

THE PERSPECTIVE OF TEACHERS TOWARD THE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PROFICIENCY IN HANDLING LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE CONTEXT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Mat Niel P. Ganohay

Graduate School of Education, Cebu Technological University -Main Campus, Cebu, Philippines
matnielg@gmail.com

Abstract

Inclusive education plays a vital role in achieving educational equity by integrating students with Special Educational Needs into regular classrooms, ensuring they receive quality education and equal opportunities, as mandated by the 1987 Constitution and related laws. This study examines the experiences of teachers in managing learners with special educational needs (LSEN) in mainstream settings. Adopting a phenomenological approach, one-on-one interviews were conducted with fifteen teachers at Bankal National High School in the Division of Lapu-Lapu City. A total population sampling was utilized since there are limited number of respondents in the district. The findings revealed the five key themes in this study: addressing classroom engagement in an inclusive environment, techniques in managing in an inclusive setting, accommodations to managing behavioral problems in an inclusive setting, establishing a helpful learning environment in the classroom, and embracing classroom management techniques to accommodate LSEN. Participants stressed the importance of establishing clear rules and routines, peer support, and interactive and accessible teaching materials in managing classroom dynamics. Likewise, strategies like modeling behavior, addressing the root cause of problems and collaborating with parents were found effective in handling behavioral challenges. The study concludes that inclusive education thrives on predictable routines, empathy, and cultural sensitivity. Its primary output is a training proposal focused on developing accessible teaching materials for inclusive classrooms. Recommendations include regular teacher training, strengthened parent-teacher collaboration, and the creation of a manual outlining strategies and resources to help new teachers manage inclusive classrooms effectively.

Keywords: Inclusive education, learners with special educational needs, behavior and classroom management, qualitative phenomenological design, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu

Introduction

The significance of comprehensive instruction in ensuring that each undergraduate has approach to comprising knowledge moment is becoming more widely acknowledged. The Department of Education is administrative of merging undergraduates accompanying Special Educational Needs (SEN) into regular classrooms so they can impose upon friendly addition and anti-discrimination program, by means of the 1987 Constitution, Republic Act 10533, and Republic Act 11650. Around 1.6 heap children in the Philippines are supposed to have restrictions, in accordance with the World Health Organization (WHO), that estimates that 15-20% of youngsters worldwide have few somewhat disadvantages. This dossier stresses how detracting it search out judge the magnitude at which point all-embracing education is advocating these juveniles' academic endeavors.

According to Byrd & Alexander (2020), the maturity of learners with special education needs (LSEN) as they become older enhances the educational opportunities for teachers of students with special needs (SPED), highlighting the importance of inclusive instruction. The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) standard outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) is regarded as the most effective educational practice, as is mainstreaming, which entails integrating LSEN into general knowledge studies classrooms with the appropriate support. The goal of this approach is to create a more collaborative learning environment specifically tailored to LSEN.

The use of comprehensive instruction has of age significantly over period. As stated for one U.S. More than 60% of juniors accompanying disadvantages currently give not completely 80% of their school era in all-embracing backgrounds, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. Research shows that by contribution appropriate command and advancing a different and impartial idea, this approach helps all students. Teachers play a important function in guaranteeing that juniors amidst disabilities accept the support they need to gain in this place scene, promoting meaningful education moment for two together undergraduates along and without destructions (School of Education Online, 2020).

Students with special education needs acknowledge that they may have significant difficulties in their academic pursuits, particularly in the areas of reading, math, vocabulary, and written verbalization (National Association of Special Education Teachers, nd). As per their assessment, these individuals demonstrate a discrepancy between their potential and actual academic accomplishments, along with a slower rate of information acquisition in comparison to their peers. Particularly low reading difficulties, which can startle up to 90% of students, are typically caused by phonological and speech deficiencies.

Alongside the 1987 Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Philippine government regularly emphasizes and upholds the importance of education as a fundamental human right. Through the mainstreaming process, the Department of Education promotes comprehensive instruction. Research conducted in Legazpi City by Lorenzita (2023) highlights these arrangements by integrating Sign Language, Project LCD-FILE for shared knowledge, and contextualizing courses that contribute to the advancement of friendly addition, ability augmentation, and enhanced trade moment. This allows students with exceptional instructional needs to thrive in an inclusive learning environment.

Teachers must use a variety of specialized techniques to address their strengths and weaknesses, according to Aqilah et al. (2019). They advocate using technology, music, and art to enhance and stimulate students' learning. To ensure a holistic approach to the students' development, interventions should also address their social and emotional requirements. By integrating correction with acknowledgment of students' skills, educators may create a learning atmosphere that fosters both academic achievement and personal development.

However, there are differing views on the efficacy of inclusive education, particularly for LSEN. Some research calls for inclusive education, which provides equal and equitable access to education for all. However, other research raise doubts regarding the effectiveness of inclusive education in practice. For example, Mc Coy et al. (2020) discovered that SEN students frequently suffer when transitioning from primary to secondary school, indicating that the program falls short of fully meeting their needs.

Similarly, Vaz et al. (2015) and Saloviita (2020) discovered that instructors' attitudes toward inclusion vary according on their training and level of preparation. For inclusive education to be successful, a teacher's preparation is essential. The results of this study show that some teachers do not attend LSEN seminars or acquire training. Additionally, one's ability to provide an environment of encouragement for mainstreamed LSEN is limited by the absence of pertinent academic materials and resources. These results emphasize the need for further studies on the best times and methods for mainstreaming SEN students.

Furthermore, there is a considerable gap in research on the efficacy of inclusive education practices for LSEN in the Philippines. While some research has highlighted the potential benefits, few local studies have provided evidence-based insights into how teacher-implementers view and experience mainstreaming techniques.

Given the absence of prior research in this area, especially in the Philippine context, this study attempts to provide firsthand viewpoints from educators spearheading the implementation process. This study will be better able to determine what will make inclusive education effective and where it can be improved by considering their perspectives, challenges, and coping strategies. Examining the effectiveness of LSEN instructors in mainstreaming these students in an inclusive environment is the aim of this study.

The judgments concerning this study add to the ongoing conversation over inclusive instruction, specifically in evolving nations like the Philippines. While Schwartz and others. (2021) and Koçdar and others. (2024) climax the benefits of specialized mediations for SEN undergraduates, they also understand, the challenges of prevailing unification. By presenting evidence-located judgments from teacher outlooks, this study offers proficient pieces of advice to enhance all-embracing instruction in the Philippine circumstances.

Methodology

Teachers' experiences and perceptions of inclusive education and classroom management in dealing with LSEs at the designated public school-Sped center in Lapu-Lapu City Division will be investigated using phenomenological qualitative research to meet the goals and purposes of this paper. Through one-on-one interviews with the chosen teachers, the method will be utilized to obtain a thorough grasp of the topic. A succession of leading questions will be used to accumulate dossier, and having a theme study will be used to accept the results.

Neubauer and others. (2019) typify phenomenology as approximate research approach that investigates things lived happenings in their environments. This aligns with Husserl's (1931) concept that individuals create meaning from the world based on their own experiences. Alhazmi & Kaufman (2022) highlighted the importance of meticulously annotating, elucidating, detailing, or interpreting individuals lived experiences to reveal them more completely. The authors also pointed out that phenomenology can be either interpretive, which goes beyond mere description, or descriptive, which focuses on recounting lived experiences without assessment. Both approaches

encourage active engagement with participants rather than relying on predetermined methods, admitting analysts to explore human occurrences in a more reactive method.

The research was administered at Bankal National High School, in Lapu-Lapu City Division which helped change the education system through technology. It also adopts Inclusive education since 2022 under the administration of the Department of Education, Division of Lapu-Lapu City. It is located at Purok 4 Bankal, Lapu-Lapu City, 6015 Cebu, Philippines.

The members of participants of the study will be Fifteenth SEN teachers in the school. The total ratio population sampling was utilized in this study since, there are very limited number of respondents in the district. The school has a total of forty-eight teachers with one hundred sixteen SPED learners from Grade 7 to Grade 12. Since fifteen sections are holding inclusive education classes with a ratio of one Inclusive educator to two Learners with special educational needs. According to Laerd Dissertation (2024), this sampling approach is a purposive sampling strategy in which researchers investigate a complete population that possesses certain, frequently rare, traits. This technique is especially advantageous when the population size is limited, such as in the study of educators instructing juniors with specialized educational needs, where excluding even a handful of individuals could result in important omissions in comprehension.

Participants will be selected using a purposive sampling method, with an emphasis on the following requirements: (a) currently teaching; (b) handling incorporated learners with special educational needs (LSENs); (c) experiencing at least one year of instruction with LSEN; and (d) openly consenting to participate in the study.

The study employed the Thematic Analysis framework put forth by Clark and Braun (2006) to examine the qualitative data that was gathered. Six steps make up this framework, according to Maguire and Delahunt (2017): (1) understanding the data, (2) forming preliminary codes, (3) labeling themes, (4) evaluating themes, (5) delineating themes, and (6) book the last report.

Results and Discussion

The information acquired through interviews and observations is presented in this section. The study used thematic analysis to understand the information gathered through coding after reaching data saturation.

Accumulated five themes derived from the conclusion of interviews that included 10 sub-themes. These themes encompass Addressing Classroom Engagement in an Inclusive Environment, Techniques in Managing Inclusive Setting, Accommodation to Managing Behavioral Problems in Inclusive Settings, Establishing a Helpful Learning Environment in the Classroom, and Embracing Classroom Management Techniques to Accommodate SEN Learners.

Theme 1: Addressing Classroom Engagement in an Inclusive Environment

This theme explores the strategies used by educators with mainstreamed LSEN to foster and sustain a cohesive, productive learning atmosphere that meets the varied needs of every student. This theme consists of three sub-themes: Setting Clear Guidelines and Procedures, Promoting Peer Support, Incorporating Technology, and Creating Engaging Activities. These concepts suggest that SPED teachers must employ proactive strategies when working with LSEN. By utilizing these methods, educators can foster a cohesive and productive knowledge atmosphere that addresses the distinguishing necessities of every junior student. These approaches can assure to each high school students having same chances to delve in an encouraging and engaging classroom.

Sub theme1: Peer Collaboration and Support. In an inclusive classroom, collaboration among students is essential. This subtheme highlights the importance of pairing students according to their strengths, allowing them to support one another. When students assist each other, whether in language skills or specific subjects, it fosters teamwork and cultivates a positive learning environment for all.

"There are several times wherein the learner experiences episodes. Sometimes it is manageable but there are times when it is difficult to manage. What I do is that I pause my discussion for a while to address his episode and speaking calmly. Other times, I allow him to spare his words in class because he is into sharing his thoughts and talking to classmates (even though it is somewhat out of the days lesson to make him feel included and most of the time it is really an effective to pacify him during episodes)". – LSY

"The learner has instances on multiple occasions. It can be controlled at times, but other times it is hard to control. I try to address his episode and speak to him in a calm manner by pausing our conversation for a bit. On other occasions, I allowed him to express his opinions in class as he enjoys talking to his peers and sharing his thoughts, even though it is sometimes outside of the lesson and is usually a very good way to calm him down during tantrums." – ML

Sub-theme 2: Teacher Support. This subject emphasizes the necessity of teacher assistance, as well as the function of patience and tranquility in fostering a positive learning environment.

"There are several times wherein the learner experiences episodes. Sometimes it is manageable but there are times when it is difficult to manage. What I do is that I pause my discussion for a while to address his episode and try to talk to him patiently and calmly. Other times, I encourage him to elaborate his wisdom in class because he is into sharing his thoughts and talking to classmates (even though it is somewhat out of the days lesson to make him feel included and most of the time it is really an effective to pacify him during episodes)". - LSY

"The learner has instances on multiple occasions. It can be controlled at times, but other times it is hard to control. I try to address his episode and speak to him in a calm manner by pausing our conversation for a bit. On other occasions, I allowed him to express his opinions in class as he enjoys talking to his peers and sharing his thoughts, even though it is sometimes outside of the lesson and is usually a very good way to calm him down during tantrums." - ML.

"Managing an inclusive class is indeed a challenging task for every educator. I make sure to cater the interest of my children with special need by assigning a buddy, usually seatmates, to update me of what their classmate with special needs is doing when I am not looking or not around. I always make sure to explain to all my students how to understand and approach their classmates with special needs. So, whenever there is a tantrum or intense expression of emotions from the special needs student, my regular students just observe and stay quiet then let me handle the situation calmly." - CMM

"For any teacher, running an inclusive classroom can be a difficult undertaking. By designating a buddy, typically a seatmate, to keep me informed about their classmate's activities when I'm not watching or present, I make sure to comply the requirements of my SEN junior student. I always sure to teach my students how to relate to and interact with their classmates who have special needs." - EOP

Theme 2: Techniques in Managing Inclusive Setting

Managing an inclusive setting classroom is a multiple task. Surrounded a diverse group of learners, teachers must carefully strategize activities to ensure the delivery of quality education where all students are treated equally and valued. This theme presents common strategies used by teachers in managing their classrooms. It is divided into two sub-themes: modeling behavior and consistency in implementing clear routines and establishing clear communication. These themes emphasize that modeling positive behavior and consistently implementing clear routines and communication can promote equity and inclusivity, potentially reducing behavioral issues. These practical ideas help SPED teachers to constitute a more impactful and fruitful knowledge environment for all juniors.

Sub theme 1: Modeling Behavior and Consistency in Implementing Clear Routines. This sub-theme demonstrates the ideal behavior and how consistent rules and routines provide stability and guidance to SEN learners.

"The classroom management strategies I use are; Modeling ideal behavior, Establishing rules, Consistency of classroom routines. These helped me a lot managing also my SEN pupil because within a specific period, he/she was able to adapt to the routine and followed it consistently." - CMM

"I employ the standard pedagogies: setting regulations, modeling appropriate behavior, and maintaining habits, because my SEN student was able to adjust to the routine and follow it consistently after a certain amount of time, they also greatly aided me in managing him or her." -EOP

"During classes, he listens but there are times that he butts in during discussions which his classmates found disrupting sometimes. However, there are routinary hand gestures that I impose in class which he follows every time I remind the class." - LSY

"He pays attention in class, but occasionally interrupts discussions with a butt, which his peers find annoying. He does, however, follow the standard hand motions I enforce in class each time I remind the class of them." - ML

Sub- theme 2: Establishing Clear Communication. This subtheme emphasizes how effective communication is as a tactic for running inclusive classrooms. According to two participants, a safe learning environment can be established by constant and transparent communication.

"One of the strategies in handling LSEN learners is that as a teacher you should have Clear and Consistent Communication because it reduces misunderstanding, simple, direct communication ensures

instructions and expectations are understood and it builds trust and security. Lastly it creates a stable safe friendly environment.” – JIH

“Clear and consistent communication is one of the strategies for dealing with LSEN students. This is because it reduces misunderstandings, makes instructions and expectations clear, builds trust and security, and, finally, creates an enduring learning environment where students feel safe.” – ABA

Theme 3: Accommodation to Managing Behavioral Problems in Inclusive Settings.

Students display a variety of behaviors shaped by their family background, personal experiences, and the environment in which they develop. For students with special needs, these influences impact their distinctive forms of self-expression, which can often be misinterpreted by others. The difficulty in managing such behaviors rests with the ability of educators and peers to truly understand the underlying reasons. Additionally, appropriate interventions can assist educators in creating a safe and organized atmosphere where students with special needs can learn. Two sub-themes to incorporate are addressing the root causes and collaborating with parents.

These two themes highlight the significance of recognizing their distinct expressions and the obstacles they encounter. Addressing the fundamental reasons for students' actions and collaborating with parents are vital for building a supportive and orderly settings which increases holistic development to academic success of junior SEN student. It can be concluded that by collaborating with families, educators can offer suitable interventions to meet varied needs and encourage a positive educational experience.

Sub-theme 1: Addressing Root Causes of Behavioral Challenges. This sub-theme pertains to the method employed by teachers to dig deeper into the causes of the misbehavior of the LSEN so they can implement appropriate strategies to address their unique needs.

“As a teacher, we should know the root cause of the problem. Teacher should recognize the behavior because LSEN learners usually act that way, they have difficulty to express their needs and emotions.” – JIH

Sub theme 2: Collaborating with Parents. In order to manage the behavioral issues in the classroom, teachers also occasionally communicate with parents.

“Giving feedback to his parents about his attitude, and class performance every day helps since there is consistency collaboration to parents where we can talk about possible reasons of change of behavior and together, we solve things out.” – LSY

“Giving his parents daily feedback on his conduct in class and attitude helps because it keeps the lines of communication open. Together, we can discuss the causes of the behavior change and find solutions.” – ML

Theme 4: Establishing a Helpful Learning Environment in the Classroom

This theme emphasizes how educators establish a classroom friendly atmosphere in which every learner feels cared, respected, and inspired. A nurturing environment encompasses academic development while also addressing emotional, social, and behavioral needs to support students' growth as individuals. It includes two supporting concepts: fostering empathy and demonstrating cultural sensitivity and equity.

These themes urge teachers to go the extra mile in understanding learners with special educational needs. Beyond addressing academic requirements, educators are expected to foster a supportive environment through empathy, honoring cultural diversity, and advocating for equality among all students.

Sub theme 1: Cultivating Empathy. Showing empathy is essential for learners in junior SEN as fosters an engaging inclusive classroom environment. When teachers and peers demonstrate empathy, LSEN feel understood and accepted—boosting their confidence, emotional well-being, and sense of belonging. Empathy also allows teachers to recognize the unique challenges these learners face and develop appropriate interventions. Ultimately, empathy builds trust, reduces isolation, and supports LSEN in reaching their full potential.

“I create a supportive classroom environment for my learners by letting my regular students understand my SEN pupil's situation and encourage them to talk to him/her as much as possible.” – CMM

“By helping my regular students understand my SEN student's circumstances and encouraging them to speak with him/her as much as possible, I implement a friendly safe learning environment for my Junior Sens.” – EOP

Sub theme 2: Observing Cultural Sensitivity and Equality. This theme discusses practices that respect cultural, linguistics, and learning differences in the classroom.

"I create a supportive classroom environment by fostering inclusivity and respect, incorporate materials and activities that reflect the cultural, linguistic, and learning differences of the student." -JIH

"What I do really appreciate with the type of my learners is their openness and embracing each one of them with no discrimination at all. In the first few months in class, I always told them that all of them are equal in the classroom and that they should support and respect one another. During group activity, I always let them mingle with one another and allow them to work together." - LSY

Theme 5: Embracing Classroom Management Techniques to Accommodate SEN Learners

This theme emphasizes instructional approaches and management Strategies intended to fulfill the unique requirements of students with needs in education. It focuses on by what method educators change and tailor their methods to foster an comprehensive and auxiliary education air for all juniors. This theme led to the identification of three sub-themes: maintaining consistency in classroom routines, adapting activities and strategies to cater to individual requirements, and collaborating with parents for additional support. These insights suggest the importance of flexible teaching methods and behavior management that are suitable for LSEN. The identified sub-themes not only improve student engagement and participation but also guarantee that each learner receives the essential support needed to succeed both academically and socially.

Sub theme 1: Maintaining Consistency in Classroom Routines. Being consistent offers a framework and a feeling of safety. When situations are stable and dependable, it aids in lowering anxiety. This is particularly important in an educational environment, where consistency in regulations, procedures, and expectations is maintained.

"The classroom management strategies I use are Modeling ideal behavior, Establishing rules, Consistency of classroom routines. These helped me a lot managing also my SEN pupil because within a specific period, he/she was able to adapt to the routine and followed it consistently. I can assess the effectiveness of my classroom management strategies upon seeing changed behaviors after a month of implementing it. Then, I continue the consistency of implementing the strategies, so my students are well-mannered."- CMM

"I can evaluate their efficacy by observing altered behaviors. After that, I keep applying the techniques consistently to ensure that my students behave well. Consistency between home and school is ensured by regular communication with parents, which reinforces constructive behaviors and methods." - EOP

"I always stick with consistency. The classroom management method I use from the beginning of the school year will be consistent until the end because SEN learners are routinary. Some classroom management method I use are the count method where I assigned hand and body movements to numbers 1 to 5, I also use the Complete the phrase method where I talk uncomplete phrases or sentences and allow the learners to complete it." -LSY

Sub theme 2: Strengthening School and Home Collaboration. Involving parents actively involve to their junior child's academic success is essential. To robust relationship between teachers and parents will strengthen learning and appropriately address behavior. Additionally, it will promote mutual understanding between these two vital entities. This sub-theme investigates how effective communication and collaboration between educators and parents can improve students' learning experiences.

"Regular communication with parents promotes positive behaviors and approaches and ensures consistency between the home and the school." - ABA

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study revealed essential strategies employed by Bankal SEN teachers to the best outcome managing inclusive classrooms, particularly to junior learners with special educational needs (SEN). These include setting clear rules and routines to ensure a structured and predictable environment and integrating interactive methods and technology to support engagement. Teachers also model positive behavior and maintain consistent communication to reinforce expectations. When addressing challenging behaviors, they identify underlying causes and work closely with parents to develop appropriate interventions. Through empathy, cultural responsiveness, and a commitment to equality, teachers foster a positive atmosphere that inspire the uniqueness of individual.

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Conflict of Interests

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