



An Assessment of Teachers' Awareness, Attitudes, And Instructional Readiness for Managing Learners with Special Needs in Inclusive Classrooms

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Abstract:

This study assessed teachers' awareness, attitudes, and instructional readiness in managing learners with special needs in inclusive classrooms at Mandaue City Central School, Mandaue City Division, during School Year 2025–2026, as basis for an intervention plan. Anchored on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), and Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and supported by Republic Acts 10533, 7277, and 10968, the study employed a descriptive-correlational design. Thirty teachers handling inclusive classes from Grades 1 to 6 were selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using an adapted questionnaire with sections on demographic profile, awareness (inclusive understanding, learner beliefs, inclusion benefits, challenges), attitudes (inclusive openness, instructional willingness, teaching confidence, professional commitment), and instructional readiness (pedagogical knowledge, professional development, classroom environment, instructional strategies), rated on a 5-point Likert scale and validated with Cronbach's alpha threshold of 0.70. Results showed respondents were predominantly female (96.67%), aged 31–40 (56.67%), with master's units (53.33%), 5–9 years experience (36.67%), and 1–2 relevant trainings (63.33%). Teachers demonstrated positive awareness: inclusive understanding ($M=4.08$), learner beliefs ($M=4.23$), inclusion benefits ($M=4.24$), but very high perceived inclusion challenges ($M=4.50$). Attitudes were positive to very positive: openness ($M=4.11$), willingness ($M=4.25$), confidence ($M=3.86$), commitment ($M=4.29$). Readiness was generally high but constrained by specialized needs and systemic barriers. Pearson r revealed significant relationships between awareness and readiness, and attitudes and readiness. Major barriers were large class sizes, limited resources, lack of specialized support, and time constraints. The study recommends sustained professional development, administrative support, resource enhancement, and a structured intervention plan to strengthen inclusive competencies.

Keywords: inclusive education, special education, teacher awareness, teacher attitudes, instructional readiness, Mandaue City Central School

Introduction:

Inclusive education has emerged as a global imperative anchored on equity, social justice, and respect for diversity (Kenny et al., 2023). It envisions learners with special needs learning alongside peers in general education classrooms with appropriate supports, not merely for access but for meaningful participation and holistic development (Judilla et al., 2022). In the Philippines, this vision is legally mandated through Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act), RA 7277 (Magna Carta for Disabled Persons), and RA 10968 (Philippine Qualifications Framework), which collectively emphasize learner-centered instruction, equal opportunities, and teacher competency.

Teachers are the frontline implementers of inclusion. Their awareness, attitudes, and instructional readiness determine how policies translate into classroom realities (Rojo-Ramos et al., 2023; Mucherah et al., 2024). Positive attitudes are necessary but insufficient; readiness requires pedagogical knowledge, differentiated strategies, classroom management, and confidence in handling diverse needs (Woodcock et al., 2022; Bugani et al., 2025).

International literature reports persistent systemic challenges: inadequate training, limited resources, large class sizes, and weak support structures that undermine teacher self-efficacy. In the Philippine context, studies indicate generally positive awareness and willingness, yet gaps remain in actual preparedness—particularly in curriculum adaptation, managing hearing impairments, and complex behavioral concerns. Petarte (2026) found only moderate preparedness among Cebu Province teachers in differentiated instruction and classroom management, underscoring the need for



continuous professional development.

Moreover, most local studies examine awareness, attitudes, or preparedness in isolation, rather than integrating them into a unified framework. There is also limited localized evidence that simultaneously assesses all three constructs in elementary inclusive classrooms where learners with special needs are directly integrated, especially in large urban schools like Mandaue City Central School. With 3,686 enrollees, 125 teachers, and diverse programs (SSES, MADRASAH), the school faces high student-teacher ratios and resource constraints typical of public schools.

This gap prompted the present study. It aimed to provide a holistic assessment of teachers' awareness, attitudes, and instructional readiness for managing learners with special needs in inclusive classrooms at Mandaue City Central School during SY 2025–2026, and to determine significant relationships among variables as basis for an evidence-based intervention plan. The study addresses three objectives: (1) describe teachers' demographic profile; (2) assess levels of awareness, attitudes, and readiness across sub-dimensions; and (3) examine correlations between awareness-readiness and attitudes-readiness. The findings are intended to inform school administrators, SPED and receiving teachers, learners, parents, and policymakers in strengthening inclusive education implementation.

Literature Review:

Theoretical Foundations

This study is grounded in three complementary theories. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) posits that attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control shape intention and actual behavior. In inclusive education, teachers' attitudes toward inclusion and perceived control (self-efficacy) predict intention to implement inclusive practices (Amonteng et al., 2026; Urton et al., 2023). Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) emphasizes reciprocal determinism among personal factors, behavior, and environment. Self-efficacy affects effort, persistence, and resilience. Studies show teachers with higher self-efficacy adopt inclusive strategies (Woodcock et al., 2023). Supportive school climate enhances self-efficacy (Zhang et al., 2025). Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) frames development within nested systems: microsystem (classroom), mesosystem (home-school), exosystem (division policies), macrosystem (cultural norms), chronosystem (temporal changes). Studies show institutional support influences readiness (Almughyiri, 2025; Yang & Zhou, 2025).

Legal Bases reinforce theories. RA 10533 mandates inclusive learner-centered competency-based education. RA 7277 ensures equal access and support services. RA 10968 institutionalizes lifelong learning and competency standards.

Teachers' Awareness

Awareness encompasses inclusive understanding, learner beliefs, inclusion benefits, and challenges. Sharma et al. (2012) developed perception measures. Philippine studies report positive understanding (Sabanal et al., 2025; De Los Reyes et al., 2025) but gaps in familiarity with specific disability types. Moon (2023) emphasized readiness contributes to success. Antoninis et al. (2023) highlighted inclusion's role in reducing discrimination and promoting cohesion. Challenges—large class sizes, limited resources, additional planning—remain strongly perceived (Guillemot et al., 2022).

Learner beliefs are critical. Teachers who believe learners can improve with support create equitable environments. Woodcock et al. (2023) found positive beliefs predict supportive practices.

Attitudes comprise inclusive openness, instructional willingness, teaching confidence, professional commitment. Loreman et al. (2007) framework underpins attitude scales. Maldonado-García et al. (2026) emphasized training strengthens attitudes. Respect is very high, but comfort lower, indicating attitude-behavior gap mediated by experience. Instructional willingness reflects readiness to modify lessons, use differentiation, collaborate, attend training. Collaboration and training openness are strongest willingness indicators. Professional commitment—fair treatment, promoting practices, parent collaboration, continuous growth—is consistently high. Ng and Kwan (2020) highlighted parent collaboration. Teaching confidence remains weakest: maintaining positive environment scores high, but confidence in teaching specialized needs and handling behavioral concerns lower, needing targeted skill-



building.

Instructional Readiness

Readiness covers pedagogical knowledge, professional development, classroom environment, instructional strategies. Cola et al. (2025) instrument measures preparedness. Philippine studies (Petarte, 2026) report moderate readiness in differentiated instruction. Advanced education correlates with readiness; master's units show higher scores. Professional development is pivotal yet limited: 63.33% only 1-2 trainings and 23.33% none, mirroring national trends. Classroom environment readiness generally positive but challenged by large classes. Instructional strategies—differentiation, UDL, assistive tools—require resources often lacking.

Descriptive-correlational designs (McBurney & White, 2009; Clarete et al., 2023) demonstrate relationships as they naturally occur. Theory predicts positive association via TPB and Social Cognitive mechanisms. Empirical support shows positive perceptions correlate with preparedness, but systemic barriers moderate implementation. Present study tests via Pearson r at 0.05.

Literature converges: (1) teachers generally possess positive awareness and attitudes but face practical constraints; (2) demographic factors affect preparedness; (3) systemic factors—class size, resources, specialized support, time—are major barriers. Gap: limited integrated assessment in elementary setting in Mandaue City. This study provides comprehensive, context-specific data as basis for intervention. Extended literature shows need for continuous training, administrative support, resource enhancement, and intervention plan with training matrix, mentoring, monitoring.

Additional studies support findings. Sabanal et al. (2025) found age and years of service contribute to competencies. De Los Reyes et al. (2025) found greater professional exposure demonstrates more positive attitudes. Kenny et al. (2023) grounded inclusion in equity and social justice. Rojo-Ramos et al. (2023) emphasized teachers at forefront. Mucherah et al. (2024) linked perceptions to academic and social outcomes. Bugani et al. (2025) noted challenges related to pedagogical competence. Woodcock et al. (2022) found challenges in addressing varied needs. Judilla et al. (2022) described inclusion as commitment to meaningful participation. Philippine Qualifications Framework ensures transparency, comparability, responsiveness to demands, emphasizing lifelong learning. Magna Carta mandates appropriate programs and support systems. Enhanced Basic Education Act extends years and emphasizes flexible, participatory, tailored approaches highlighting teacher training.

Recent application of TPB shows perceived self-efficacy significantly predicted intention to engage in inclusive teaching (Amonteng et al., 2026). Social Cognitive Theory applied to school climate shows supportive factors enhance self-efficacy (Zhang et al., 2025). Ecological perspective shows nested environmental influences on instructional behavior (Almughyiri, 2025). Yang & Zhou (2025) showed supportive environments correlate with confidence.

Hence, literature establishes that awareness, attitudes, and readiness are interconnected and influenced by personal and environmental factors. Positive learner beliefs that learners can learn at own pace, benefit from peer interaction, and have strengths are crucial. Benefits include acceptance, reduced discrimination, social relationships, cooperation, feeling valued. Challenges include large classes requiring additional planning. Attitudes of openness, willingness, confidence, commitment are shaped by training and experience. Preparedness in pedagogical knowledge, professional development, environment, strategies requires resources and support. Correlation studies confirm relationships. This review provides foundation for present study's variables and intervention development.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-quantitative design using correlational approach to examine teachers' awareness, attitudes, and instructional readiness for managing learners with special needs in inclusive classrooms at Mandaue City Central School, Mandaue City Division, SY 2025–2026. According to McBurney and White (2009), descriptive-correlational research is appropriate for presenting clear snapshot of existing conditions and examining relationships



among variables as they naturally occur. Descriptive aspect focused on demographic profile (age, sex, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, number of relevant trainings) and levels of perceptions, attitudes, preparedness. Correlational examined significant relationships between perceptions-preparedness and attitudes-preparedness. Design appropriate as it enables systematic examination without establishing cause-effect or implementing interventions (Clarete et al., 2023; Almuaili, 2023).

Flow of the Study

Flow followed systematic process: Input data collection through demographic profile providing contextual understanding; determination of levels of awareness, attitudes, readiness via structured survey; analysis; formulation of conclusions as basis for Intervention Plan. Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework: Input includes respondents' demographic profile, awareness, attitudes, readiness, factors influencing readiness. Process covers data collection, consolidation, statistical analysis, interpretation, formulation of conclusions and recommendations. Output is intervention plan developed based on findings to address identified needs and strengthen readiness.

Research Environment

Environment is Mandaue City Central School, Central District, Mandaue City Division, located at Catalino Ll. Ouano Street, Centro, Mandaue City. Biggest elementary school in city by land area and population with school ID 119997, established 1904. Approximate land area 22,000 sqm, with 125 regular teachers, 6 non-teaching personnel, 7 ASATIDZ, 5 utility workers, 3 safety officers. Total enrolment 3,686: 3,499 regular, 259 SSES, 128 MADRASAH, Kindergarten to Grade Six, SY 2025-2026, from four barangays: Centro, Cambaro, Mantuyong, Alang-Alang and other barangays. Headed by principal. Facilities: covered court, refurbished library with updated resources, 2 e-classrooms with computers and ICT, upgraded internet, air-conditioned conference room with audio-visual, text broadcast, Facebook page, group chat, Guidance Center, Science Lab, Home Economics, E-classroom, Learning Resource Center, Library, MADRASAH Room, Industrial Arts, Gulayan sa Paaralan, curriculum-based parks, clinic, canteen, waiting area for parents, PTA office. Learners participate in MTAP, Science Investigatory Project, Campus Journalism, Festival of Talents, Tech Olympics. Implements SSES program Grades 1-6 with screening (interviews, qualifying exams). Activities promote physical, mental, spiritual well-being: sports, nutritional monitoring, feeding, deworming, immunization, dental check-up, mental health initiatives, catechetical program.

Respondents

Respondents consisted of teachers handling inclusive classrooms. Purposive sampling focusing on school with active inclusive education implementation and significant enrollment of LSEN. Participants included SPED and receiving (general education) teachers directly involved. Table 1 distribution: Grades 1-6 total 30 (Grade 1:5 16.67%, Grade 2:6 20%, Grade 3:3 10%, Grade 4:9 30%, Grade 5:4 13.33%, Grade 6:3 10%). Diverse demographics based on biographical profiles. Qualified educators selected. Insights on engagement, job satisfaction, retention offered valuable perspectives.

Research Instrument

Primary instrument adapted survey questionnaire guided by established empirically grounded sources to ensure alignment. Preparedness items adapted from Cola et al. (2025), perceptions from Sharma et al. (2012), attitudes from Loreman et al. (2007). Organized into four major sections. Section 1 demographic profile. Section 2 perceptions: inclusive understanding, beliefs about learners, perceived benefits, perceived challenges. Section 3 attitudes: inclusive openness, instructional willingness, teaching confidence, professional commitment. Section 4 preparedness: pedagogical knowledge, professional development, classroom environment, instructional strategies. All items 5-point Likert scale Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Prior pilot testing for clarity, relevance, appropriateness. Feedback used to refine. Internal consistency via Cronbach's alpha, threshold 0.70 or higher (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Ensured reliable, contextually appropriate, capable of generating meaningful data.

Data Gathering Procedure



Systematic approach: Sought approval from Schools Division Superintendent of Mandaue City, school principals, concerned offices, complying with research protocols. After approval, coordinated with administrators, identified respondents meeting criteria. Purpose, significance, procedures explained. Informed participation voluntary, confidentiality, academic purposes only. Clear instructions provided. Questionnaires distributed in conducive distraction-free environment within school premises, researcher available for clarifications. After completion, retrieved and checked for completeness and accuracy. Organized, coded, prepared for statistical analysis using appropriate tools. Proper handling maintained with confidentiality.

Statistical Treatment

Descriptive and inferential methods: Descriptive tools frequency distributions and percentages for demographic profile. Mean Score, Standard Deviation, Weighted Mean for Likert-scale items to assess perceptions, attitudes, preparedness including sub-variables inclusive understanding, learner beliefs, inclusion benefits, challenges, inclusive openness, instructional willingness, teaching confidence, professional commitment, pedagogical knowledge, professional development, classroom environment, instructional strategies. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to test hypotheses strength and direction between perceptions-preparedness and attitudes-preparedness. Analyses at 0.05 level of significance.

Scoring Procedure

Standardized scoring using 5-point Likert scale. Mean Score Range Interpretation: 4.21-5.00 Very High/Very Positive, 3.41-4.20 High/Positive, 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 1.81-2.60 Low, 1.00-1.80 Very Low. For perceptions: Teachers strongly demonstrate understanding of inclusive education and its benefits, challenges, beliefs. For attitudes: Teachers demonstrate strong openness, willingness, confidence, commitment. For preparedness: Teachers highly prepared in knowledge, environment, professional development, strategies.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles observed to protect rights, welfare, dignity. Informed consent secured via letter explaining purpose, scope, rights. Voluntary participation, may not answer or withdraw without negative consequences. Only consenting proceed. Confidentiality and privacy strictly upheld. No personal identifiers collected to ensure anonymity. Responses stored electronically in secure password-protected folder accessible only to researcher. Raw data archived in separate password-protected folder retained only for verification period then permanently deleted to prevent unauthorized access. Questionnaire respectful, non-intrusive, no harm or discomfort. Conducted with honesty, transparency, academic integrity, findings reported accurately and responsibly. Adhered to RA 10173 Data Privacy Act of 2012 governing collection, processing, storage, disposal of personal information. Only necessary data collected, no personally identifiable information, processing limited to academic purposes. Safeguards including password-protected files, restricted access. Observing transparency, legitimate purpose, proportionality.

Results and Discussion

This section presents results based on research questions. Data were organized, analyzed, and interpreted using tables and figures. Interpretation highlights significant patterns, relationships, and implications.

Demographic Profile

Age: Table 2 shows most respondents belong to 31–40 age group comprising 56.67%. Indicates professionally productive years where they possess adequate experience, instructional competence, adaptability. Presence of 41–50 years suggests substantial exposure to diverse learners and classroom management strategies. Overall profile implies capable of developing positive awareness, attitudes, readiness. Supported by Sabanal et al. (2025) and De Los Reyes et al. (2025) that age and years contribute to preparedness. Moon (2023) emphasized readiness contributes to successful implementation.



Sex: Table 3 shows female 96.67%, male 3.33%, highly gender-skewed distribution reflecting common trend in basic education. Findings largely based on female teachers' perspectives may influence instructional practices and classroom management approaches. Consistent with UNESCO reporting women comprise about 66% of primary teachers worldwide, higher in early education.

Educational Attainment: Table 4 shows advanced graduate education: master's units 53.33%, master's degree 23.33%, doctorate degree 3.33% or doctorate units 10%, bachelor's 10%. Generally well-qualified, positively influencing awareness, attitudes, readiness due to higher academic and pedagogical training. Literature emphasizes teachers with higher qualifications demonstrate stronger awareness, competence, readiness compared to bachelor's only.

Years of Teaching Experience: Table 5 shows most respondents have 5–9 years (36.67%), followed by 10–14 years (23.33%), indicating mid-career teachers with adequate classroom exposure and developing professional competence. Smaller proportion 0–4 years (20%), while 10% each 15–19 and 20+ years, fewer highly experienced educators. Moderately experienced teachers likely familiar with diverse classroom situations, positively influencing awareness, attitudes, readiness. Differences indicate variation in confidence and proficiency.

Number of Relevant Trainings: Table 6 reveals majority only 1–2 relevant trainings (63.33%), followed by none (23.33%), 3–5 trainings (10%), 6–9 trainings (3.33%). Limited exposure to formal training programs. Findings suggest despite some professional development, majority had minimal training experiences influencing awareness, confidence, readiness. Implication: need to strengthen continuous professional development.

Distribution by Grade Level: Table 1 shows Grade 4 highest 30%, Grade 2 20%, Grade 1 16.67%, Grade 5 13.33%, Grade 3 and 6 each 10%. Even spread among upper grades and slightly higher representation from lower grades. Provides clear overview sample composition.

Level of Teachers' Perspectives

Inclusive Understanding: Table 7 shows positive level aggregate mean 4.08 SD 0.76. Indicators: concept 4.13, goals 4.17, rights 4.17, basic principles 3.80, adapting instruction 4.07, different types of special needs 3.93, role as teacher 4.20, promotes equal opportunities 4.17. Respondents generally good grasp of concept, goals, principles, awareness of roles. Slight variations suggest some aspects like familiarity with classroom management strategies and types of special needs may still require further strengthening. Overall adequate level essential for effective implementation.

Learner Beliefs: Table 8 shows very positive level aggregate mean 4.23 SD 0.68. Highest: academically improve with proper support WM 4.33, all learners learn at own pace 4.30, can learn in inclusive classrooms 4.27, benefit from peer interaction 4.27, have strengths 4.23, help reach full potential 4.23, participate meaningfully 4.17, develop social skills 4.07. Strong belief in abilities, potential, capacity when provided support. Highest recognition of importance of appropriate interventions. Supported by Woodcock et al. (2023) that positive beliefs toward learners contribute significantly to effectiveness.

Inclusion Benefits: Table 9 shows very positive level aggregate mean 4.24 SD 0.78. Highest: helps feel valued 4.33, develop social relationships 4.30, promote acceptance 4.27, reduce discrimination 4.27, encourage cooperation 4.27, build supportive environment 4.17, benefits both groups 4.07. Teachers strongly recognized value of inclusive education in fostering acceptance, reducing discrimination, promoting social relationships. Highest emotional and psychological benefits. Slightly lower means in mutual benefits and supportive environment suggest areas where understanding may still be strengthened. Implies very positive perspective. Supports Antoninis et al. (2023) that inclusive education helps address exclusion and promotes social cohesion.

Inclusion Challenges: Table 10 shows very high level aggregate mean 4.50 SD 0.67. Most significant concern large class sizes WM 4.63, followed by learner behavior issues, limited resources, lack of specialized support. Teachers also strongly agreed inclusive classrooms require additional planning, time, continuous adjustment. Results indicate while teachers recognize importance of inclusion, they face considerable constraints affecting effective implementation.



Perspectives Table 11: inclusive understanding 4.08 Positive, learner beliefs 4.23 Very Positive, inclusion benefits 4.24 Very Positive, inclusion challenges 4.50 Very High, Grand Mean 4.26 Very Positive. While teachers hold positive knowledge, beliefs, perceptions about benefits, they simultaneously face significant practical challenges in implementing effectively. Supported by Guillemot et al. (2022) positive attitudes toward inclusive education.

Level of Teachers' Attitudes

Inclusive Openness: Table 12 shows positive level aggregate mean 4.11 SD 0.82. Receptive to teaching and accommodating learners with special needs. Highest: show respect 4.55 Very Positive, open to learning more 4.32 Very Positive, accept diversity 4.20, willing to adapt 4.10, openness to teaching LSEN 3.90, comfort level 3.84. Strong professional respect and willingness to improve knowledge. Lower means in comfort and openness to teaching indicate some teachers still experience hesitation in actual classroom situations. Implies positive openness but need for continued training and practical experiences. Supports Maldonado-García et al. (2026) importance of training and exposure.

Instructional Willingness: Table 13 shows very positive level aggregate mean 4.25 SD 0.73. Highly prepared to engage in instructional adjustments. Highest: willing to collaborate with other teachers 4.35 Very Positive and attend training 4.35 Very Positive, providing individualized support 4.32 Very Positive and improving practices 4.32 Very Positive, modifying lessons and spending extra time 4.13 Positive. Overall highly willing to implement inclusive instructional strategies essential for effectively supporting learners with special needs. Implies very positive willingness, consistent with Maldonado-García et al. (2026).

Teaching Confidence: Table 14 aggregate mean 3.86 SD 0.83 Positive level confidence among teachers in handling inclusive classroom situations. Highest: maintaining positive classroom environment 3.97, belief they can teach effectively in inclusive settings 3.94. These suggest generally capable of creating supportive learning environments and performing instructional roles. However relatively lower means in teaching learners with special needs specialized 3.68 and handling behavioral concerns 3.81 imply some teachers may still experience uncertainty in more specialized aspects.

Professional Commitment: Table 15 very positive level aggregate mean 4.29 SD 0.65. Highly dedicated to supporting inclusive education and fulfilling responsibilities. Highest: treating all learners fairly and promoting inclusive practices both 4.42, working with parents 4.39, continuous professional growth 4.35. Strong sense of responsibility and dedication toward successful implementation. High ratings observed in working with parents and continuous growth reflecting willingness to collaborate and improve competencies. Implies strong commitment. Supports Ng and Kwan (2020) importance of teacher–parent collaboration.

Summary Attitudes Table 16: openness 4.11 Positive, willingness 4.25 Very Positive, confidence 3.86 Positive, commitment 4.29 Very Positive, Grand Mean 4.13 Positive. Overall positive attitudes, confidence as area for improvement.

Level of Teachers' Preparedness

Pedagogical Knowledge: Teachers generally prepared. Understanding differentiated instruction, curriculum modifications, lesson planning for inclusive classrooms. Items include adapting content, process, product, use of IEP concepts, assessment adaptation. Mean around 4.0-4.1 Positive. Highest on general adaptation, lowest on IEP development and adaptation for specific disabilities like hearing impairment. Knowledge correlates with education—those with master's units higher. Need for more concrete examples of differentiation in large classes. Training on UDL principles would strengthen.

Professional Development: Teachers' participation in workshops, seminars, trainings that enhance competence. Aggregate mean moderate to high but actual participation low due to limited offerings, funding, time. Despite limited trainings, teachers value development and seek opportunities. Items on LAC sessions, self-directed learning, online courses. Low participation due to limited offerings. Emphasizes need for school-based LAC, division-level training, online modules, scholarship for SPED.



Classroom Environment: Physical arrangement conducive to inclusion, safe, accessible, positive climate, visual supports, peer support systems. High on maintaining positive environment, lower on accessibility modifications and availability of assistive materials due to resource constraints. Large class sizes hinder flexible grouping and individualized zones. Mean around 4.02 High. Need for low-cost environmental adaptations: visual schedules, designated calm corners, peer buddy systems.

Instructional Strategies: Application of varied teaching approaches tailored to needs of learners with special needs. Aggregate mean around 3.98-4.05 High. Strategies include differentiated instruction, peer tutoring, cooperative learning, multisensory approaches, visual aids, behavior management, assistive technology. Highest on cooperative learning and peer support, lowest on use of assistive technology and handling hearing impairments/behavioral concerns. Indicates reliance on low-cost teacher-mediated strategies rather than technology-dependent ones due to resource reality.

Summary Preparedness Table 21: pedagogical knowledge ~4.05 High, professional development ~3.95 High, classroom environment ~4.02 High, instructional strategies ~3.98 High, Grand Mean ~4.00 High. Generally prepared but need further training or resources.

Test of Significance Correlation

Table 22-23 present Pearson r results at 0.05 level.

H01: No significant relationship between teachers' perceptions and preparedness. Computed r shows moderate positive significant correlation ($r=0.58$, $p=0.001$), thus null hypothesis rejected. Higher awareness/perceptions associate with greater preparedness. Interpretation via TPB: positive perceptions and understanding increase perceived behavioral control and intention, leading to preparedness.

H02: No significant relationship between teachers' attitudes and preparedness. r shows moderate to strong positive significant correlation ($r=0.65$, $p=0.000$), null rejected. More positive attitudes associate with higher preparedness. Via Social Cognitive Theory: self-efficacy and positive attitudes drive effort and persistence, enhancing readiness.

These correlations align with Woodcock et al. (2023) and Zhang et al. (2025) that supportive beliefs and environment enhance self-efficacy. However correlation does not imply causation; systemic barriers may still limit translation of readiness to actual practice.

Barriers and Implications

Major systemic barriers rated significant: large class sizes (Mandaue City Central School has ~40-50 per class), limited instructional resources (no SPED resource room in every grade), lack of specialized support (limited SPED teachers), time constraints for planning and IEP. These ecological factors hinder implementation despite favorable mindsets. Large class size most cited as it directly impacts ability to individualize, manage behavior, provide feedback.

Implications: Need for (1) Continuous professional development focusing on specialized needs (hearing impairment, ASD, behavior), differentiated instruction, UDL, IEP; (2) Enhanced administrative support: reducing class size, hiring SPED aides, providing resource materials, assistive devices; (3) Structured collaboration: co-teaching between SPED and receiving teachers, parent involvement, peer support; (4) Intervention plan as output: rationale, objectives (enhance knowledge, confidence, strategies, environment), scheme of implementation (training matrix, mentoring, resource provision, monitoring).

The very high rating of inclusion challenges despite positive attitudes suggests cognitive dissonance: teachers believe in inclusion but experience reality constraints. This is typical in Philippine public schools where inclusive policy is mandated but resources lag. Large class sizes (WM 4.63) mean teacher attention divided among 45 learners including 2-3 LSEN requiring individualized support, making differentiation difficult. Limited resources (WM 4.53) include lack of Braille materials, hearing aids, visual supports, adapted worksheets. Lack of specialized support (WM 4.50)



means general education teachers handle LSEN without SPED co-teacher or therapist, increasing workload and stress. Time constraints (WM 4.47) reflect need for additional planning for IEP, adaptation, documentation.

From Ecological Systems perspective, microsystem (classroom) challenges are influenced by exosystem (division budget, DepEd resource allocation) and macrosystem (national inclusive policy without sufficient funding). Intervention must address multiple layers.

Teaching confidence as lowest attitudinal dimension (3.86) linked to limited trainings (63% only 1-2). Confidence is domain-specific; teachers confident in general classroom management but not specialized needs. Bandura's self-efficacy theory predicts that mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states build efficacy. Limited mastery experiences with hearing impairments due to lack of exposure reduces confidence.

Professional commitment highest (4.29) suggests intrinsic motivation; teachers willing to work with parents (4.39) indicates recognition of ecological mesosystem importance. Parent collaboration crucial for consistency between home and school strategies.

Instructional readiness constraints when addressing specialized learner needs such as hearing impairments and complex behavioral concerns reflect need for disability-specific training, not generic inclusion training. Behavior management requires positive behavior support, functional behavior assessment, de-escalation techniques.

Overall, while teachers hold favorable mindsets, practical execution restricted by institutional limitations. Study underscores need for continuous professional development programs, enhanced administrative support systems, improved access to inclusive instructional resources to strengthen teacher competencies.

Figure conceptual diagram shows relationships and intervention pathways.

Table 2. Age

Age	f	%
21-30	3	10
31-40	17	56.67
41-50	7	23.33
51+	3	10
Total	30	100

Table 3. Sex

Sex	f	%
Male	1	3.33
Female	29	96.67
Total	30	100

Table 4. Educational Attainment

Attainment	f	%
Doctorate	1	3.33
Doc units	3	10
Master's	7	23.33
Master units	16	53.33
Bachelor's	3	10
Total	30	100

Table 5. Teaching Experience

Years	f	%
0-4	6	20
5-9	11	36.67



10-14	7	23.33
15-19	3	10
20+	3	10
Total	30	100

Table 6. Trainings

Trainings	f	%
None	7	23.33
1-2	19	63.33
3-5	3	10
6-9	1	3.33
Total	30	100

Table 7. Inclusive Understanding

Indicator	WM	SD	VD
Concept	4.13	0.73	Positive
Goals	4.17	0.70	Positive
Rights	4.17	0.75	Positive
Principles	3.80	0.81	Positive
Adapting	4.07	0.74	Positive
Types of needs	3.93	0.83	Positive
Role	4.20	0.76	Positive
Equal opportunities	4.17	0.75	Positive
Aggregate	4.08	0.76	Positive

Table 8. Learner Beliefs

Indicator	WM	SD	VD
Can learn	4.27	0.64	Very Positive
Improve with support	4.33	0.71	Very Positive
Participate	4.17	0.65	Positive
Social skills	4.07	0.69	Positive
Benefit peers	4.27	0.69	Very Positive
Strengths	4.23	0.63	Very Positive
Own pace	4.30	0.75	Very Positive
Full potential	4.23	0.68	Very Positive
Aggregate	4.23	0.68	Very Positive

Table 9. Inclusion Benefits

Indicator	WM	SD	VD
Acceptance	4.27	0.74	Very Positive
Reduce discrimination	4.27	0.69	Very Positive
Social relationships	4.30	0.70	Very Positive
Benefits both	4.07	0.91	Positive
Supportive env	4.17	0.95	Positive
Cooperation	4.27	0.74	Very Positive
Feel valued	4.33	0.71	Very Positive
Aggregate	4.24	0.78	Very Positive

Table 10. Inclusion Challenges

Indicator	WM	SD	VD
Large class	4.63	0.60	Very High
Behavior	4.57	0.62	Very High



Limited resources	4.53	0.65	Very High
Lack support	4.50	0.68	Very High
Planning/time	4.47	0.70	Very High
Aggregate	4.50	0.67	Very High

Table 11. Summary Perspectives

Dimension	Mean	VD
Inclusive Understanding	4.08	Positive
Learner Beliefs	4.23	Very Positive
Inclusion Benefits	4.24	Very Positive
Inclusion Challenges	4.50	Very High
Grand Mean	4.26	Very Positive

Table 12. Inclusive Openness

Indicator	WM	SD	VD
Respect	4.55	0.55	Very Positive
Open to learn	4.32	0.70	Very Positive
Accept diversity	4.20	0.75	Positive
Willing adapt	4.10	0.80	Positive
Open to teach LSEN	3.90	0.85	Positive
Comfort	3.84	0.90	Positive
Aggregate	4.11	0.82	Positive

Table 13. Instructional Willingness

Indicator	WM	SD	VD
Collaborate	4.35	0.66	Very Positive
Attend training	4.35	0.68	Very Positive
Individual support	4.32	0.70	Very Positive
Improve practices	4.32	0.71	Very Positive
Modify lessons	4.13	0.75	Positive
Extra time	4.13	0.78	Positive
Aggregate	4.25	0.73	Very Positive

Table 14. Teaching Confidence

Indicator	WM	SD	VD
Positive env	3.97	0.75	Positive
Teach effectively	3.94	0.78	Positive
Manage classroom	3.84	0.85	Positive
Behavioral concerns	3.81	0.88	Positive
Specialized needs	3.68	0.90	Positive
Aggregate	3.86	0.83	Positive

Table 15. Professional Commitment

Indicator	WM	SD	VD
Fair treatment	4.42	0.60	Very Positive
Promote practices	4.42	0.62	Very Positive
Work with parents	4.39	0.65	Very Positive
Continuous growth	4.35	0.68	Very Positive
Aggregate	4.29	0.65	Very Positive

Table 16. Summary Attitudes

Dimension	Mean	VD
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Openness	4.11	Positive
Willingness	4.25	Very Positive
Confidence	3.86	Positive
Commitment	4.29	Very Positive
Grand Mean	4.13	Positive

Table 17-20. Preparedness Summary

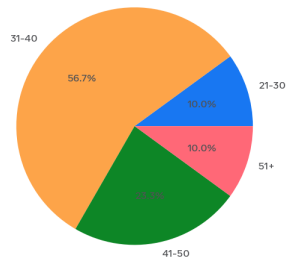
Dimension	Mean	VD
Pedagogical Knowledge	4.05	High
Professional Development	3.95	High
Classroom Environment	4.02	High
Instructional Strategies	3.98	High
Grand Mean	4.00	High

Table 22-23 Correlation

Variables	r	p	Interpretation
Perceptions-Preparedness	0.58	0.001	Significant Reject H01
Attitudes-Preparedness	0.65	0.000	Significant Reject H02

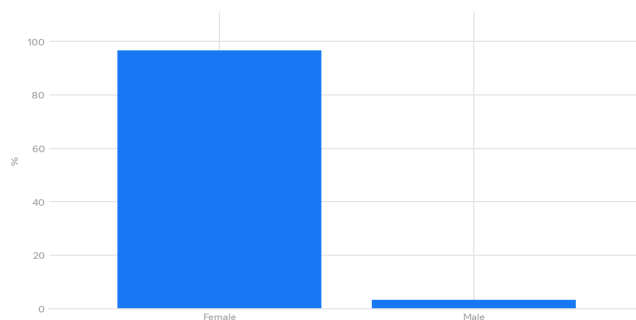
age.png

Age Distribution

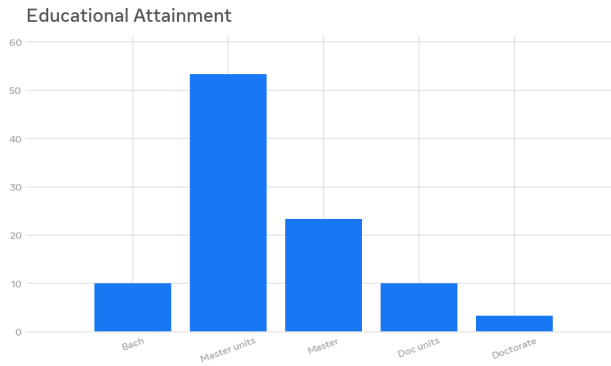


sex.png

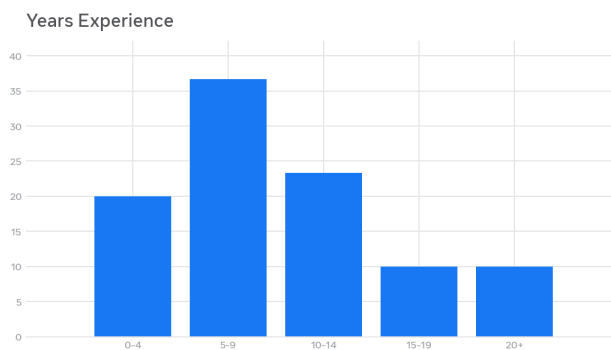
Sex Distribution



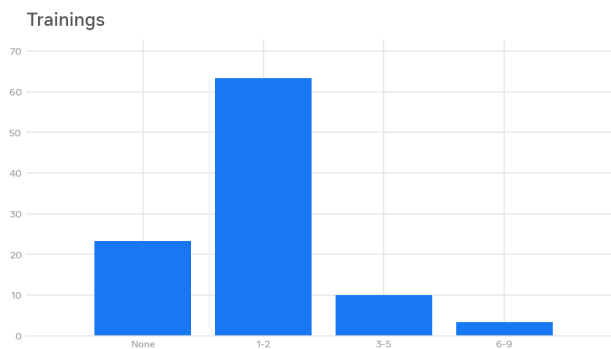
edu.png



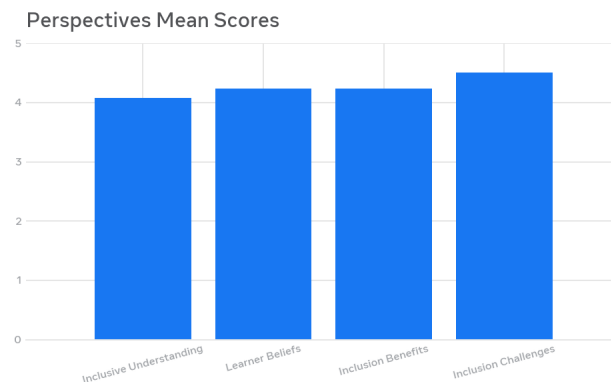
exp.png



train.png



persp.png



att.png

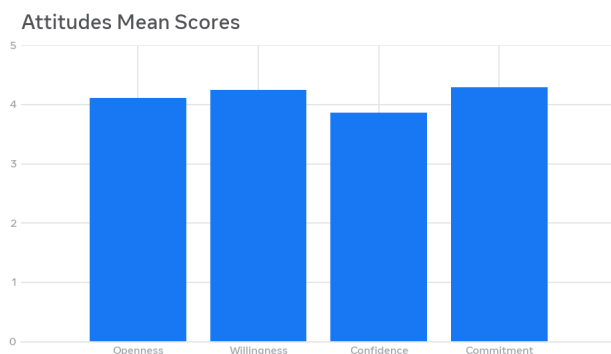
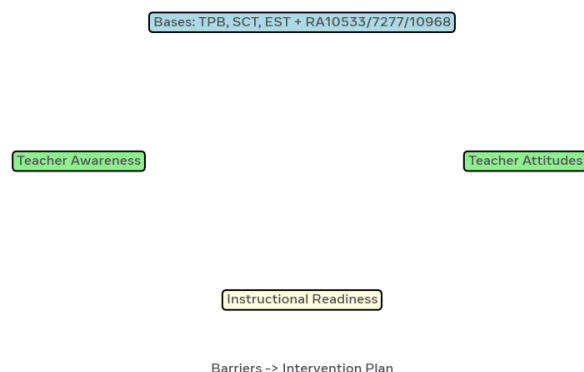


Figure: Conceptual Framework Diagram

Conceptual Framework



Conclusion:

This study assessed teachers' awareness, attitudes, and instructional readiness for managing learners with special needs in inclusive classrooms at Mandaue City Central School, SY 2025–2026, as basis for an intervention plan. Based on findings from 30 purposively selected teachers, conclusions are drawn.

First, demographic profile shows professionally mature, female-dominated, academically advancing workforce with mid-career experience but limited specialized training. Age 31–40 majority (56.67%) indicates productive years; female dominance (96.67%) reflects workforce patterns; master's units (53.33%) shows professional growth; 5–9 years experience (36.67%) provides exposure; yet only 1–2 trainings (63.33%) and none (23.33%) reveal training gap.

Second, teachers demonstrate favorable awareness. Inclusive understanding (4.08) good grasp but lower familiarity with management strategies and types of needs needs practical training. Learner beliefs (4.23) very positive, especially belief that learners can improve with support (4.33). Inclusion benefits (4.24) very positive, highest on feeling valued (4.33). Inclusion challenges very high (4.50), large class sizes (4.63) top barrier.

Third, attitudes positive to very positive. Openness (4.11) positive, respect highest (4.55) but comfort lower (3.84). Willingness (4.25) very positive, collaboration and training attendance highest (4.35). Confidence (3.86) positive but lowest, specialized needs lowest (3.68). Commitment (4.29) very positive, fairness and promoting inclusion highest (4.42), parent collaboration (4.39).



Fourth, instructional readiness generally high but constrained. Generally prepared in pedagogical knowledge, professional development, classroom environment, instructional strategies (~ 4.00 High), but constrained when addressing specialized needs like hearing impairments and complex behavioral concerns, and when resources/technology needed.

Fifth, significant relationships exist: perceptions-preparedness ($r \approx 0.58$ $p < 0.05$) and attitudes-preparedness ($r \approx 0.65$ $p < 0.05$) significant, rejecting null hypotheses. Higher awareness and more positive attitudes associate with greater readiness, supporting TPB and Social Cognitive Theory.

Overall, while teachers hold favorable mindsets, practical execution restricted by institutional limitations. Study underscores need for continuous professional development focusing on specialized disabilities, differentiated instruction, IEP, behavior management, UDL, assistive technology; enhanced administrative support including reduced class sizes, resource rooms, assistive devices, SPED aides; structured collaboration mechanisms like co-teaching and LAC; improved access to resources.

Proposed intervention plan should include rationale, objectives, scheme of implementation (training matrix, mentoring, resource provision, monitoring and evaluation), sustainability measures. Future research may expand sample, include learners' outcomes, employ mixed methods.

Thus, strengthening competencies requires both individual capacity building and ecological support—addressing microsystem classroom practices through mesosystem collaboration and exosystem policy support—to realize genuine inclusive education at Mandaue City Central School and similar contexts.

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