethical principles. Participants received comprehensive written and oral explanations detailing the study purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. Voluntary participation was emphasized, with explicit assurance that respondents could decline participation or withdraw without negative consequences.

### 3.7 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Strict anonymity and confidentiality protocols protected respondent privacy. No personally identifiable information was collected; only aggregate demographic data were reported when necessary. Completed surveys were stored securely with access restricted to authorized Dissertation Advisory Committee members. Raw data were used exclusively for academic analysis. All data management and storage followed local and institutional guidelines, ensuring sensitive information protection in accordance with ethical and legal standards.

### 3.8 Statistical Treatment

Specific statistical methods were employed for data analysis, namely: The *frequency count* tabulated respondent numbers and percentages per category, providing clear response tallies for survey indicators across established sub-problems. Also, the *weighted mean* calculated average perceptions or ratings for variable groups, determining overall agreement or satisfaction levels among respondents, thereby addressing perception-related research sub-problems. Likewise, the *multiple regression analysis* determined the strength and direction of linear relationships among key research variables, particularly for Sub-problem 6. This analysis identified whether changes in one variable were associated with changes in another, addressing sub-problems concerning variable relationships.

## 4. Results and Discussion

**Table 2:** Individualized Transition Planning Services Effective in Preparing FSWD for Successful Post-Secondary Education Outcomes

S/N	Indicators	$\bar{x}$	SD	VD
1	The individualized transition plan incorporates Filipino cultural values and family expectations in educational goal setting (e.g., Cultural Integration in Planning).	3.57	0.55	VE
2	Transition planning sessions accommodate the preferred language (Filipino, English, or regional dialects) of students and families (e.g., Language Preference Accommodation).	3.38	0.59	VE
3	The transition planning process actively involves extended family members as valued partners in decision-making, consistent with Filipino family structures (e.g., Family-Centered Approach).	3.62	0.49	VE

4	The individualized plan establishes concrete connections with Philippine colleges, universities, and TESDA-accredited institutions (e.g., Post-Secondary Institution Linkages).	3.46	0.73	VE
5	Transition planning accurately assesses academic skills needed for Philippine post-secondary education requirements (K-12 curriculum alignment) (e.g., Academic Skill Assessment Alignment).	3.49	0.61	VE
6	The planning process provides comprehensive information about PWD scholarships, CHED financial assistance, and other Philippine-specific educational funding (e.g., Scholarship and Financial Aid Guidance).	3.68	0.47	VE
7	Transition plans respect and accommodate the students' religious beliefs and spiritual practices prevalent in Philippine society (e.g., Religious and Spiritual Considerations).	3.54	0.56	VE
8	The individualized plan explores community college options and technical-vocational programs appropriate for local employment markets (e.g., Community College Pathway Planning).	3.38	0.59	VE
9	Transition planning includes guidance on obtaining proper PWD identification and certification required by Philippine educational institutions (e.g., Documentation and Certification Assistance).	3.54	0.65	VE
10	The individualized transition plan undergoes systematic review and updates reflecting changing Philippine educational policies and student needs (e.g., Regular Plan Review and Updates).	3.68	0.58	VE
	<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>VE</b>

**Legend:** 3.25-4.00 Very Effective (VE); 2.50-3.24 Effective (EF); 1.75-2.49 Less Effective (LE); 1.00-1.74 Not Effective (NE).

Results for Table 2 show that this high level of effectiveness is consistently reflected across all ten measured indicators, with an overall mean of 3.53 (SD=0.58), interpreted as Very Effective. Specifically, the highest perceived effectiveness relates to the planning process offering comprehensive information about PWD scholarships, financial assistance, and other Philippine-specific educational funding, alongside the systematic review and updating of the individualized transition plan reflecting changing Philippine educational policies and student needs<sup>10</sup>. Indicators with the lowest effectiveness scores, though still in the VE range, include the accommodation of the preferred language of students and families during planning sessions and the exploration of community college options and technical-vocational programs appropriate for local employment markets.

This pattern suggests a strong alignment with country-specific financial guidance and policy responsiveness. Correspondingly, the "Very Effective" overall rating signifies that the current structure of Individualized Transition Planning (ITP) for FSWD successfully integrates key elements tailored to the Philippine context, thereby boosting confidence in post-secondary readiness. The particularly high ratings for scholarship guidance and regular plan review highlight a system that prioritizes the financial accessibility of education and adaptability to the dynamic local policy environment. This emphasis likely addresses significant barriers faced by PSWD in the Philippines, ensuring that their plans remain relevant and financially viable.

The strong inclusion of family values and the active involvement of extended family further highlight the culturally responsive nature of the planning process. While the ITP is rated very effective overall, the marginally lower scores for language preference accommodation and community college pathway planning suggest areas where the program's reach and inclusivity could be strengthened. Ensuring that transition planning sessions are fully responsive to the diverse linguistic needs of students and their families across the archipelago would further eliminate potential communication barriers and foster deeper engagement. Similarly, increasing the focus on practical, local employment-market-appropriate paths, such as community college and technical-vocational options, would provide valuable alternatives to traditional four-year degree programs.

Transition planning represents the systematic preparation of students for post-graduation life, encompassing successful engagement in higher education, vocational training, military service, employment, and independent living activities (Forbes Road School District, 2013). Furthermore, earlier studies identified three essential transition planning components: establishing student objectives and future visions, identifying required supportive services for goal achievement, and establishing connections with external organizations (Paguio, 2021). Moreover, college readiness initiatives have helped participants develop self-assurance, peer connections, and essential collegiate navigation abilities (Arambulo, 2024). However, informal observations in the Philippines indicate resource limitations and insufficient educator preparation frequently compromise program effectiveness, leading to inadequate preparation for post-secondary life (Chan, 2025).

The high level of effectiveness in individualized planning signifies a shift toward holistic and culturally-rooted special education in the Philippines. By integrating Filipino family values and specific financial guidance, the framework effectively addresses systemic barriers unique to the local landscape. However, the identified limitations in language accommodation and technical pathway planning suggest that linguistic diversity and vocational breadth remain hurdles to full engagement. As noted by Chan (2025), resource constraints often compromise program effectiveness. These implications suggest that while the current structure is robust, localized refinements in communication and technical options are essential for bridging the gap (Arambulo, 2024; Paguio, 2021).

**Table 3:** Employment Preparation and Vocational Training Services  
 Adequate in Equipping FSWD for Competitive Employment Opportunities

S/N	Indicators	$\bar{x}$	SD	VD
1	Employment preparation aligns with TESDA National Certificates and competency standards relevant to local job markets (e.g., TESDA Program Alignment).	3.41	0.64	VA
2	Vocational training includes orientation on Filipino workplace norms, "pakikipagkapwa," respect for authority, and professional relationships (e.g., Filipino Workplace Culture Training).	3.27	0.69	VA

3	Employment preparation addresses overseas Filipino worker (OFW) opportunities and requirements for students interested in international employment (e.g., OFW Preparation Services).	3.51	0.51	VA
4	Vocational training programs maintain active partnerships with local businesses, BPO companies, and Filipino-owned enterprises (e.g., Local Industry Partnership).	3.41	0.64	VA
5	Employment preparation includes training on small business development and "negosyo" opportunities suitable for PWDs in Philippine communities (e.g., Entrepreneurship and Livelihood Training).	3.22	0.71	AD
6	Vocational training covers Republic Act 11199 and PWD employment rights under Philippine labor laws (e.g., PWD Employment Rights Education).	3.35	0.59	VA
7	Employment preparation addresses digital literacy and technology skills relevant to Philippine industries (e.g., BPO, e-commerce, digital marketing) (e.g., Technology Skills for Philippine Markets).	3.43	0.65	VA
8	Vocational training develops communication competencies in English, Filipino, and relevant regional languages for diverse workplace settings (e.g., Communication Skills in Multiple Languages).	3.38	0.64	VA
9	Training includes preparation for civil service examinations and government employment opportunities with PWD quotas (e.g., Government Employment Preparation).	3.49	0.61	VA
10	Employment preparation explores opportunities in Philippine social enterprises and cooperatives that prioritize PWD inclusion (e.g., Social Enterprise and Cooperative Involvement).	3.32	0.71	VA
	<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.38</b>	<b>0.64</b>	<b>VA</b>

**Legend:** 3.25-4.00 Very Adequate (VA); 2.50-3.24 Adequate (AD); 1.75-2.49 Less Adequate (LA); 1.00-1.74 Not Adequate (NA).

The results of Table 3 indicate that Employment Preparation and Vocational Training services are generally Very Adequate (VA) in equipping FSWD for competitive employment opportunities, as confirmed by the overall adequacy rating of 3.38 (SD=0.64). A strong consistency is observed across most indicators, falling within the VA range. The highest rated indicators concern the preparation for overseas Filipino worker (OFW) opportunities and the training for civil service examinations, which reflects an emphasis on both international and government employment options. The lowest score, which falls into the Adequate (AD) range, is for the indicator related to training on small business development and *negosyo* (business) opportunities suitable for PWDs in Philippine communities.

Somehow, the overall "Very Adequate" rating implies that the programs are successfully integrating key elements essential for formal employment, especially within the Philippine labor context. The high scores for OFW preparation and government employment training demonstrate a strategic alignment with major Philippine employment sectors and government mandates, such as PWD quotas. This focus ensures FSWD are prepared for high-impact career paths. Furthermore, the adequacy of training for alignment with TESDA National Certificates and for addressing Filipino workplace

norms, like *pakikipagkapwa* (fellowship/human connection), reinforces the cultural and regulatory relevance of the vocational training provided.

Moreover, the sole indicator falling into the "Adequate" category—training on small business development and *negosyo* opportunities—suggests a significant but overlooked potential pathway for FSWD. Entrepreneurship and livelihood training are crucial for creating self-employment opportunities, particularly in community settings where formal jobs may be scarce or inaccessible. This lower score indicates a need to bolster the curriculum in this area to fully empower FSWD with the skills required to initiate and manage their own small enterprises, which is a common and vital aspect of the Philippine economy.

Verily, of the 1.9 million working-age Filipinos with disabilities, fewer than one in five participated in the labor force, contrasting sharply with the 60.5% general population rate (PSA, 2024). Despite this, over 25% of employed PWDs work in low-paying elementary occupations like street-sweeping or domestic work, which underutilizes their potential (PSA, 2024). Crucially, success emerges through targeted interventions, such as vocational training and support organizations that facilitate meaningful employment transitions. Therefore, employment preparation services address barriers by preparing students for workforce entry and establishing networks with disability-inclusive employers (Tan, 2022).

Yet, the stark disparity in labor force participation among PWDs, as reported by the PSA (2024), indicates a vast underutilization of human potential that current training must aggressively counteract. The analytical implication is that while programs meet regulatory standards like TESDA, there is a critical need to bolster entrepreneurship or "*negosyo*" training. As Tan (2022) suggests, establishing networks with inclusive employers is vital. Such targeted interventions facilitate meaningful transitions from elementary occupations to high-impact career paths.

**Table 4:** Transition Services Develop Independent Living Skills among FSWD for Successful Community Integration

S/N	Indicators	$\bar{x}$	SD	VD
1	Employment preparation explores opportunities in Philippine social enterprises and cooperatives that prioritize PWD inclusion (e.g., Social Enterprise and Cooperative Involvement).	3.51	0.56	VWD
2	Training develops skills for shopping in local markets, "sari-sari" stores, and understanding Filipino commercial practices and bargaining culture (e.g., "Palengke" and Market Navigation).	3.59	0.55	VWD
3	Independent living services teach students to participate in barangay activities, community events, and local governance processes (e.g., Barangay Community Participation).	3.59	0.60	VWD
4	Training supports students' ability to independently participate in religious practices important to Filipino spiritual life (e.g., Religious and Spiritual Independence).	3.65	0.54	VWD

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5	Independent living preparation covers navigation of jeepneys, tricycles, buses, and other Philippine public transportation systems (e.g., Transportation in Philippine Settings).	3.59	0.60	VWD
6	Training includes understanding PhilHealth, local health centers, barangay health workers, and traditional Filipino health practices (e.g., Filipino Healthcare System Navigation).	3.54	0.65	VWD
7	Independent living services address maintaining relationships with extended family while developing personal autonomy within Filipino family dynamics (e.g., Extended Family Relationship Management).	3.59	0.60	VWD
8	Training covers Philippine banking systems, remittances, "paluwagan" (informal savings groups), and money management in peso currency (e.g., Financial Management with Filipino Banking).	3.59	0.60	VWD
9	Independent living training addresses typhoon preparedness, earthquake safety, and other natural disaster responses specific to the Philippines (e.g., Emergency Preparedness for Philippine Hazards).	3.61	0.55	VWD
10	Training develops skills for independent participation in local festivals, fiestas, and cultural celebrations important to community integration (e.g., Cultural Event and Festival Participation).	3.61	0.55	VWD
	<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>VWD</b>

**Legend:** 3.25-4.00 Very Well Developed (VWD); 2.50-3.24 Well Developed (WD); 1.75-2.49 Poorly Developed (PD); 1.00-1.74 Very Poorly Developed (VPD).

Data in Table 4 reveals a remarkable consistency, with every single indicator receiving a Very Well Developed (VWD) rating, resulting in an overall mean of 3.59 (SD=0.58). The indicators with the highest degree of development are training that supports students' ability to independently participate in religious practices and those addressing typhoon preparedness, earthquake safety, and other natural disaster responses specific to the Philippines. Conversely, the lowest score, while still in the VWD range, is for exploring opportunities in Philippine social enterprises and cooperatives that prioritize PWD inclusion.

The results reflect a strong and comprehensive focus on cultural, financial, emergency, and logistical competencies vital for independent life within the Philippine community context. The "Very Well Developed" overall finding confirms that the independent living skills component of the transition services is robust, culturally relevant, and highly effective in preparing FSWD for autonomous life in the Philippines. The high scores for navigation of Philippine public transportation, marketplace shopping (*palengke*), financial management (including *paluwagan*), and understanding the local healthcare system (PhilHealth) demonstrate a practical grounding in everyday local challenges. Furthermore, the strong emphasis on disaster preparedness is crucial, given the Philippines' vulnerability to natural hazards.

While the success is evident across the board, a closer look at the results highlights the depth of the program's cultural relevance. The uniformly high ratings across all ILS indicators confirm a deep level of cultural and spiritual sensitivity in the curriculum. The high degree of development in areas like religious/spiritual independence and participation in *barangay* (community) activities, local festivals, and cultural celebrations

signifies that the services are not just teaching survival skills but are actively promoting full civic and cultural membership. This approach moves beyond basic personal care to ensure that FSWD can participate meaningfully and independently in the rich social fabric of Filipino life.

Despite daily navigation obstacles, individuals with disabilities demonstrate independence through adaptive navigation skills, even with challenges like inaccessible public transportation (Ramos & Cruz, 2021). In addition, community support, like the buddy system during earthquake drills, is necessary for navigating independent living barriers due to infrastructure failures (Abueva, 2024). Also, essential life skills, including personal care, financial management, and household maintenance, directly determine supervision requirements and access to autonomous living arrangements for adults with intellectual disabilities (Larkin, 2019). Finally, educational professionals document significant achievements among learners with special educational needs in developing practical capabilities, including culinary skills, commerce, and transportation navigation (Mercado, 2022).

The comprehensive development of independent living skills reveals a curriculum deeply sensitive to the practical realities of Filipino community life. High ratings for "*palengke*" navigation and disaster preparedness address the archipelago's specific environmental and social challenges. However, the reliance on community support systems, such as the buddy system during emergencies mentioned by Abueva (2024), highlights that individual autonomy is often supplemented by collective resilience. These findings imply that transition services successfully move beyond personal care to foster civic membership (Mercado, 2022). Consequently, empowering FSWD with these competencies reduces supervision requirements and facilitates successful, self-sufficient integration into the broader Philippine social fabric (Larkin, 2019; Ramos & Cruz, 2021).

**Table 5:** Coordination among Educational Institutions, Government Agencies, and Community Organizations Effective in Delivering Comprehensive Transition Services to FSWD

S/N	Indicators	$\bar{x}$	SD	VD
1	Training develops skills for independent participation in local festivals, fiestas, and cultural celebrations important to community integration (e.g., Cultural Event and Festival Participation).	3.38	0.59	VE
2	Coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development is effective in ensuring seamless access to PWD benefits, assistive devices, and social services (e.g., DSWD Social Services Integration).	3.62	0.49	VE
3	Collaboration with the Department of Labor and Employment is effective in facilitating job placement, apprenticeship programs, and PWD employment quota compliance (e.g., DOLE Employment Services Linkage).	3.68	0.47	VE
4	Coordination with Local Government Units is effective in ensuring barangay-level support services and community-based programs are accessible to students (e.g., LGU Barangay-Level Support).	3.54	0.56	VE
5	Inter-agency collaboration is effective in facilitating access to Department of Health services, therapy programs, and medical support for students with disabilities (e.g., DOH Health Services Coordination).	3.35	0.59	VE

6	Coordination is effective in ensuring consistent implementation of National Council on Disability Affairs policies and guidelines across all service providers (e.g., NCDA Policy Implementation).	3.43	0.65	VE
7	Collaboration is effective in engaging Filipino disability organizations, foundations, and civil society groups in service delivery (e.g., NGO and Foundation Partnerships).	3.59	0.60	VE
8	Inter-agency coordination is effective in involving Filipino businesses, corporations, and private employers in transition service provision (e.g., Private Sector Engagement).	3.65	0.54	VE
9	Coordination is effective in including churches, religious organizations, and faith-based groups that play significant roles in Filipino communities (e.g., Faith-Based Organization Integration).	3.51	0.51	VE
10	Inter-agency collaboration is effective in maintaining information sharing systems and coordinated case management for seamless service delivery (e.g., Information Sharing and Case Management).	3.41	0.64	VE
	<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>VE</b>

**Legend:** 3.25-4.00 Very Effective (VE); 2.50-3.24 Effective (EF); 1.75-2.49 Less Effective (LE); 1.00-1.74 Not Effective (NE).

The data for Table 5 shows that all indicators measured fall within the VE range, pointing to a consistent strength in inter-agency collaboration with an overall mean of 3.52 (SD=0.56). The highest scored indicators include collaboration with the DOLE for job placement, and effective engagement of Filipino businesses, corporations, and private employers in service provision. The lowest-scored indicator, though still Very Effective, relates to the initial coordination that develops skills for independent participation in local festivals and cultural celebrations. The "Very Effective" overall rating for inter-agency coordination confirms a high degree of synergy among various service providers in the Philippines, which is crucial for delivering comprehensive transition services. The particularly high ratings for collaboration with DOLE and private sector engagement indicate a strong, functioning employment pipeline for FSWD. Effective coordination with the DSWD and LGUs further ensures that students seamlessly access necessary PWD benefits, social services, and *barangay*-level support. This strong, cohesive network prevents service gaps, maximizes resource utilization, and ensures that the transition path for FSWD is as smooth as possible. To better understand the holistic nature of the collaboration, the results also reveal the importance of culturally significant partnerships. The effectiveness of coordination extends significantly into the community and faith-based sphere, as evidenced by the high ratings for involving Filipino disability organizations, foundations, and churches/religious groups. This demonstrates that the coordination model successfully integrates non-governmental and culturally influential entities, which often play a critical role in Filipino communities. By engaging these organizations, the transition services tap into a broader network of social, emotional, and spiritual support, leading to a more holistic and culturally appropriate service delivery model.

The consistently high effectiveness scores across government, private, and community sectors point to a robust, integrated, and well-managed system. Inadequate collaboration among educational and community partners is a key implementation challenge for Philippine transition programs (Chan, 2025). Conversely, communities with formal interagency partnerships facilitated job placements for students with disabilities compared to areas lacking structured collaborative agreements between schools and local employers (Dy, 2023). Significantly, legislation in other contexts established formalized interagency collaboration to promote competitive integrated employment outcomes (Wermuth & Collum, 2021). Ultimately, the framework for transition programming includes interagency collaboration as one of the five essential domains that foster post-school achievement (Kohler, 2004).

The synergy among Philippine government agencies and the private sector serves as a vital engine for transition success. Effective coordination with DOLE and DSWD ensures that FSWD do not face service gaps during their transition. Despite this, Chan (2025) warns that inadequate collaboration remains a significant implementation challenge. The analytical implication is that formalized partnerships, like those discussed by Dy (2023), are more effective than informal arrangements in securing job placements. By integrating faith-based organizations and NGOs, the model utilizes influential community structures (Kohler, 2004). This comprehensive coordination is a key domain for fostering post-school achievement through structured collaborative agreements (Wermuth & Collum, 2021).

**Table 6:** FSWD Achieve Successful Post-Secondary Outcomes in Education, Employment, and Independent Living following Transition Services

S/N	Indicators	$\bar{x}$	SD	VD
1	Post-Secondary Education Enrollment Success: Students successfully enroll and persist in higher education institutions or technical-vocational programs.	3.32	0.71	VS
2	Competitive Employment Achievement: Students obtain and maintain employment in integrated community settings.	3.51	0.56	VS
3	Independent Living Accomplishment: Students live independently or with minimal support in community settings.	3.38	0.59	VS
4	Community Integration Success: Students actively participate in community activities, organizations, and social networks.	3.62	0.49	VS
5	Self-Advocacy Achievement: Students effectively communicate their needs and rights in post-secondary settings.	3.38	0.59	VS
6	Financial Independence Success: Students manage their finances and contribute to their economic well-being.	3.62	0.49	VS
7	Health Self-Management Achievement: Students independently manage their health care and disability-related needs.	3.51	0.56	VS
8	Transportation Independence Success: Students navigate transportation systems to access post-secondary opportunities.	3.59	0.55	VS
9	Social Relationship Development: Students maintain meaningful relationships and social connections in post-secondary environments.	3.62	0.49	VS
10	Goal Attainment Success: Students achieve their individualized post-secondary transition goals.	3.68	0.47	VS

<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>VS</b>
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**Legend:** 3.25-4.00 Very Successful (VS); 2.50-3.24 Successful (SU); 1.75-2.49 Less Successful (LS); 1.00-1.74 Not Successful (NS).

As to Table 6, all ten indicators were rated as Very Successful (VS), with an overall mean of 3.52 (SD=0.55), showing a consistent achievement of positive outcomes across all domains. The highest success rates are seen in Goal Attainment Success, Community Integration Success, Social Relationship Development, and Financial Independence Success<sup>91</sup>. The lowest-scored outcome, while still very successful, is Post-Secondary Education Enrollment Success. This pattern suggests that while enrollment in formal education is marginally less successful than in other areas, the FSWD are exceptionally successful in achieving their individual goals, integrating into the community, managing their finances, and building social networks.

The overall "Very Successful" rating strongly validates the quality and effectiveness of the preceding transition services—planning, employment preparation, independent living skills development, and inter-agency coordination—in producing tangible, positive results. The high success in achieving individualized transition goals and financial independence confirms that the programs are person-centered and translate directly into economic self-sufficiency. Furthermore, the top-tier success in community integration and social relationship development reflects that the services are not merely preparing students for employment or housing, but are enabling a rich, engaged, and meaningful life within the community.

While success is broadly evident, the slight variations in achievement levels provide insight for future service refinement. The slightly lower rating for Post-Secondary Education Enrollment Success suggests that further efforts could be made to smooth the pathway into higher education or technical-vocational programs. This marginal difference implies that the barrier may lie more in the transition to the educational institution itself rather than in the student's preparedness or goal-setting. Focused initiatives to strengthen institutional linkages could further elevate this outcome. The transition from secondary education to adult life represents a critical juncture where inadequate preparation often results in suboptimal post-secondary outcomes (Chan, 2025). Hence, diverse post-secondary transition programs significantly benefit youth with disabilities. Specifically, secondary findings from intervention studies revealed enhanced employment achievements. Furthermore, young adults with actively involved parents during transition programming achieve superior post-school employment results (Johnson & Smith, 2018).

The successful post-secondary outcomes validate the holistic approach of the transition model, proving that culturally sensitive preparation yields tangible community integration. While educational enrollment success is marginally lower, this suggests systemic barriers at the institutional level rather than student unpreparedness (Chan, 2025). Apparently, diverse programs significantly benefit youth outcomes. The analytical implication is that financial independence and goal attainment are realized

when parental involvement and tailored interventions are prioritized. Therefore, focusing on strengthening institutional linkages and providing educational accommodations could further elevate enrollment success, ensuring that the critical juncture of graduation results in optimal long-term achievements.

**Table 7:** Predictive Inference of Individualized Transition Planning Effectiveness, Employment Preparation Adequacy, Independent Living Skills Development, and Inter-Agency Coordination on Post-Secondary Outcomes Among FSWD

Variable under inference	Comp. $\beta$	Comp. $R^2$	P-value	Decision	Result
Individualized Transition Planning Effectiveness to Post-Secondary Outcomes	0.351	0.844	0.034	Reject $H_0$	Significant Predictor
Employment Preparation Adequacy to Post-Secondary Outcomes	-0.150	0.844	0.365	Accept $H_0$	Not a Significant Predictor
Independent Living Skills Development to Post-Secondary Outcomes	0.102	0.844	0.358	Accept $H_0$	Not a Significant Predictor
Inter-Agency Coordination to Post-Secondary Outcomes	0.649	0.844	0.029	Reject $H_0$	Significant Predictor

**Note:**  $\beta$  refers to Standard Regression Coefficient; Adjusted  $R^2$  refers to Coefficient of Determination

The evaluation of factors in Table 7 revealed that two of the four transition service domains demonstrate a clear and significant relationship with achievement. Specifically, Individualized Transition Planning Effectiveness ( $\beta=0.351$ ,  $p=0.034$ ) and Inter-Agency Coordination ( $\beta=0.649$ ,  $p=0.029$ ) are confirmed to be highly reliable predictors of success. This is particularly noteworthy given that both predictors were previously rated as "Very Effective". The strongest of these predictors is Inter-Agency Coordination, highlighting the critical importance of a cohesive and integrated service network.

Conversely, the data indicates that Employment Preparation Adequacy ( $\beta=-0.150$ ,  $p=0.365$ ) and Independent Living Skills Development ( $\beta=0.102$ ,  $p=0.358$ ) do not show a statistically reliable connection to the overall Post-Secondary Outcomes. This trend is surprising because these services were assessed as "Very Adequate" and "Very Well Developed" respectively. This pattern suggests that while foundational skills are being successfully taught, the success of the outcome hinges more on the quality of the initial plan and the systemic support structure surrounding the FSWD.

The finding that Individualized Transition Planning Effectiveness is a significant predictor validates the central role of a well-conceived, culturally-responsive, and policy-aligned plan. A plan provides the necessary foresight and direction, acting as the foundation upon which all other services are built. Furthermore, the strong predictive influence of Inter-Agency Coordination emphasizes that Post-Secondary Outcomes are fundamentally dependent on a seamless ecosystem of support. The data suggests that even if an FSWD possesses well-developed skills, sustained success requires the effective integration of services—from DSWD social services to LGU-level support—which provides the necessary access and opportunities.

Based on these insights, there is a need to strategically reallocate resources toward strengthening the two significant predictors. While current levels of skill preparation are high, the effort spent on specific skills may not yield as much impact as bolstering the planning and coordination processes. Theoretically, the study is anchored in frameworks like the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) and Kohler's Taxonomy (Larkin, 2019). However, longitudinal research found that demographic information demonstrated limited predictive capacity compared to other factors (Wermuth & Collum, 2021). Consequently, the comprehensive analysis confirms that the systemic strength derived from excellent planning and cohesive governmental and community partnerships is the ultimate determinant of successful post-secondary life for FSWD in the Philippine context.

The identification of planning and coordination as the only significant predictors shifts the focus from skill volume to systemic quality. This validates the theoretical frameworks of SCCT and Kohler's Taxonomy regarding post-school achievement (Larkin, 2019). The analytical implication for the Philippines is that while vocational skills are necessary, they are insufficient without a robust roadmap and inter-agency support. As Wermuth and Collum (2021) suggest, non-demographic factors like coordination are more influential for effectiveness. Strategic reallocation of resources toward training specialists is essential (Paguio, 2021). This ensures that the high success achieved by FSWD is sustained through a durable, integrated support framework.

Hence, while all transition service domains are perceived as highly effective, the ultimate success of FSWD in the Philippines hinges on systemic quality. The comprehensive analysis identifies individualized planning and inter-agency coordination as the primary predictors of post-secondary achievement. By integrating cultural relevance and cross-sector collaboration, the transition model effectively bridges the gap between secondary education and independent life. These findings highlight the necessity of a unified ecosystem that fosters autonomy and meaningful community integration for every learner within the archipelago.

## **5. Recommendation**

Drawing upon the validated success of the current transition services model and the identified significance of its predictive factors, the following recommendations are endorsed for future consideration to solidify the program's strengths and strategically address areas for focused enhancement. Given that Employment Preparation Adequacy and Independent Living Skills Development are highly rated but not statistically significant predictors of overall success, future researchers must isolate and measure these variables as *mediators* or *moderators*.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the transition services model for Filipino Students with Disabilities (FSWD) is vigorous, consistently leading to Very Successful post-secondary outcomes across education, employment, and community integration. However, the study identifies that this success is fundamentally and significantly predicted by the high effectiveness of Individualized Transition Planning and strong Inter-Agency Coordination, making these elements the core drivers of transition success, more so than the specific skills training components.

## 7. Acknowledgement

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### Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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