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Threshold of General Education Teachers' Readiness and Classroom Practices in the Implementation of Inclusive Education

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Abstract:

This study examined the readiness and classroom practices of general education teachers in implementing inclusive education at Ibabao-Estancia Elementary School, Mandaue City, Cebu, in preparation for Inclusive Learning Resource Center (ILRC) mainstreaming. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, complete enumeration was employed with 32 general education teachers across kindergarten to Grade 6. Data were gathered through a validated structured questionnaire measuring three readiness domains, namely efficacy in using inclusive instructional strategies, efficacy in collaboration, and efficacy in managing behaviour, and four classroom practice domains, namely differentiated instruction and curricular accommodations, classroom management, assessment adaptations, and learner engagement, together with perceived challenges. Frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson product-moment correlation were used. Results showed that teachers reported a high level of perceived readiness overall ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.87$), highest in inclusive instructional strategies ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.73$) and lowest, though still high, in managing behaviour ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.88$). Classroom practices were frequently implemented overall ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.83$), with classroom management and learner engagement both at 4.08 and assessment adaptations lowest at 3.92. A strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship was found between readiness and classroom practices ($r = .744$, $p < .001$), with readiness explaining about 55.4% of the variance in practices. Despite these strengths, teachers strongly agreed that they lacked sufficient knowledge and skills to teach learners with disabilities ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.85$), and agreed that inclusion increased workload and stress and made orderly classroom management more challenging (both $M = 3.97$). The findings indicate that confidence is real but uneven, that practice follows readiness, and that targeted, sustained capacity building, collaborative support, and workload-sensitive systems are needed before and during ILRC mainstreaming. An evidence-based five-phase capacity-building intervention plan is proposed to translate these findings into school action.

Keywords: inclusive education, teacher readiness, classroom practices, learners with disabilities, general education teachers, capacity building

Introduction:

Inclusive education is no longer a peripheral reform in Philippine basic education; it is a legal, moral, and pedagogical commitment. Republic Act No. 11650 (2022) institutionalised a policy of inclusion and services for learners with disabilities and mandated Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs) to support their schooling in general education settings. This law builds on earlier guarantees, including the 1987 Constitution, Batas Pambansa Blg. 232 (Education Act of 1982), Republic Act No. 7277 (Magna Carta for Disabled Persons), Republic Act No. 9155 (Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001), Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013), and Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 045, s. 2021, which operationalised ILRCs. Internationally, the same direction is affirmed by the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (United Nations, 2015), both of which require equitable, quality education and lifelong learning for all. The policy architecture is therefore clear. What remains uncertain, and what this study addresses, is whether the classroom teacher at the point of delivery feels ready and actually practises inclusion in ways that make the policy real for children.

At Ibabao-Estancia Elementary School in Mandaue City, Cebu, general education teachers are expected to welcome learners with diverse needs into regular classrooms while maintaining learning quality for all pupils. In practice, this means differentiating lessons, adapting assessment, managing behaviour positively, engaging every learner, and collaborating with parents, special education (SPED) personnel, and allied professionals. It also means doing all of

this with limited specialist time, large classes, and competing administrative demands. Teachers may therefore hold genuinely positive attitudes toward inclusion while still doubting their specific skills, especially when a learner presents complex behavioural, communication, or learning needs. That distinction between willingness and readiness is central to this study. Willingness without competence produces frustration; competence without support produces burnout. Readiness must be understood as a multidimensional belief in one's capability, not as a single global attitude.

The theoretical anchor of this study is Bandura's (1977, 1997) self-efficacy theory, which holds that people's beliefs about their capability to organise and execute courses of action shape the effort they invest, the persistence they show when difficulties arise, and the strategies they choose. In teaching, self-efficacy has been shown to predict openness to inclusive practices, use of differentiated strategies, and resilience in managing challenging behaviour (Sharma et al., 2012; Wray et al., 2022). A teacher who believes she can explain a concept in another way, calm a disruptive learner, or co-plan with a SPED teacher is more likely to attempt those behaviours, to persist when the first attempt fails, and to learn from feedback. Conversely, a teacher with low efficacy in a specific domain is more likely to avoid, simplify, or refer the problem elsewhere, even when she values inclusion in principle. The present study therefore measures efficacy in three concrete domains adapted from the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) tradition: using inclusive instructional strategies, collaborating with parents and professionals, and managing behaviour.

Complementing self-efficacy is the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) perspective (Demerouti et al., 2001), which explains why even capable teachers can struggle when demands exceed resources. Inclusion increases job demands: more planning, more differentiation, more documentation, more behaviour support, and more collaboration. When resources such as training, materials, specialist support, planning time, and administrative backing are insufficient, demands translate into stress, exhaustion, and reduced implementation quality. When resources are adequate, the same demands can become manageable challenges that build mastery. This lens helps interpret the apparent paradox in many Philippine studies, including the present one, in which teachers report both high readiness and high concern. The two are not contradictory; they describe a workforce that is willing and partly skilled but stretched, and whose readiness is conditional on support.

Empirical literature converges on the same pattern. International reviews find that general education teachers are generally supportive of inclusion but report lower confidence for learners with more complex needs and for behaviour management (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; de Boer et al., 2011; Loreman et al., 2013). Philippine meta-syntheses likewise report that regular teachers feel prepared in general pedagogy but less prepared in SPED-specific knowledge, individualised planning, and assistive approaches (Alcosero et al., 2023). Gonzaga et al. (2024) found readiness and challenges coexisting among general education teachers implementing inclusion, while Arboiz and Aoanan (2024) showed that efficacy and attitude predict readiness. Donath et al. (2023) found in a meta-analysis that professional development can support implementation, but that effects depend on design, duration, and follow-up. UNICEF Philippines (2024) further documented uneven pathways for children with disabilities in Philippine basic education, underscoring that policy alone does not guarantee classroom change. Together, these studies justify a school-level, evidence-based diagnosis before ILRC mainstreaming, rather than assuming readiness from policy compliance.

This study was therefore conducted to determine the threshold, the actual level, of general education teachers' readiness and the frequency of their current classroom practices at Ibabao-Estancia Elementary School, and to test whether readiness and practices move together. Specifically, it sought to describe the profile of the teachers; determine their level of readiness in inclusive instructional strategies, collaboration, and behaviour management; determine the extent of their classroom practices in differentiated instruction and curricular accommodations, classroom management, assessment adaptations, and learner engagement; identify the challenges they encounter; test the relationship between readiness and practices; and propose an evidence-based capacity-building intervention plan for ILRC mainstreaming. The findings are intended for school leaders, the SPED coordinator, master teachers, and teachers themselves, and for division planners who must decide what training, mentoring, materials, and staffing to prioritise. In short, the study asks not whether inclusion is desirable, but whether the school is ready to do it well, where its strengths lie, and what must be strengthened first.

Literature Review:

This review synthesises international, national, and local evidence on four connected questions: what inclusive education requires of general education teachers, what readiness means and what shapes it, what classroom practices make inclusion work, and what barriers persist even when teachers are willing. The review is organised thematically rather than as a catalogue of studies, so that each theme builds toward the conceptual model tested in this study.

Inclusive education, as framed by UNESCO (1994) and Republic Act No. 11650 (2022), means that learners with disabilities learn alongside their peers in general education, with the supports, accommodations, and services they need to participate and progress. It is not mere placement. Placement without participation reproduces exclusion inside the regular classroom. DepEd Order No. 045, s. 2021 therefore positions ILRCs as hubs for assessment, intervention, teacher support, and resource provision, not as separate schools. The shift is profound for general education teachers, whose role expands from delivering a uniform curriculum to designing flexible learning that responds to variability. Florian and colleagues' work on inclusive pedagogy captures this well: instead of labelling some learners as different and providing something separate for them, the teacher designs from the start for diversity, using rich, flexible approaches that benefit all. In the Philippine context, this ideal meets real constraints documented by UNICEF Philippines (2024), including uneven identification, referral, and support systems, and limited specialist personnel in many schools. The classroom therefore becomes the decisive site where inclusion succeeds or stalls.

Teacher Readiness and Self-Efficacy

Readiness in this study is operationalised as teacher self-efficacy for inclusive practices, following Sharma et al. (2012) and the TEIP scale. Bandura (1977, 1997) distinguished efficacy expectations, beliefs that one can execute the behaviour, from outcome expectations, beliefs that the behaviour will produce a result. Both matter, but efficacy expectations are more proximal to action. Teachers with higher efficacy for inclusive instruction are more likely to try varied assessment, provide alternate explanations, design accommodated tasks, and gauge comprehension for learners who struggle. Teachers with higher efficacy for collaboration are more likely to engage parents, articulate expectations to support personnel, identify when specialist intervention is needed, and co-plan with professionals. Teachers with higher efficacy for behaviour management are more likely to set clear expectations, prevent disruption, calm learners, and sustain instruction through difficulty. Wray et al. (2022) systematically reviewed factors influencing efficacy for inclusion and found that training, experience with learners with disabilities, school support, and collaborative culture matter, while lack of knowledge and negative school climate undermine efficacy. Giorgi et al. (2026) and related network meta-analytic work similarly link efficacy to contextual and personal variables, suggesting that efficacy is malleable, not fixed.

What Shapes Readiness: Training, Experience, and Support

Training is the most consistently cited lever. Donath et al. (2023) meta-analysed professional development for inclusion and found that it can improve implementation, especially when it is sustained, practice-based, and followed by coaching rather than delivered as a single seminar. Loreman et al. (2013), in a four-country study, found that pre-service teachers felt more ready after focused preparation, but that confidence varied by domain, with behaviour management often lowest. In the Philippines,

Alcosero et al. (2023) synthesised evidence that regular teachers felt prepared in general teaching but not in SPED-specific competencies, echoing international findings. Experience also matters, but not automatically. Years of service can build classroom fluency, yet without specific inclusive experience and reflection, veteran teachers may rely on routines that do not fit diverse learners. Collaboration is a third shaper: when SPED teachers, parents, and allied professionals are accessible and collaborative, general education teachers report higher readiness and less isolation (Ebron, 2026). School leadership matters as well; principals who protect planning time, provide materials, and recognise inclusive work create the resource conditions described by the JD-R model (Demerouti et al., 2001).
Four practice domains structure this study. First, differentiated instruction and curricular accommodations involve modifying materials, presenting concepts through multiple modalities, drawing on learners' interests and strengths, and using assistive technologies (Aribbay et al., 2024). Differentiation is not lowering expectations; it is varying the pathway while holding the learning goal. Second, classroom management for inclusion involves arranging the physical environment for mobility and sightlines, explicitly teaching social skills and routines, fostering a culture that celebrates diversity, using positive behaviour supports rather than punitive discipline, and arranging flexible seating.

Third, assessment adaptations involve adjusting time, length, and pacing, using individualised progress benchmarks alongside standard grades, and providing regular diagnostic feedback. Fourth, learner engagement involves multi-sensory and interactive activities, cooperative learning and peer tutoring, relevance through interests and culture, self-advocacy, and a culture that celebrates effort and diverse abilities. Each domain has its own evidence base, but they are interdependent: assessment that is not adapted cannot reveal learning; management that is punitive cannot sustain engagement; differentiation without engagement cannot build belonging.

Attitudes toward inclusion are generally positive but conditional. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) and de Boer et al. (2011) found that teachers support inclusion in principle but express more concern about learners with behavioural and more complex needs, large classes, and insufficient support. Forlin et al. (2011) developed the SACIE-R to capture sentiments, attitudes, and concerns, showing that concerns about workload, resources, and competence are distinct from attitudes and must be addressed separately.

Recent systematic reviews confirm that secondary and primary teachers continue to report similar concerns, even as policy advances (Lindner et al., 2026; Maldonado-García et al., 2026). In Philippine studies, workload, stress, and classroom management recur as barriers (Gonzaga et al., 2024). The concern that learners with disabilities might progress better in special classrooms, found in the present study, is not necessarily rejection of inclusion; it can reflect teachers' honest appraisal of their current capacity and the support available. Addressing it requires demonstrating, through co-teaching, demonstration lessons, and visible learner progress, that inclusion can work in their own classrooms, not merely asserting it.

The Readiness–Practice Link and the Gap This Study Fills

Theory predicts that efficacy and practice are linked, and empirical work supports it: teachers who feel more capable are more likely to use inclusive strategies and to persist with them. Arboiz and Aoanan (2024) found efficacy and attitude predict readiness in a Philippine sample, using an explanatory sequential design that allowed quantitative patterns to be explained by teachers' accounts. Hall et al. (1977), in the Concerns-Based Adoption Model, similarly showed that teachers move through stages of concern, from self-concerns to task concerns to impact concerns, and that support must match the stage.

Yet few Philippine school-level studies simultaneously measure all three readiness domains, all four practice domains, and perceived challenges in a single ILRC-transition context, and fewer still translate the pattern into a phased, costed, and monitored intervention plan. This study fills that gap for Ibabao-Estancia Elementary School. It tests the hypothesis that readiness and classroom practices are significantly related, and it uses the profile of strengths and gaps to design capacity building that is targeted rather than generic. Figure 1 presents the conceptual model that guides the analysis.

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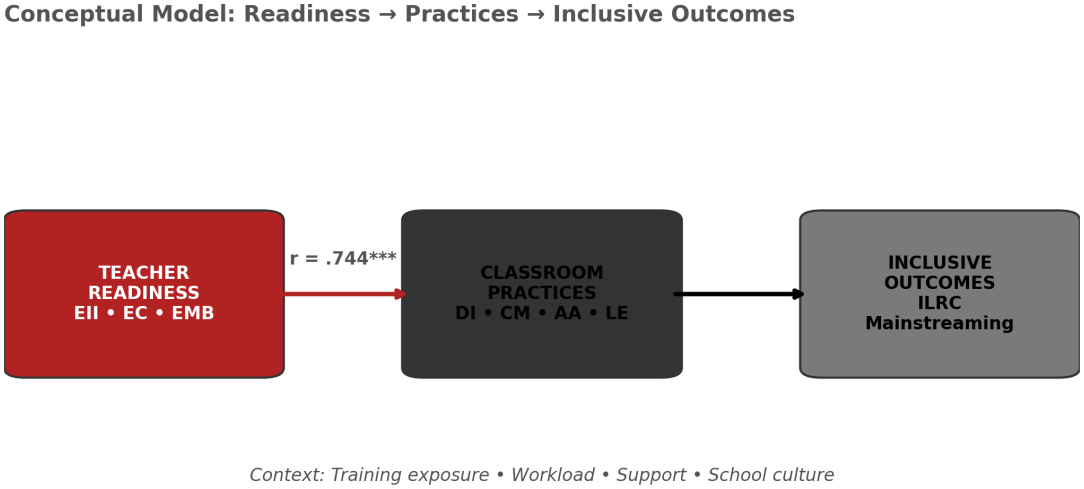

Figure 1. Conceptual model: teacher readiness, classroom practices, and inclusive outcomes in ILRC mainstreaming.

Methodology:

Research Design

This study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational design. The descriptive component established the level of teachers' readiness, the extent of their classroom practices, and the challenges they perceived. The correlational component tested whether readiness and classroom practices were significantly related. The design was appropriate because the aim was to describe a current state and test an association in a natural school setting, without manipulating variables or establishing causation. All procedures followed ethical standards for research with human participants, including voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and secure handling of data in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173).

Research Environment and Respondents

The study was conducted at Ibabao-Estancia Elementary School, Mandaue City, Cebu, a public elementary school preparing for ILRC mainstreaming under DepEd Order No. 045, s. 2021 and Republic Act No. 11650 (2022). Complete enumeration was used: all 32 general education teachers from kindergarten to Grade 6 participated. This census approach was chosen because the population was small and the school needed a complete baseline for planning; no sampling error from selection was therefore introduced, although generalisation beyond the school must be made cautiously. Table 1 summarises the profile. Most teachers were aged 40–49 (46.9%), female (87.5%), had master's units (65.6%), and had 16 or more years of service (46.9%). Grade-level representation was balanced across Grades 1–6, with kindergarten smallest (6.3%). In training, 37.5% had attended inclusive education training, 25.0% SPED and learners-with-disabilities training, 15.6% differentiated instruction, 12.5% classroom management and behaviour support, and 9.4% reported no relevant training.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered with a structured questionnaire in three parts. Part I captured profile: age, gender, highest educational attainment, field of specialisation, length of service, grade level taught, and relevant training. Part II measured readiness using 18 items adapted from the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) scale (Sharma et al., 2012), with six items each for efficacy in using inclusive instructional strategies (EII), efficacy in collaboration (EC), and efficacy in managing behaviour (EMB), rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Part III measured classroom practices using 17 items across differentiated instruction and curricular

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accommodations (4 items), classroom management (5 items), assessment adaptations (3 items), and learner engagement (5 items), rated from 1 (never) to 5 (always). A separate eight-item section measured perceived challenges on a five-point agreement scale. The instrument was subjected to expert validation and pilot testing, and reliability was checked with Cronbach's alpha, with the readiness and practices scales showing acceptable to high internal consistency as reported in the thesis. Interpretation used the following mean ranges: for readiness and challenges, 4.21–5.00 very high/strongly agree, 3.41–4.20 high/agree, 2.61–3.40 moderate/undecided, 1.81–2.60 low/disagree, 1.00–1.80 very low/strongly disagree; for practices, 4.21–5.00 always, 3.41–4.20 frequently, 2.61–3.40 sometimes, 1.81–2.60 rarely, 1.00–1.80 never.

Data Gathering Procedure

After securing approval from the graduate school, the Schools Division Office, and the school head, the researcher explained the purpose, voluntary nature, and confidentiality safeguards to the teachers, obtained informed consent, and administered the questionnaire during a schedule that did not disrupt classes. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness, coded without names, and encoded for analysis. No learner data were collected, and no classroom observation was used to validate self-reports, a limitation acknowledged in the discussion.

Data Analysis

Frequency and percentage described the profile. Weighted mean and standard deviation described readiness, practices, and challenges. Pearson product-moment correlation (Pearson r) tested the relationship between overall readiness and overall classroom practices at the .05 level of significance, with the null hypothesis of no significant relationship. The coefficient of determination (r^2) was computed to express shared variance. Means were interpreted using the scales above. Data were analysed using standard statistical software, with checks for completeness and for out-of-range values before analysis.

Ethical considerations. Participation was voluntary, with the right to withdraw without penalty. Responses were anonymous, reported only in aggregate, and stored securely with access limited to the researcher. Findings are reported honestly, including limitations, and no participant is identifiable in any table or figure.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results in the order of the research questions, followed by integrated discussion. Tables report the exact means, standard deviations, and interpretations from the thesis; figures visualise the same patterns for planning. Discussion connects each pattern to theory and prior evidence, explains why it may have occurred in this school, and draws out what it means for ILRC mainstreaming. The overarching finding is coherent: teachers are confident and practising inclusion frequently, yet they are also candid about a specific competence gap and about workload, and readiness and practice rise together.

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1. Profile of the respondents (N = 32).

Profile	Category	f	%
Age	20–29	1	3.1
	30–39	6	18.8
	40–49	15	46.9
	50–59	9	28.1
	60 and above	1	3.1
Gender	Female	28	87.5
	Male	4	12.5
Education	Bachelor's degree	7	21.9
	With master's units	21	65.6
	Master's graduate	1	3.1

	With doctorate units	2	6.3
	Doctorate graduate	1	3.1
Service	Less than 1 year	1	3.1
	1–5 years	4	12.5
	6–10 years	4	12.5
	11–15 years	8	25.0
	16 years and above	15	46.9
Grade level	Kinder	2	6.3
	Grade 1	4	12.5
	Grade 2	4	12.5
	Grade 3	4	12.5
	Grade 4	6	18.8
	Grade 5	6	18.8
	Grade 6	6	18.8
Training	Inclusive education	12	37.5
	SPED / learners with disabilities	8	25.0
	Differentiated instruction	5	15.6
	Classroom mgmt / behaviour	4	12.5
	No relevant training	3	9.4

The profile matters because it describes a mature, credential-progressing, and largely experienced faculty. Nearly three quarters of the teachers were aged 40–59, and nearly half had served for 16 years or more. This is not a novice workforce learning classroom basics; it is a workforce whose general classroom fluency is well established. In self-efficacy terms, mastery experiences in general teaching are abundant, and those experiences likely underpin the high readiness means reported below. At the same time, experience in general teaching does not automatically transfer to SPED-specific tasks such as writing individualised supports, using assistive technology, or de-escalating complex behaviour. The distinction between general and specific efficacy is therefore crucial: a teacher can be highly efficacious in running a well-ordered Grade 4 class and still feel uncertain when a learner with autism, intellectual disability, or significant communication needs joins that class without specialist support. The training profile reinforces this reading. A majority had some inclusive or SPED-related training, but coverage was fragmented: only a little over one third had training explicitly labelled inclusive education, one quarter had SPED-specific training, and nearly one in ten had none. Training was therefore broad but shallow for some, and unevenly distributed.

That unevenness is a plausible reason why overall readiness is high yet the single highest challenge is insufficient knowledge and skills: the faculty has enough exposure to feel willing and partly capable, but not enough depth, practice, and follow-up to feel secure in the hardest tasks. The gender distribution, predominantly female, mirrors the elementary teaching force in the Philippines and is not interpreted as a causal factor; it is reported for completeness. The balanced grade-level spread means the findings are not driven by one grade level, which strengthens their usefulness for whole-school planning. For ILRC mainstreaming, the profile implies that capacity building should not be designed as remedial general pedagogy. It should be advanced, SPED-specific, and practice-based, building on existing mastery while targeting the specific competencies that general experience does not supply.

The profile also raises a planning question about sustainability and mentoring. With almost half the faculty in the most experienced band, the school possesses a rich internal resource: master teachers and veteran teachers who can mentor, model, and co-teach. Yet that same concentration means that retirement and turnover in the next few years could erode institutional memory if inclusive practices are held only in individuals rather than in systems, materials, and routines. The intervention plan therefore deliberately builds mentoring, shared materials, and documented routines, so that inclusive practice survives individual turnover. Similarly, the large group with master's units suggests a faculty that values further study and is receptive to structured professional learning, provided that learning is relevant, scheduled realistically, and recognised. Capacity building that is generic, lecture-only, or scheduled on top of an already full load is likely to be resisted, not because teachers do not value learning, but because the JD-R balance is already tight. The

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profile thus points toward job-embedded, collaborative, and recognised professional development rather than one-off seminars.

Level of Teachers' Readiness

Table 2. Overall level of teachers' readiness.

Readiness domain	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Efficacy in using inclusive instructional strategies (EII)	3.94	0.73	High Readiness
Efficacy in collaboration (EC)	3.87	0.89	High Readiness
Efficacy in managing behaviour (EMB)	3.85	0.88	High Readiness
Overall readiness	3.85	0.87	High Readiness

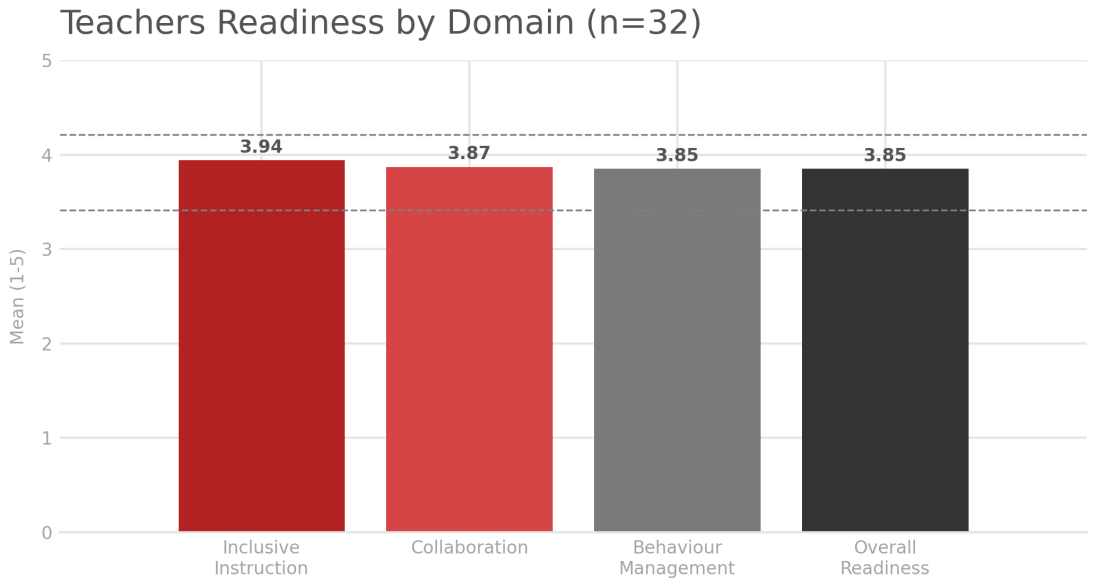

Figure 2. Teachers' readiness by domain. All domains fall in the high-readiness band (3.41–4.20), with instructional strategies highest.

Teachers reported high readiness overall (M = 3.85, SD = 0.87). All three domains fell in the high band, with a narrow spread of only 0.09 between the highest and lowest domain means. That narrow spread is itself informative: readiness is not sharply uneven across domains, but a consistent ordering still appears and is replicated in the item-level data. Efficacy in using inclusive instructional strategies was highest (M = 3.94, SD = 0.73) and also had the smallest standard deviation, indicating more consensus. Efficacy in collaboration was next (M = 3.87, SD = 0.89), followed by efficacy in managing behaviour (M = 3.85, SD = 0.88). The standard deviations, all between 0.73 and 0.89, show moderate variability: most teachers cluster around high readiness, but a minority report substantially lower confidence, especially in collaboration and behaviour. That minority matters for planning, because a school average can hide the teachers who most need support, particularly if they teach learners with the most complex needs.

Table 3. Efficacy in using inclusive instructional strategies.

EII item	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Use variety of assessment strategies	4.02	0.82	High

Provide alternate explanation / example	4.12	0.81	High
Craft good questions incl. learners with difficulties	3.85	0.69	High
Design tasks accommodating individual needs	3.76	0.70	High
Gauge every student's comprehension	3.98	0.65	High
Provide appropriate challenges for every learner	3.90	0.66	High
Grand mean	3.94	0.73	High

Within inclusive instructional strategies, the strongest item was providing an alternate explanation or example when learners are confused (M = 4.12, SD = 0.81), followed by using a variety of assessment strategies (M = 4.02) and gauging comprehension (M = 3.98). These are core, transferable teaching skills that experienced teachers practise daily, and their strength is consistent with the profile of a veteran faculty. The lowest item, though still high, was designing learning tasks so that the individual needs of learners with disabilities are accommodated (M = 3.76, SD = 0.70). This is the most SPED-specific item in the set, and its relative weakness is diagnostic. Teachers feel confident explaining, questioning, and assessing in general, but less confident in the deliberate design work that inclusion requires: task analysis, scaffolding, modified materials, and individualised expectations.

That pattern is exactly what Bandura's theory predicts when efficacy is domain-specific: general instructional mastery does not fully transfer to a new, specific task. It also matches Alcosero et al. (2023) and Gonzaga et al. (2024), who found Philippine general education teachers confident in general pedagogy but less secure in SPED-specific design. The practical implication is that training should focus less on generic differentiation slogans and more on worked examples: taking a real lesson from the school's curriculum, task-analysing it, and producing two or three accommodated versions with materials teachers can use the next day. When teachers produce a usable product and see a learner succeed with it, mastery experience builds efficacy more powerfully than a lecture about differentiation.

Table 4. Efficacy in collaboration.

EC item	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Articulate expectations to paraprofessionals / assistants	3.72	0.89	High
Make parents feel comfortable coming to school	4.00	0.78	High
Assist families in helping children succeed	4.00	0.81	High
Identify when specialist intervention is needed	3.88	0.90	High
Collaborate with professionals in designing plans	3.78	0.96	High
Work jointly with professionals / support staff	3.81	0.97	High
Overall EC	3.87	0.89	High

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Collaboration efficacy was high overall (M = 3.87), but its internal pattern reveals where support structures are thinnest. Teachers felt most confident in the relational, parent-facing items: making parents feel comfortable (M = 4.00) and assisting families (M = 4.00). These strengths reflect the relational culture of Philippine elementary schools, where teachers routinely communicate with parents and where parent trust is a professional asset. The lowest item was articulating expectations to paraprofessionals or teaching assistants (M = 3.72, SD = 0.89), followed by collaborating with other professionals in designing educational plans (M = 3.78, SD = 0.96) and working jointly with professionals and support staff (M = 3.81, SD = 0.97).

The two collaboration-with-professionals items also had the largest standard deviations in the entire readiness scale, approaching 1.00, indicating wide disagreement: some teachers have ready access to SPED and allied professionals and feel confident co-planning, while others rarely have that access and feel uncertain. That variability is likely structural rather than personal. If a school has one SPED teacher or coordinator for many general education classes, contact is rationed, and collaboration efficacy will depend on which grade or learner a teacher happens to serve. Ebron (2026) emphasises that teacher–parent collaboration and individualised planning succeed when roles, communication, and follow-up are clear. The present data suggest that the school should formalise collaboration routines, such as brief, scheduled co-planning, referral and feedback forms, and shared individualised plan templates, so that collaboration does not depend on informal access or individual initiative. Formalising the routine also protects collaboration when personnel change.

Table 5. Efficacy in managing behaviour.

EMB item	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Make expectations clear about behaviour	3.84	0.89	High
Get students to follow classroom rules	4.00	0.82	High
Calm a disruptive / noisy student	3.88	0.84	High
Deal with physically aggressive students	3.69	1.00	High
Prevent disruptive behaviour before it occurs	3.84	0.88	High
Direct activities seamlessly despite difficult behaviour	3.84	0.86	High
Overall EMB	3.85	0.88	High

Behaviour management efficacy was the lowest readiness domain (M = 3.85), though still high, and its item pattern is the most actionable. Teachers felt most confident in getting students to follow classroom rules (M = 4.00), a routine, preventive skill that veteran teachers master. The lowest item by a clear margin was dealing with physically aggressive students (M = 3.69, SD = 1.00), the only item in the readiness scale with a standard deviation of exactly 1.00, indicating the widest spread of confidence. Preventing disruption, making expectations clear, and sustaining activities through difficulty were all at 3.84, suggesting that teachers feel reasonably secure in preventive and general management but less secure when behaviour escalates to aggression or becomes persistent.

This pattern is consistent with international reviews (de Boer et al., 2011; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002) and with the SACIE-R literature (Forlin et al., 2011), in which behaviour is the domain where concerns remain highest even among otherwise supportive teachers. It is also consistent with the JD-R model: aggressive or persistent behaviour increases emotional demands and, without a clear protocol, specialist backup, and a calm, safe space, can quickly deplete a teacher's resources. The implication is not that teachers lack discipline; it is that they need a shared, practised protocol for escalation, de-escalation, documentation, and referral, plus mentoring and debriefing after incidents. Training that only teaches behaviour theory without rehearsing de-escalation, practising calm language, and clarifying when and how to call for support will not close this gap. The school should treat behaviour support as a system, not a personal trait, with visible steps, roles, and follow-up.

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Taken together, the readiness results describe a faculty that is ready in the sense that matters most for starting inclusion well: it believes it can teach, collaborate, and manage, and it has the general mastery to do so. Yet the relative weaknesses, designing accommodated tasks, articulating expectations to support personnel, co-planning with professionals, and managing aggressive behaviour, are precisely the tasks that distinguish inclusive teaching from good general teaching. Those four items should be the organising priorities for the first phase of capacity building. They are also the items where a small improvement in confidence is likely to produce a disproportionate improvement in classroom experience, because they are the moments when a teacher otherwise feels stuck, alone, or unsafe. A training plan that raises the average readiness score by a few points but leaves these four items unchanged would miss the point. A plan that moves these four items, even modestly, would change daily practice.

Extent of Classroom Practices

Table 6. Overall extent of classroom practices.

Practice domain	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Differentiated instruction & curricular accommodations	4.05	0.81	Frequently Practiced
Classroom management	4.08	0.83	Frequently Practiced
Assessment adaptations	3.92	0.86	Frequently Practiced
Learner engagement	4.08	0.83	Frequently Practiced
Overall classroom practices	4.03	0.83	Frequently Practiced

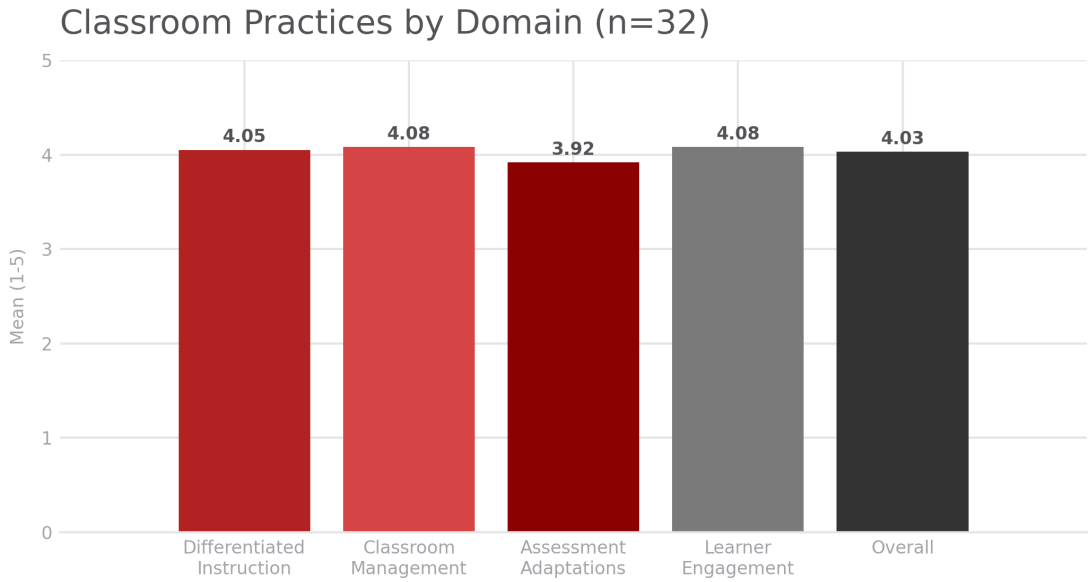

Figure 3. Classroom practices by domain. All domains are frequently practised, with assessment adaptations lowest.

Classroom practices were frequently implemented overall (M = 4.03, SD = 0.83). As with readiness, all domains fell in the same band, but the ordering is instructive. Classroom management and learner engagement tied for highest (both M = 4.08), followed by differentiated instruction and curricular accommodations (M = 4.05), with assessment adaptations lowest (M = 3.92). The gap between the highest and lowest practice domains is only 0.16, yet it is replicated in the item data and aligns with the readiness pattern, where the most SPED-specific, technical work, designing accommodated tasks and adapting assessment, was relatively weakest. Teachers are doing inclusion frequently, but the work that requires the most technical adaptation is the work done least frequently. That is not a failure; it is a precise diagnosis of where to invest.

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Table 7. Differentiated instruction and curricular accommodations.

DI item	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Modify lesson materials	4.09	0.75	Frequently
Present concepts via multiple modalities	4.03	0.75	Frequently
Integrate interests, culture, strengths	4.12	0.77	Frequently
Leverage assistive technologies / aids	3.97	0.96	Frequently
Grand mean	4.05	0.81	Frequently

In differentiated instruction, the strongest item was integrating learners' interests, cultural backgrounds, and personal strengths into daily activities (M = 4.12), followed by modifying lesson materials (M = 4.09). These strengths suggest that teachers already practise culturally responsive, interest-based differentiation, which is a genuine asset. The lowest item was leveraging assistive technologies or specialised learning aids (M = 3.97, SD = 0.96), again with the largest variability in the domain. Assistive technology is the item where access, knowledge, and confidence intersect: a teacher cannot frequently use a tool she does not have, has not been trained to use, or does not know how to maintain.

The school should therefore audit what assistive and low-cost aids actually exist, such as enlarged print, visual schedules, manipulatives, audio versions, and communication supports, and make them visible, labelled, and borrowable, rather than assuming teachers will improvise them. Training should include hands-on use of those specific tools with real learners, not a generic overview of assistive technology. Aribbay et al. (2024) show that differentiation in inclusive settings succeeds when teachers have concrete, subject-specific examples and time to adapt them; the present data support that approach.

Table 8. Classroom management practices.

CM item	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Organise furniture for mobility / sightlines	4.22	0.71	Always Practiced
Teach social skills / routines vs bullying	4.06	0.83	Frequently
Foster culture celebrating diversity	4.09	0.81	Frequently
Use positive behaviour interventions	4.00	0.88	Frequently
Arrange flexible seating	4.03	0.90	Frequently
Grand mean	4.08	0.83	Frequently

Classroom management practices were the joint-highest domain, and one item reached the always-practised band: organising classroom furniture to ensure safe mobility and clear sightlines (M = 4.22, SD = 0.71). This is the single highest mean in the entire practices scale, and it is encouraging because physical arrangement is a visible, low-cost, high-impact inclusive practice that benefits every learner, especially those with physical, visual, or attention needs. The lowest item in the domain was employing positive behaviour interventions rather than punitive discipline (M = 4.00), still frequently practised, but relatively lower and with a higher standard deviation. That relative weakness connects directly to the readiness gap in managing aggressive behaviour: teachers are confident in arranging the environment and in fostering a positive culture (M = 4.09), but when behaviour escalates, the shift from punitive to positive, function-based response is harder to sustain without a protocol and support. The discussion in the literature on positive behaviour supports emphasises that positive approaches require teaching, prompting, and reinforcing expected behaviour, not merely withholding punishment. The school should therefore make positive behaviour routines explicit, such as posted expectations, social-skills mini-lessons, reinforcement systems, and calm-down procedures, and should ensure that every teacher knows the steps when a learner's behaviour exceeds what the classroom routine can handle. When the environment is well arranged and the culture is positive, but the escalation

pathway is unclear, teachers are left to improvise in the most stressful moment, which is precisely when improvisation is least reliable.

Table 9. Assessment adaptations.

AA item	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Adjust time / length / pacing	3.91	0.90	Frequently
Evaluate via individualised benchmarks	3.84	0.88	Frequently
Provide regular diagnostic feedback	4.00	0.80	Frequently
Grand mean	3.92	0.86	Frequently

Assessment adaptations were the lowest practice domain (M = 3.92), and the item pattern is the most technically demanding in the scale. Providing regular diagnostic feedback was highest (M = 4.00), reflecting a general feedback culture that veteran teachers practise. Adjusting time, assignment length, or pacing was next (M = 3.91). The lowest item was evaluating growth using individualised progress benchmarks alongside standardised grading (M = 3.84, SD = 0.88). Individualised benchmarking requires deciding what to measure, how to record it, and how to report it without lowering expectations or creating a parallel, lower-status system. It also requires time and a recording tool. Without a simple template, such as a one-page progress tracker linked to the lesson's learning competency, teachers are likely to default to the standard grade, even when they know it does not capture a learner's progress.

The assessment gap is therefore best understood as a systems gap, not a knowledge gap alone. The intervention plan should provide a simple, shared assessment adaptation toolkit: a menu of allowable adaptations, a one-page individualised benchmark template, and examples of diagnostic feedback that are specific, actionable, and encouraging. When assessment is adapted, teachers gain evidence that inclusion is working, which in turn builds efficacy. When it is not adapted, teachers lack evidence, and the learner's progress remains invisible, which can reinforce doubt about inclusion.

Table 10. Learner engagement practices.

LE item	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Multi-sensory / interactive activities	4.13	0.83	Frequently
Cooperative / peer-tutoring structures	4.09	0.82	Frequently
Tap interests / culture / strengths	4.03	0.84	Frequently
Foster self-advocacy	4.03	0.86	Frequently
Maintain inclusive culture celebrating efforts	4.13	0.79	Frequently
Grand mean	4.08	0.83	Frequently

Learner engagement was joint-highest (M = 4.08), with multi-sensory and interactive activities and maintaining an inclusive culture both at 4.13. These strengths are important because engagement is the mechanism through which inclusion becomes belonging: a learner who is actively participating, working with peers, and having effort recognised is not merely present but included. Cooperative learning and peer tutoring (M = 4.09) are particularly valuable, because peer support can extend the teacher's reach and build social acceptance, provided that peer roles are structured, rotated, and taught, not left to chance.

The relatively lower items, tapping interests and fostering self-advocacy (both M = 4.03), are still frequently practised, but they point to the next level of engagement: moving from teacher-designed engagement to learner-owned engagement, in which learners monitor their own goals, ask for assistance, and advocate for what they need. Self-

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advocacy is especially important for learners with disabilities, who must learn to communicate their needs in and beyond school. Teachers should be supported to teach self-advocacy explicitly, through goal-setting, choice, and reflection routines, rather than assuming it will emerge from participation alone. The engagement results, taken with the management results, suggest that the school's classrooms are already warm, active, and well arranged. The task is to make that warmth more technically precise, so that engagement is not only frequent but also adapted, assessed, and sustained for the learners who find it hardest to engage.

Overall, the practice profile is coherent and credible. Teachers report doing the visible, relational, and environmental work of inclusion frequently and well. They report doing the technical, individualised work, accommodated task design, assistive technology, individualised benchmarks, and positive behaviour response to escalation, less frequently, though still frequently. That pattern is exactly what would be expected from a veteran, willing faculty that has had fragmented rather than sustained SPED-specific training and that works in a system where specialist support is rationed. It also explains why the readiness–practice correlation is strong but not perfect: readiness and practice move together, but practice is also constrained by resources, time, and systems. A teacher can be ready and still not use assistive technology if the tool is not available; a teacher can be ready and still not use individualised benchmarks if there is no template or time to record them. The discussion must therefore avoid reducing the findings to a claim that teachers need more motivation. They need more tools, time, templates, and support.

Relationship Between Readiness and Classroom Practices

Table 11. Correlation between readiness and classroom practices.

Variables	Pearson r	Strength	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Readiness and classroom practices	0.744	Strong positive	< .001	Reject H0	Significant

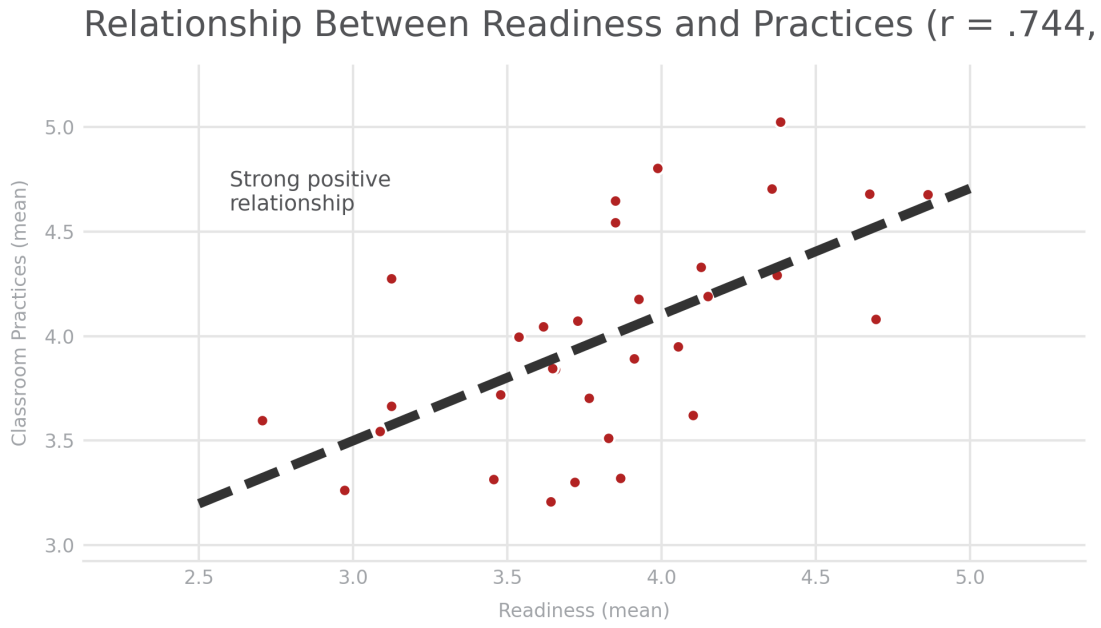

Figure 4. Illustrative scatter of the strong positive relationship (r = .744, p < .001). Points are jittered for display; the dashed line shows the positive trend. Shared variance r² = .554.

The Pearson correlation between overall readiness and overall classroom practices was strong, positive, and statistically significant (r = .744, p < .001). The null hypothesis of no relationship is therefore rejected. The coefficient of determination is r² = .554, meaning that about 55.4% of the variance in classroom practices is shared with readiness, a large effect in educational research. In practical terms, teachers who reported higher readiness also reported more

frequent inclusive practices, and teachers who reported lower readiness reported less frequent practices. This is the central inferential finding of the study, and it has direct planning value: interventions that genuinely raise readiness, especially in the specific domains identified above, are likely to raise practice, and interventions that only mandate practice without building readiness are likely to be resisted or performed superficially.

The correlation must be interpreted with appropriate caution. First, correlation does not establish causation. It is plausible that readiness drives practice, as self-efficacy theory predicts, and it is equally plausible that practice builds readiness, as mastery experience predicts, and that the two reinforce each other in a virtuous cycle. The most defensible reading is bidirectional: confidence encourages attempt, attempt produces mastery, mastery builds confidence. Second, both variables were measured by self-report on the same questionnaire at the same time, so common-method variance may inflate the correlation. Teachers who view themselves positively may rate both readiness and practices higher. Third, the sample is small (N = 32) and from one school, so the correlation is best treated as a school-level planning signal, not as a population estimate. Despite these cautions, the size of the correlation, its significance, and its consistency with theory and with the item-level patterns make it unlikely to be a mere artefact. The correlation is also consistent with Arboiz and Aoanan (2024) and with the broader efficacy literature (Sharma et al., 2012; Wray et al., 2022), in which efficacy predicts inclusive behaviour. For the school, the implication is to design capacity building as a cycle of learning, trying, feedback, and reflection, rather than as a single training event. Demonstration teaching, co-teaching, peer observation, and coaching are more likely to build both readiness and practice than lectures alone, because they create the mastery experiences that efficacy theory identifies as the strongest source of efficacy.

The shared variance also leaves 44.6% of the variance in practices unexplained by readiness. That remainder is not error alone; it represents the resources, systems, and context that the JD-R model highlights. A teacher's practice depends not only on what she believes she can do, but also on whether she has the material, the time, the specialist, and the administrative backing to do it. Future research in the school should therefore test a fuller model, including training depth, specialist support, class size, and planning time as predictors of practice, and should add classroom observation and learner outcomes to complement self-report. For now, the 55.4% figure is a useful reminder that readiness is powerful but not sufficient. The intervention plan must address both sides: build readiness and build the system that allows readiness to become practice.

Challenges Encountered

Table 12. Perceived challenges in implementing inclusive education (ranked).

Rank	Challenge	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Insufficient knowledge / skills to teach learners with disabilities	4.16	0.85	Agree
2	Inclusion may increase workload and stress	3.97	1.03	Agree
3	Maintaining effective, orderly classroom more challenging	3.97	0.86	Agree
4	Learners with disabilities may progress better in special classrooms	3.91	0.89	Agree
5	Difficult to provide adequate attention to all learners	3.84	1.02	Agree
6	Learners with disabilities likely to	3.75	1.05	Agree

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	exhibit disruptive behaviour			
7	Inclusion may negatively affect emotional development	3.44	1.11	Agree
8	Concern learners may not be fully accepted by classmates	—	—	Agree (as reported in thesis)

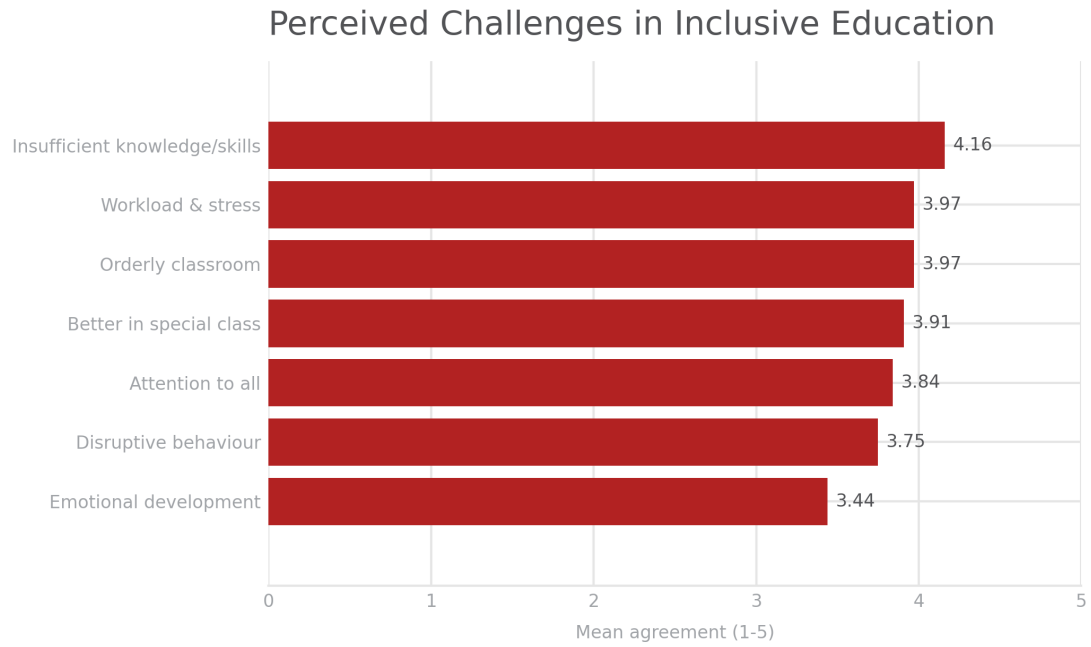

Figure 5. Perceived challenges ranked by mean agreement. The competence gap is the clear priority.

Teachers agreed with all the listed challenges, but the ranking is decisive. The highest challenge, by a clear margin, was concern about insufficient knowledge and skills to teach learners with disabilities (M = 4.16, SD = 0.85). This is the only challenge item that approaches the very-high band, and it has the smallest standard deviation among the challenge items, indicating broad consensus. It is also the most actionable challenge, because knowledge and skills can be taught, practised, and coached, whereas attitudes alone are harder to shift. The finding should be read alongside the readiness results: teachers are not saying they are unready in general; they are saying that for the specific, SPED-related knowledge and skills that inclusion demands, they feel under-prepared. That specificity is a gift for planning. It tells the school exactly where to start: not with generic inclusion awareness, but with concrete competencies, such as understanding common disabilities, task analysis, accommodations, assistive supports, behaviour support, and individualised planning, taught with real cases from the school.

The next two challenges tied at 3.97: increased workload and stress (SD = 1.03) and maintaining an effective, orderly classroom (SD = 0.86). Workload and stress had one of the largest standard deviations, indicating that some teachers feel the load acutely while others feel it less, likely depending on class composition, support, and non-teaching load. The JD-R model predicts exactly this: when inclusion adds demands without adding resources, stress rises and implementation quality falls. The school must therefore treat workload as a design issue, not as a complaint to be endured. Practical workload-sensitive measures include protecting a regular co-planning period, providing ready-to-use adapted materials rather than requiring every teacher to create them from scratch, streamlining documentation, clarifying referral and support pathways, and ensuring that ILRC mainstreaming does not simply add tasks to the same

timetable. The orderly-classroom challenge, at the same mean, connects to the behaviour findings: teachers are not saying classrooms are chaotic; they are saying that maintaining order is harder when diverse needs are present without adequate support. The same system response applies: clear routines, positive behaviour supports, and a known escalation pathway reduce the daily cost of maintaining order.

The fourth-ranked challenge, that learners with disabilities may make better academic progress in special classrooms (M = 3.91), deserves careful interpretation. It would be a mistake to read this as opposition to inclusion. In a context where teachers feel under-skilled and under-supported, it is a rational concern that a specialist setting might currently offer more intensive, individualised support than a general classroom can. The appropriate response is not to argue the point in the abstract, but to make the general classroom demonstrably more capable, through co-teaching, specialist consultation, adapted materials, and visible learner progress, so that teachers' lived experience contradicts the concern. Demonstration lessons, case conferences that show progress, and peer mentoring by teachers who have succeeded with inclusion are more persuasive than policy statements. The remaining challenges, difficulty giving adequate attention to all learners (M = 3.84), disruptive behaviour (M = 3.75), and negative effects on emotional development (M = 3.44), all fall in the agree band, with the last two showing the largest variability, suggesting that teachers differ in how strongly they hold these concerns. Peer acceptance, reported as agreed in the thesis, is a related concern that should be addressed through explicit social-skills teaching, structured peer interaction, and a school culture that celebrates diversity, all of which the teachers already practise frequently. The challenge profile as a whole therefore points to a single, coherent intervention logic: build specific competence, reduce workload through systems and shared resources, strengthen behaviour support, and make progress visible.

Integrated Discussion and Implications for ILRC Mainstreaming

The integrated picture is of a school that is past the starting line but not yet at the threshold of secure, sustained inclusion. Teachers are willing, experienced, and practising inclusion frequently. Their classrooms are well arranged, culturally responsive, and engaging. Their readiness is high and their practices are frequent, and the two move together strongly. At the same time, they are candid that the most technical work, accommodated task design, assistive technology, individualised assessment, and behaviour support in escalation, is the work they feel least secure in and do least frequently, and that they lack sufficient SPED-specific knowledge and skills. That is not a contradiction; it is the definition of a threshold. The school is at the point where general good teaching is no longer enough, and where the next increment of progress requires specific, supported, and sustained capacity building. ILRC mainstreaming should therefore be phased, not abrupt, and should be led by the school's own data rather than by a generic training calendar.

Three implications follow. First, capacity building must be specific and practice-based. The four lowest readiness items and the three lowest practice items should be the curriculum for the first cycle, taught through demonstration, co-teaching, and coaching, with usable materials produced during training. Second, capacity building must be systemic. The school should formalise collaboration routines, behaviour support protocols, assessment adaptation templates, and a shared bank of adapted materials, so that inclusive practice does not depend on individual heroism. Third, capacity building must be workload-sensitive and monitored. Training should be scheduled realistically, recognised, and followed by classroom support and feedback, with pre- and post-measures of readiness and observation of practice, so that the school can see whether the intervention is working and adjust. The evidence-based capacity-building intervention plan below translates these implications into five phases, from needs assessment and orientation through planning, capacity building, classroom implementation, and monitoring and sustainability, with objectives, activities, persons involved, resources, time frames, success indicators, and means of verification. It is designed to be implemented over one school year, with the first two phases in February–March, capacity building in April–July, classroom implementation with collaborative support in August–October, and monitoring, evaluation, and sustainability in November–January, as in the thesis, adapted to the school calendar.

Table 13. Evidence-based capacity-building intervention plan (summary; full plan in the thesis).

Phase	Focus	Key activities	Success indicator
1. Needs assessment & orientation (Feb)	Understand needs, build shared purpose	Orientation on findings, needs assessment, ILRC roles	Teachers understand plan, needs identified

2. Planning & preparation (Mar)	Resources & schedules	Develop adapted materials, assessment tools, mentoring schedules	Materials & schedules ready
3. Capacity building (Apr–Jul)	Competencies	Seminars, workshops, demo teaching, mentoring on DI, assessment, behaviour, collaboration	Pre/post gains, outputs
4. Classroom implementation (Aug–Oct)	Practice with support	DI, flexible assessment, positive behaviour, peer mentoring, SPED consultation	Consistent practice, improved management
5. Monitoring, evaluation & sustainability (Nov–Jan)	Sustain & improve	Observations, feedback, reflections, evaluation meetings	Documented improvements, sustained routines

The plan is evidence-based in a specific sense: each phase responds to a finding. Phase 1 responds to the need for shared understanding of the baseline, so that teachers see the plan as a response to their own data, not an imposed programme. Phase 2 responds to the resource gaps in assistive technology, adapted materials, and assessment templates. Phase 3 responds directly to the competence gap, the behaviour gap, and the collaboration gap. Phase 4 responds to the readiness–practice link, by creating mastery experiences through supported classroom implementation. Phase 5 responds to the risk that gains fade, by building monitoring, reflection, and sustainability into routines. The plan should be evaluated with the same instruments used in this study, so that change in readiness and practice can be measured, and with classroom observation and learner progress data, so that self-report is complemented by evidence of what actually happens for learners.

Limitations must be stated plainly. The study used a small, single-school census (N = 32), so findings should not be generalised to other schools without replication. Data were self-reported, without classroom observation, learner outcome data, or parent and learner perspectives, so practices may be over-reported and the learner's experience is not directly captured. The design was correlational, so the readiness–practice relationship cannot be interpreted as causal. The challenges scale, as reported, requires fuller reporting of all items and their reliability in future work. Despite these limitations, the study provides a credible, school-specific baseline and a practical plan. Future research should replicate the design in multiple schools, add observation and learner outcomes, test whether training depth and specialist support predict practice beyond readiness, and use a longitudinal design to test whether capacity building raises both readiness and practice over time.

Conclusion:

This study set out to determine the threshold of general education teachers' readiness and classroom practices in implementing inclusive education at Ibabao-Estancia Elementary School, and to test whether readiness and practice are related, as a basis for ILRC mainstreaming. The answer is clear and encouraging, but it carries a specific warning. Teachers reported high readiness overall ($M = 3.85$) and frequently implemented inclusive practices overall ($M = 4.03$), with strengths in instructional strategies, parent collaboration, classroom arrangement, and learner engagement. Readiness and practices were strongly, positively, and significantly related ($r = .744$, $p < .001$), with readiness sharing 55.4% of the variance in practices. That relationship means that investing in readiness is investing in practice, and that the school's best lever for better inclusion is the teacher's felt capability, supported by systems that let capability become action.

The warning is equally clear. Teachers strongly agreed that they lack sufficient knowledge and skills to teach learners with disabilities ($M = 4.16$), and they agreed that inclusion increases workload and stress and makes orderly classroom management more challenging. The relative weaknesses were specific, not general: designing accommodated tasks, using assistive technology, evaluating progress with individualised benchmarks, articulating expectations to support personnel, co-planning with professionals, and managing physically aggressive behaviour. Those are the tasks that make inclusion real for the learners who need it most, and they are the tasks the school must strengthen first. The

school is therefore ready to begin ILRC mainstreaming, but not ready to assume it will succeed without targeted, sustained, and workload-sensitive support.

The study therefore recommends that the school implement the five-phase evidence-based capacity-building intervention plan, with priority to SPED-specific competencies, behaviour support protocols, collaboration routines, assessment adaptation tools, and a shared bank of adapted and assistive materials, delivered through demonstration, co-teaching, mentoring, and coaching rather than one-off seminars, and monitored with the same readiness and practice measures plus classroom observation. Division and school leaders should protect planning and collaboration time, ensure specialist access, and recognise inclusive work, so that demands are matched by resources. Future research should replicate the study in more schools, add observation and learner outcomes, and test longitudinally whether capacity building raises both readiness and practice. If those steps are taken, the threshold documented here will not be a ceiling, but a baseline from which the school can build an inclusion that is not only mandated, but practised, supported, and sustained for every learner.

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