



Voices from the Primary Grades: Experiences of Receiving Teachers in Managing Learners with Special Needs in Mainstreamed Classes

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Abstract:

This narrative inquiry study aimed to explore the lived experiences, effective practices, challenges, and coping strategies of Primary Receiving Teachers who teach learners with special needs in mainstream Junior High School classrooms at the Kalibo Integrated Special Education Center under the Division of Aklan during School Year 2025–2026, using a qualitative narrative inquiry research design. Ten purposively selected Primary Receiving Teachers who were directly involved in inclusive education participated in the study. Data were gathered through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and analyzed thematically to capture how teachers manage the daily realities of teaching learners with special needs in regular classrooms. The findings showed that teachers used a variety of inclusive practices, including differentiated instruction, individualized support, structured classroom routines, multisensory teaching approaches, and strong home–school collaboration. However, they also faced persistent challenges such as large class sizes, limited instructional resources, insufficient training, behavioral difficulties, and a lack of support personnel. To cope with these difficulties, teachers relied on peer collaboration, self-directed professional learning, reflective practice, emotional self-regulation, and support from parents and co-teachers. The teachers' narratives emphasized that their lived experiences are central to improving inclusive education, leading to the proposal of a Comprehensive Upskilling Program for Primary Receiving Teachers that focuses on capacity building, differentiated instruction, behavior management, collaboration, and continuous professional support to strengthen the successful inclusion of learners with special needs in mainstream classrooms.

Keywords: Special Education, Narrative Inquiry, Inclusive Teaching Practices, Cebu, Philippines

Introduction:

The Philippines' inclusive education is built on the legal requirements and regulatory frameworks that ensure every learner's right to a high-quality, inclusive, and equitable education, even those with special needs. Laws such as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (RA 10533) mandate that curricula be learner-centered and responsive. Just last year, in 2022, Republic Act No. 11650 was enacted, which in no uncertain terms requires schools to cater to students with disabilities through the provision of infrastructure, assistive technology, and reasonable accommodation. Through the removal of educational, behavioral, and physical barriers, these legal bases seek to integrate students



Learners with specialized instructional needs into regular classrooms, fostering social inclusion, holistic development, and equity for all Filipino students (DepEd policy materials, 2022).

When teachers in general education classrooms teach students with special needs alongside their typically developing peers, they encounter numerous challenges. In fact, a study conducted in the Philippines disclosed that in order to cater to the diverse demands of students, teachers modify assessments, extend time, change materials, and apply differentiated instruction. Large class sizes, high workloads, a lack of institutional support, a lack of specialized training, a lack of resources and assistive technology, and irregular parent-teacher communication are some of the major obstacles that frequently limit these beneficial practices (Sumagang & Balano, 2025). Qualitative studies of these teachers lived experiences also reveal emotions like tension, uncertainty, and occasionally frustration (Sumagang & Balano, 2025).

There is still a gap in literature despite its growth: few researches, particularly in integrated special education centers, have thoroughly examined the shared experiences of receiving teachers from several grade levels (primary, intermediate, and junior high) in one location. Additionally, little is known about how teachers on the ground are affected by current legislation demands like RA 11650, how support differs by level, and how problems are sustained while achievements are managed. Instead of providing in-depth accounts of how teachers view, adjust, and develop via their inclusive practice, previous publications have tended to concentrate on a single level (e.g., elementary), categories of disabilities, or the numeric magnitude of problems (e.g. Patina & Bolongaita, 2024).

According to the researchers' firsthand observations at the Kalibo Integrated Special Education Center, receiving teachers at the primary, intermediate and junior high school levels are working hard to modify their lessons, form unofficial partnerships with experts, and create inclusive learning environments. These educators are creative in how they use scarce resources, modify the tempo of their lessons, and enlist the help of their peers. However, there are noticeable barriers such as a lack of professional development designed especially for mainstream instructors working with special needs students, a lack of assistive technology, inadequate administrative support, and uneven enforcement of inclusive policies. The need to clarify how receiving teachers view their jobs, what resources they believe are necessary, and what supports are effective or ineffective is further supported by these first-hand observations. Since these common experiences serve as a crucial body of evidence for creating a successful upskilling program, it is essential to investigate the best practices, difficulties, and coping mechanisms of instructors who work with students who have special instructional needs in mainstreamed classrooms. According to research, knowing how teachers educate and the challenges they encounter can assist identify which competences require improvement (Sakarneh & Abu Nair, 2022). In addition, research highlights the importance of teachers' coping strategies, including reflective practice, peer collaboration, and emotional self-management, in maintaining inclusive pedagogy (Brackenreed, 2024; Lipayon, 2023). The suggested upskilling program will directly address real-world teacher requirements, enhance instructional quality, and promote teacher retention and well-being by firmly establishing professional development in the reality of the classroom.

Therefore, the aim of this research is to gather data on what the receiving teachers have in common when they teach students with special learning requirements in mainstreamed classrooms. More specifically, the research aims to find out the ways the receiving teachers' across different grade levels cope and work around the challenges, understand the difficulties that the receiving teachers have faced in teaching students with Special Needs in mainstreamed classes, and to present an upskilling program that will help support systems (like training, resource allocation, and policy implementation) be more effective, sustainable, and equitable in wide-ranging education in the Philippines.

Literature Review:

This research is based on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework of Anne Meyer and David Rose as its main theory, supplemented by Albert Bandura's Social Learning theory and John Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory. The framework of the laws such as Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013) and Republic Act No. 11650 (Inclusive Education Act of 2022), besides these theories, provide a perspective to be used for the common experiences of teachers receiving students with special needs when they are instructing mainstreamed classrooms.



Universal Design for Learning (UDL) takes different types of learners into consideration and therefore insists that education has to be built from scratch by giving various options in representation, engagement, and expression (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014; Rao et al., 2017). It can be said that general education teachers are implementing UDL strategies in the classroom when they are adjusting their teaching methods in such a way that students with special needs can have easy access to the lessons and at the same time the other students' needs in the mainstreamed classrooms are also met. The characteristics of an inclusiveness education practice and its development can be assessed through the rubric which is based on UDL framework and thus the paper utilizes this theory as the basis of the research. Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory stresses the vital role of learning through modeling, imitation and observation (Bandura, 2018). Peer modeling and instructor demonstration are useful tactics for developing social and intellectual abilities in students with special needs. Receiving teachers helps students learn from one another in cooperative learning environments in mainstream classrooms. Since instructors themselves pick up inclusive behaviors by watching colleagues and exchanging professional experiences, the notion is equally applicable to them. Because students have limited working memory, education should avoid unnecessary burden and concentrate on critical processing, according to John Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2019). This idea is especially helpful in specialized education settings where students who possess disabilities might need work to be divided into smaller, more manageable chunks using scaffolding and visual aids.

The tenets of this approach are reflected in receiving teachers' methods for streamlining lessons and lowering cognitive demands. According to this law (Republic Act No. 10533 or The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013), the curriculum should be an inclusive one, put the learners first, and be developmentally appropriate. It sets the legal basis for the integration of students with special needs in regular classrooms by calling for inclusive practices and individualized instruction. RA 10533 legitimizes the teachers' receiving pupils' obligation to take measures that accommodate students with different abilities in mainstreamed settings.

The Inclusive Education Act of 2022, also known as Republic Act No. 11650. A newer legislation puts the rights of students with disabilities to inclusive education on the same level as other kinds of education. It requires that programs be designed to ensure accessibility, that reasonable accommodations be made, and that Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs) be established (Republic Act No. 11650, 2022). RA 11650 provides receiving teachers with essential legal backing, guaranteeing that their efforts to mainstream students with specialized learning needs are supported by state resources and policies that promote equity.

When combined, these principles and theories offer a comprehensive foundation for this study. While the laws offer the legal mandate and structural support for inclusive education in the Philippines, the theories explain the pedagogical and psychological underpinnings of how inclusive teaching practices can be implemented successfully. Based on these, this study explores the common experiences of receiving teachers in instructing students with special needs in mainstreamed classrooms, acknowledging the legal requirements as well as the theoretical underpinnings that influence their methods. The study's conclusions will ultimately guide the creation of an up skilling program for receiving teachers, improving their capability to successfully administer education of inclusiveness

According to an increasing body of research on inclusive practice, effective education of students with special learning requirements in mainstream classrooms should be underpinned by a set of collaborative models, curriculum design with foresight, and adaptable teaching strategies. Among them is the co-teaching strategy, whereby a general education teacher and a special educator work together to meet the diverse needs of students, which is most commonly mentioned as effective. For example, Sparks (2022) notes that students with debilities gain better access to the curriculum of the same grade level and experience more meaningful participation when co-teaching is implemented with shared planning and teaching duties. Additionally, studies highlight that co-teaching may not reach its full potential in the absence of sufficient preparation time, precise job definition, and administrative support (Alnasser, 2021; Sparks, 2022).

A second core set of best practices focuses on proactive lesson planning and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). In order to minimize obstacles up front rather than retrofit them later, UDL encourages teachers to create classes with different modes of representation, expression, and interaction. In mixed-ability classrooms, teachers who implement UDL tactics report improved differentiation and increased learner engagement (Grafe-Lugo & Delos Reyes, 2024). Differentiated instruction (DI) has a close relationship with UDL. Teachers that use Differentiated Instruction (DI)



strategies such as tiered assignments, flexible grouping, and scaffolded support are more capable of adjusting their classes to the preferences and levels of their students according to qualitative studies (Jamil Suprihatiningrum et al., 2022).

Continuous evaluation and progress tracking are also identified as crucial teaching strategies. According to research, teachers who routinely implement formative assessment procedures, such as brief exit tickets, visual signal cards, and rapid oral probes, are better equipped to identify misunderstandings early on and offer special needs pupils timely support (Vergara et al., 2025). By taking a proactive stance, differentiated education is made to be more responsive than reactive.

An additional set of best practices for inclusive classrooms includes social behavior assistance and effective classroom management. To control disruptive behavior and improve engagement for students with special needs, teachers use peer-mediated strategies (e.g., peer tutoring, cooperative learning), visual schedules, clear routines, and positive behavioral supports (Indonesian Journal of Community & Special Needs Education, 2024). Learners with specialized learning demands who are mainlined engage more completely in classroom activities when these tactics are combined with explicit training in social skills and emotional control.

Collaborative problem solving and teacher capacity building are also essential for successful mainstreaming. According to research, instructors must get focused professional development on behavior management, differentiation, and inclusive practices. Classroom practices significantly increase when coaching, co-planning time with experts, and resource availability support this kind of professional development (Benemerito et al., 2024). Effective inclusive teaching is frequently cited as being facilitated by system-level supports, such as assigning roles, granting access to specialists, and scheduling co-planning.

Lastly, it is becoming more widely acknowledged that integrating technology with assistive services is an excellent practice. Receiving teachers give students with special needs alternative ways to acquire knowledge and demonstrate learning through the use of both low-tech assistance (such as visual clocks and cue cards) and high-tech resources (like text-to-speech and multimedia presentations) (Ty et al., 2024). However, teacher preparation, alignment with learning objectives, and deliberate integration—rather than haphazard deployment—is necessary for the effective use of assistive technology.

Research from primary, intermediate, and junior high schools agrees on a logical set of interrelated best practices: cooperative co-teaching arrangements; proactive, adaptable curriculum design (UDL and DI); regular formative evaluation and progress tracking; structured behavioral and peer-mediated supports; ongoing professional development and capacity building for teachers; and careful use of assistive technology. When supported by school policies that offer professional development opportunities, planning time, and expert assistance, these strategies work best. The lesson for receiving teachers is that inclusion is a planned set of activities that collectively make classrooms for students with exceptional needs accessible, interesting, and manageable.

The implementation of wide-ranging education is still a global problem, particularly for mainstream teachers who must provide equitable access to high-quality instruction while accommodating a variety of learning requirements. According to research, teachers frequently feel unprepared to deal with the diverse spectrum of emotional, behavioral, and learning difficulties among kids with special needs. Many general education teachers report having little training in special education techniques, which leaves them unsure about how to modify lessons and handle behavior, according to Sharma and Loreman (2018). Similarly, Al-Makahleh (2020) discovered that teachers' nervousness and diminished confidence while dealing with individualized education plans (IEPs) are caused by a lack of professional preparation and understanding. These results show that continuing professional development and teacher preparation are still major concerns in inclusive education.

The dearth of resources and support services is another significant issue facing receiving instructors. According to studies, inclusive classrooms frequently lack the necessary paraprofessional assistance, assistive technology, and instructional materials (Avramidis et al., 2021). Large class sizes, little instructional time, and poor access to learning resources are some of the reasons why teachers report having trouble implementing differentiated instruction. For example, without institutional support or extra funds, teachers in inclusive settings frequently bear the burden of



implementing changes in many poor nations, including the Philippines (Villanueva & Dizon, 2022). Teacher burnout, a decline in the quality of instruction, and difficulties maintaining inclusive education are all consequences of this lack of resources, both human and material.

Classrooms that are inclusive are further complicated by behavioral and social issues. Classroom management and the learning environment can be negatively impacted by the disruptive behaviors and social adjustment problems that receiving instructors often confront among students with special needs (Smit & Humpert, 2021). Agbenyega and Klibthong (2019) claim that many teachers are forced to use punitive rather than supportive techniques because they lack the necessary training in behavioral interventions, which can compromise student motivation and inclusion. Additionally, teachers frequently experience stress and role conflict as a result of juggling the demands of children with disabilities with those of students who are usually developing (Forlin & Chambers, 2017). Teachers have more emotional strain because of this dynamic, which can result in compassion fatigue and job discontent.

There are still issues with cooperation and communication between conventional education and specialized education staff. Effective inclusion is hampered by a lack of coordination and collaboration between educators, school administrators, and experts, according to research by Mngo and Mngo (2018). When it comes to aligning educational goals for kids with special needs, teachers are frustrated by the absence of clear communication channels and preparation time. Furthermore, because of financial limitations or a lack of knowledge regarding inclusive education, parental involvement is frequently low (Santos & De Guzman, 2023). Gaps in intervention continuity and support systems arise when stakeholders do not actively collaborate.

Systemic and contextual impediments exacerbate the difficulties in the Philippine context. According to studies, public school instructors face challenges such as crammed classrooms, dilapidated infrastructure, and restricted access to special education specialists (Reyes & Tolentino, 2021). Teachers are often forced to perform the roles of both general and specialized teachers without getting the right training and institutional backing. To become more competent and flexible in general classrooms, Kalibo and similar district teachers who are receiving students point out their need for expert training and mentoring programs. In order to strengthen inclusive education, these contextual issues highlight the significance of responsive educational policy and school-level initiatives.

According to the literature, receiving teachers experience a variety of difficulties in mainstreamed classrooms, from poor preparation and inadequate resources to behavioral problems and a lack of institutional support. Although many people support including students with special educational profiles, teachers' difficulties are a reflection of structural flaws in collaboration, training, and resource distribution. A comprehensive strategy that empowers educators via ongoing professional development, legislative changes, and a collaborative culture among educators, families, and administrators is needed to address these issues.

They must have both the pedagogical skills and proper coping mechanisms to maintain their mental stability and their teaching abilities in difficult situations where they are trying to educate students with specialized learning needs in regular school classrooms. According to studies, teachers can better manage stress and maintain motivation by implementing adaptive coping methods like teamwork, professional growth, and emotional regulation (Forlin & Chambers, 2017). Teachers who use proactive coping strategies, such as creating lessons that incorporate varied instruction and establishing reasonable goals, are more equipped to keep things balanced and productive in inclusive classrooms, claim Sharma and Loreman (2018). This illustrates how crucial self-efficacy and a positive outlook are to conquering everyday educational obstacles.

Peer support and teamwork are key coping mechanisms among inclusive educators. To exchange instructional materials and behavioral management techniques, teachers frequently turn to their peers, special education coordinators, and school officials for support (Avramidis et al., 2021). Programs for team teaching and mentoring have been shown to be successful in improving competence and lowering professional isolation (Smit & Humpert, 2021). Similarly, Mngo and Mngo (2018) emphasized that collegial collaboration reduces burnout and improves teaching effectiveness by providing mainstream teachers with access to professional guidance and emotional support. By encouraging shared responsibility in providing inclusive education, strong teacher networks inside schools in the Philippines help solve the lack of specialized professionals, according to Villanueva and Dizon (2022).



Reflective practice and ongoing professional development are two more tactics that educators frequently employ. Teachers who actively participate in training, workshops, and reflective conversations gain more self-assurance and flexibility in managing a varied student body, claims Al-Makahleh (2020). Teachers can evaluate classroom practices, share inclusive teaching tactics, and improve their methods by participating in professional learning communities (PLCs). Additionally, Forlin and Chambers (2017) noted that reflective teaching improves competence and resilience when teachers evaluate their experiences, acknowledge their shortcomings, and modify their approaches accordingly. Teachers can better align with inclusive education objectives and adjust to changing educational frameworks with the support of ongoing learning.

Coping also heavily relies on emotional and stress management techniques. Teachers frequently use mindfulness, relaxation techniques, and positive reframing to preserve psychological well-being because teaching students with special needs can be emotionally exhausting (Jennings & Greenberg, 2019). Teachers who develop empathy and patience through emotional regulation report feeling less frustrated when handling difficult behaviors, according to Agbenyega and Klibthong (2019). Similarly, it has been discovered that self-care practices including preserving work-life balance and looking for social support lower stress and increase teachers' emotional resilience. In inclusive classrooms, these coping strategies are essential for maintaining dedication and avoiding compassion fatigue.

Flexibility and adaption in instruction are also essential coping strategies. To address the learning requirements of students with varying abilities, teachers use tailored support, task modifications, visual aids, and differentiated instruction (Sharma & Salend, 2016). Teachers may manage diversity in the classroom and keep all students engaged by emphasizing learner-centered approaches. To make classes accessible to students with different skill levels, teachers in the Philippines commonly modify the pace of their lessons, employ peer tutoring, and integrate real-world applications, according to Reyes and Tolentino (2021). This pedagogical adaptability shows how teachers can transform obstacles into chances for creativity and development.

Additionally, obtaining community and administrative assistance has been emphasized as a useful coping strategy. Teachers exhibit greater levels of work satisfaction and perseverance when they perceive that school administrators are supporting them through encouragement, resource supply, and acknowledgment (Santos & De Guzman, 2023). In addition to lessening teachers' workloads, community partnerships and family involvement promote a sense of shared accountability. According to Avramidis et al. (2021), inclusive education flourishes when educators believe that their work is valued and that there are systems in place to help them deal with both emotional and instructional difficulties.

According to the reviewed literature, receiving teachers in mainstreamed classes use a variety of coping mechanisms that include collaborative, pedagogical, and emotional aspects. The most successful methods for handling the challenges of inclusive teaching are peer collaboration, professional development, and reflective practice. Maintaining teachers' motivation and lowering stress levels also heavily depends on their ability to control their emotions and on the community's and administrators' support. All things considered, these coping strategies show how resilient and flexible educators are when addressing the complex issues of inclusion. The success of inclusive education can be further increased, and the welfare of both teachers and students can be guaranteed, by fortifying institutional and structural support for these tactics.

Statement of the Problem:

This study aims to obtain the collective shared experiences of receiving teachers in their instruction of learners with special needs who are enrolled in mainstreamed classes at the Kalibo Integrated Special Education Center under the District of Kalibo II, Division of Aklan for the School Year 2025-2026. Specifically, it seeks answers to the following questions:

1. *What are the best practices employed by Primary receiving teachers in teaching learners with special needs enrolled in mainstreamed classes?*
2. *What are the challenges encountered by Primary receiving teachers in teaching learners with special needs enrolled in mainstreamed classes?*
3. *What are the coping strategies adopted by Primary receiving teachers in addressing the challenges they encountered in teaching learners with special needs enrolled in mainstreamed classes?*
4. *What upskilling program can be proposed to capacitate receiving teachers in teaching SNED in mainstreamed classes?*



Methodology:

This study employed a narrative inquiry research design to explore the experiences of receiving teachers who taught learners with special needs in mainstream classes at Kalibo Integrated Special Education Center (KISEC), District of Kalibo II, Division of Aklan, for the School Year 2025–2026. Narrative inquiry, as defined by Creswell (2013, 2017) and Creswell & Poth (2016), focuses on gathering and analyzing personal stories to understand participants' lived experiences. This design was chosen for its relevance in capturing teachers' firsthand accounts, including best practices, challenges, and coping strategies, in implementing inclusive education. The study followed an Input–Process–Output framework, with participants comprising 30 purposively selected teachers from primary, intermediate, and junior high levels. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, guided by an interview tool validated by experts and pilot-tested to ensure clarity and reliability.

The research was conducted in the inclusive environment of KISEC, the only recognized SPED center in Aklan Division offering a full basic education program from Kindergarten to Senior High School, including Alternative Learning System (ALS). KISEC provides specialized programs, accommodations, and support services for learners with disabilities, and its Senior High School offers Technical-Vocational-Livelihood strands in Home Economics and ICT. Under the leadership of Dr. Wilma Werigene Malapad Villa, KISEC has strengthened its inclusive programs and fostered collaboration with teachers, parents, and stakeholders. This environment provided an authentic context for examining teachers' experiences in managing learners with diverse needs, ensuring that the findings reflect real-life practices, challenges, and strategies in inclusive education.

Data were gathered in three phases: preliminary, main, and post-data collection. After obtaining formal approvals, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted, audio-recorded, and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts were coded, categorized, and analyzed to identify recurring themes related to best practices, challenges, and coping strategies. Ethical considerations, including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, were strictly followed. The analysis followed Creswell's narrative inquiry framework, with themes interpreted in relation to relevant literature, legal mandates such as RA 11650, and theoretical foundations like Universal Design for Learning and Social Learning Theory. The study's findings informed the development of a proposed upskilling program for receiving teachers, aimed at enhancing their competencies and promoting effective inclusive practices.

Results:

The study revealed several key findings regarding the strategies employed by special education teachers in inclusive classrooms and the subsequent effects on student outcomes. Analysis of classroom practices indicated that teacher strategies could be categorized into three broad areas: collaboration and professional development, coping strategies and interventions for student challenges, and behavioral and emotional support strategies. Across all areas, a consistent pattern emerged showing that deliberate planning, individualized support, and collaborative engagement significantly contributed to the academic, social, and emotional growth of students.

Collaboration and Professional Development-Teachers highlighted the central role of collaboration with parents, colleagues, and school counselors in shaping effective learning objectives and instructional strategies. Teacher Chai emphasized that involving parents through regular meetings and collaborative goal-setting facilitated a coherent link between home and school environments, which positively influenced student engagement, well-being, and academic participation (Santos & De Guzman, 2023). Similarly, Teacher Ems indicated that professional development (PD) workshops were instrumental in enhancing her instructional repertoire. These workshops not only provided up-to-date research-based strategies but also offered practical experience through hands-on activities, allowing teachers to test techniques, receive feedback, and refine their approaches (Forlin & Chambers, 2017). Engagement in PD, combined with support from mentors and networking with colleagues, enhanced teachers' problem-solving capacity, instructional competence, and ability to address the complex and diverse needs of inclusive learners (Villanueva & Dizon, 2022). This demonstrates that collaboration and continual professional growth form the foundation of effective inclusive education practice.



Coping Strategies and Interventions for Student Challenges-Teachers applied targeted strategies to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of students. Teacher Noeme used differentiated prompts and implemented a buddy reading program to support students struggling with literacy tasks. These approaches not only improved academic performance but also strengthened peer collaboration, confidence, and a sense of community among learners (Al-Makahleh, 2020). Teacher Chai addressed high-anxiety students through a gradual exposure strategy, beginning with one-on-one interactions and progressively introducing small group activities. This paced approach fostered trust, decreased feelings of overwhelm, and increased student participation and engagement (Jennings & Greenberg, 2019). These methods illustrate the critical role of individualized support, social scaffolding, and structured interventions in promoting both cognitive and socio-emotional development in inclusive classrooms.

Behavioral and Emotional Support Strategies-Teachers employed structured routines, positive reinforcement, sensory tools, visual schedules, and movement breaks to manage behavioral challenges such as disruptive behavior, impulsivity, attention difficulties, and anxiety. Teacher Gigi reported that combining structured routines with positive reinforcement cultivated a calmer classroom environment, enabling students to follow expectations and engage more effectively in learning activities (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2019). Teacher Shein created a “quiet corner” equipped with sensory tools, providing students with a safe space for emotional regulation. This intervention minimized disruptions, supported self-management, and increased participation in classroom tasks (Santos & De Guzman, 2023). Teacher Gia used visual schedules and integrated movement breaks for students with ADHD, resulting in improved focus, self-control, and reduced frequency of disruptive behaviors (Reyes & Tolentino, 2021). Collectively, these strategies highlight the importance of structured, flexible, and empathetic approaches to support the social-emotional and behavioral needs of diverse learners, ensuring that all students can participate meaningfully in classroom activities.

Overall it indicates that a combination of collaborative practices, engagement in professional development, individualized interventions, and structured behavioral and emotional support directly influenced the academic, social, and emotional outcomes of students in inclusive classrooms. Teachers’ deliberate use of evidence-based strategies and responsive interventions not only promoted student learning and engagement but also fostered positive peer interactions, confidence, and emotional well-being. These results underscore that inclusive classroom success is grounded in teacher competence, collaboration, and the implementation of adaptable strategies that respond to the holistic needs of students.

Discussion

The results highlight the integral role of collaboration, teacher growth, and individualized strategies in fostering inclusive education. Teachers’ collaboration with parents, colleagues, and counselors strengthens the alignment of home and school expectations, providing a coherent framework that addresses the multifaceted needs of learners. Teacher Chai’s emphasis on parent engagement demonstrates that home-school partnerships can improve students’ social-emotional well-being, which aligns with prior studies emphasizing family involvement as critical in inclusive education (Santos & De Guzman, 2023).

Professional development emerged as a critical factor in teachers’ preparedness and confidence. Teacher Ems’ engagement in workshops not only enhanced practical skills but also reinforced the mindset of lifelong learning, enabling teachers to respond effectively to the evolving demands of inclusive classrooms (Forlin & Chambers, 2017). Such professional growth ensures that teachers are equipped with evidence-based strategies that enhance instructional quality and student outcomes.

Student-focused interventions demonstrated the significance of individualized, empathetic approaches. Teacher Noeme’s differentiation strategies and buddy reading program exemplify how structured peer support can improve academic outcomes while fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration (Al-Makahleh, 2020). Similarly, Teacher Chai’s gradual exposure method illustrates the importance of pacing interventions according to students’ emotional readiness, reducing anxiety and promoting social participation (Jennings & Greenberg, 2019).

Behavioral and emotional support strategies, such as those employed by Teachers Gigi, Shein, and Gia, were instrumental in maintaining a stable and productive classroom environment. Positive reinforcement, structured routines, sensory tools, visual schedules, and movement breaks not only addressed specific behavioral challenges but



also promoted self-regulation, autonomy, and active engagement (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2019; Santos & De Guzman, 2023; Reyes & Tolentino, 2021). These strategies reflect that inclusive classrooms require a balance of predictability, structure, flexibility, and empathy to meet diverse learner needs effectively.

A clear pattern emerged in the interplay between teacher resilience and student outcomes. Teachers' use of emotional regulation techniques, self-care, and reflective practices contributed to their ability to implement individualized interventions consistently and effectively (Smit & Humpert, 2021; Jennings & Greenberg, 2019). By managing stress and maintaining motivation, teachers not only preserve their well-being but also create stable, supportive learning environments that benefit students academically, socially, and emotionally.

Overall, it demonstrates that successful inclusive education relies on the integration of professional competence, collaborative practices, individualized academic and socio-emotional interventions, and proactive classroom management. The study reinforces prior research suggesting that teacher preparation, continuous development, and strategic support systems are critical for the academic, social, and emotional growth of all learners in inclusive settings (Forlin & Chambers, 2017; Villanueva & Dizon, 2022; Loreman, 2018).

Findings:

Key findings revealed that individual instruction and differentiated learning remain the heart of inclusive education and that these can be accomplished quite simply through multi-sensory methods and peer work. Nevertheless, teachers faced such a tough situation of having large classes, intensive work, and lack of materials as revealed by 8 out of 10 teachers, that they are not able to give each child the necessary attention in the class. Quite a few teachers also think that they have been lacking specialized training and that there is no support from the administration to solve behavior and learning problems. The strategies' success requires the existence of the activities, establishment of clear expectations, positive reinforcement, sensory breaks, and truthful communication. To overcome these difficulties, it is necessary to have smaller classes, enough materials, thorough training, and collaborative support, all of which are necessary for the creation of thriving environments of inclusivity that respond to the academic, social, and emotional needs of every student.

Conclusion:

Practically, the key concepts of individual and differentiated teaching that probably facilitate multi-sensory engagement and peer collaboration for the implementation of inclusive education is still largely obstructed by the systemic resistance to it. The results show that big class sizes, heavy workloads, and lack of resources limit very much the ways in which teachers can provide students with specialized learning needs the personalized attention and support that they deserve. Besides that, the lack of training and provision for collaboration have also been mentioned by teachers as reasons for their unpreparedness and isolation, hence these factors influence their competence in the efficient management of the students' learning needs. Therefore, the implementation of education of inclusivity relies not only on the use of student-centered pedagogical approaches but, very importantly, on solving those systemic problems that make it difficult for teachers to realize these approaches. Giving more importance to smaller class sizes, providing lots of resources, investing in complete professional development, and encouraging collaborative networks are necessary steps to enable teachers and thus make possible the creation of truly inclusive environments where every student will be able to develop academically, socially, and emotionally, in addition to contributing to the establishment of a sustainable and equitable educational system by addressing in a direct way the well-being and success of teachers as well as students with specialized learning styles.

Recommendations

The researcher proposes that the following be done based on the findings:

Decrease the number of students per class so that teachers can give more personalized attention to each student.

Raise resource allocation so that there will be enough materials and technologies.

Improve professional development in order to provide teachers with more inclusive strategies.

Encourage collaboration in order to build support networks for teachers.



Put teacher well-being first in order to avoid burnout and facilitate better teaching.
Adopt the comprehensive upskilling program the researcher has recommended in order for the teacher to be aided, capacitated and empowered.

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