

Classroom Readiness for Inclusive Education of Public Elementary Schools

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Abstract

Classroom readiness for inclusive education heavily relies on the teacher's preparedness with regards to their knowledge of teaching strategies and availability of classroom resources to effectively accommodate diverse learning needs. Through quantitative descriptive-correlational design, this study aimed to determine the classroom readiness for inclusive education of the public elementary teachers. A total of 60 respondents were selected using simple random sampling. The data were taken from Samboan public elementary teachers using adapted survey questionnaire. Simple percentage and weighted mean were the statistical method used to interpret the data. Generally, the key factors that hindered classrooms to be fully ready in implementing inclusive education were the need to expand the teachers' knowledge of teaching strategies and improve classroom resources. The study recommended that teachers shall participate in trainings on inclusive education, provide more assistive learning devices, and conduct further study that examine teachers' knowledge and resource constraints in promoting inclusive education.

Keywords: *Inclusive Education, Classroom Readiness, Public Elementary Schools, Teachers' Knowledge, Classroom Resources, Quantitative Descriptive-Correlational Design.*

Introduction

Inclusive education promotes fair treatment and equal learning opportunities for all learners, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or learning needs. It emphasizes the creation of a classroom environment that fosters respect, empathy, diversity, and equity, where learners with difficulties feel supported and valued. Successful implementation of inclusive education hinges on the preparedness of teachers, particularly in terms of their knowledge of inclusive teaching strategies and the availability of classroom resources necessary to meet the diverse

needs of all students.

According to DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2021, inclusive education must create an environment conducive for every learner, regardless of their differences. However, several studies have indicated that public school teachers have yet to fully embrace inclusive practices. For instance, the effectiveness of inclusive education is closely tied to a teacher's knowledge and understanding of inclusive principles [1]. Similarly, many teachers hold unfavorable attitudes toward inclusion, primarily due to a lack of training and insufficient teaching resources [2].

Further evidence suggests that teachers are better prepared to implement inclusion when they can appropriately utilize technology, recognize individual differences, and engage in continuous professional development [3]. Despite these findings, many regular education teachers still experience difficulties in adapting their teaching strategies to accommodate learners with special needs, primarily due to feeling unprepared [4].

Insufficient training and lack of knowledge in instructional methodology hinder teachers' ability to effectively manage inclusive classrooms [5]. Also identified challenges in implementation, such as limited utility, inadequate strategy knowledge, and resource constraints [6]. Despite these documented barriers, prior studies have not deeply explored how teachers' knowledge of teaching strategies and the availability of classroom resources affect classroom readiness for inclusive education. This gap presents an opportunity for further investigation.

Thus, this study aims to assess the classroom readiness of public elementary school teachers in implementing inclusive education by examining two key components: teachers' knowledge of inclusive teaching strategies, and the availability of classroom resources. The goal is to contribute to the improvement of inclusive practices in basic education and offer practical recommendations for better equipping educators to teach diverse learners, including those with special needs.

Methodology

Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to assess classroom readiness for inclusive education among public elementary school teachers. A descriptive-correlational design is used to examine the relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them, focusing instead on measurement and analysis of naturally occurring relationships [7]. The objective was to determine the level of classroom readiness in relation to two key variables: teachers' knowledge of inclusive teaching strategies and the availability of classroom resources. This design allowed the researchers to explore how these variables relate to overall classroom preparedness without implementing interventions or altering conditions.

Informants

The informants of this study consisted of 60 elementary public school teachers from five selected public elementary schools located in the District of Samboan. The respondents were selected using simple random sampling, ensuring that every teacher in the population had an

equal probability of being chosen [8]. The inclusion criteria for participation were being an elementary teacher with at least one year of teaching experience, regardless of age or prior attendance in training or seminars related to inclusive education. This ensured that the sample represented teachers with diverse levels of experience and exposure to inclusive education practices.

Instrument

A survey questionnaire was utilized by the researchers to collect data regarding the classroom readiness for inclusive education among public elementary school teachers. The instrument aimed to gather specific and relevant information about the teachers' knowledge of teaching strategies and availability of classroom resources for inclusive education [9]. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part I collected respondents' demographic information, including gender, years of teaching experience, educational attainment, teaching position, and prior training related to inclusion. Part II consisted of two sections: the first section was adapted [10] with 10 indicators designed to measure teachers' knowledge of inclusive teaching strategies, while the second section was adapted [11] with 8 indicators assessing the availability of classroom resources for inclusive education. Respondents answered using a four-point Likert scale (4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree). The questionnaire was administered in English, with respondents given 20 minutes to complete it. This structured instrument allowed for quantitative measurement of teacher preparedness and resource availability in the sampled classrooms.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the Cebu Province Schools Division Superintendent and the school heads of the five selected elementary schools. The researchers gave the instruments to each respondent using simple random sampling. After data collection, the responses were tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted. Ethical guidelines were strictly followed: respondent identities were kept anonymous, participation was voluntary, and all were informed about the study's purpose and data use. Data were securely stored and destroyed after the study to protect privacy. Proper citation and copyright practices were also observed.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data on classroom readiness for inclusive education, the researchers employed quantitative statistical treatments appropriate for descriptive-correlational studies. Specifically, Simple Percentage was used to present and interpret the demographic profile of the respondents. This helped highlight distributions in terms of gender, years in teaching, educational attainment, teaching position, and training related to inclusion. Additionally, the researchers used the Weighted Mean to analyze responses related to the knowledge of teaching strategies and availability of classroom resources. This statistical method allowed for an accurate interpretation of the level of classroom readiness based on the indicators measured in the adapted questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

The data gathered in this study were systematically presented, analyzed, and interpreted to assess the classroom readiness for inclusive education among public elementary

school teachers. The results are organized into six tables, each highlighting key aspects of the study.

Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents: gender, years in teaching, educational attainment, teaching position, and training related to inclusion.

	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	56	93.33
Male	4	6.67
Years in Teaching		
1-9	28	46.67
10-18	18	30.00
19-27	7	11.67
28-36	7	11.67
<i>Mean: 12.02 St. Dev.:9.66</i>		
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	48	80.00
Master's Degree	12	20.00
Teaching Position		
Master Teacher I	2	3.33
Teacher I	31	51.67
Teacher II	13	21.67
Teacher III	14	23.33
Training Related to Inclusion		
No	49	81.67
Yes	11	18.33

As shown in Table 1, majority of the respondents were female teachers (93.33%) where most of them belonged to 1-9 years in teaching ($\mu=12.02$) with Bachelor's Degree (80%), mostly were classified as Teacher I (51.67%) and many of them had not received any training related to inclusion (81.67%). This indicates that the respondents of the study were predominantly female teachers with limited exposure to inclusive education. The fact that most of them had 1-9 years of teaching experience, held Teacher I position, and had not received training related to inclusion means that they are new to the field of teaching and still improving their knowledge of teaching strategies, and have limited access for inclusive classroom resources. Most of the responding teachers had never taken any kind of training on implementing inclusive education, making them not prepared to handle an inclusive learning environment [12].

Table 2. Respondents' knowledge of inclusive teaching strategies.

Classroom Readiness of the Respondents based on Knowledge of Teaching Strategies

	Indicator	Frequency distribution				Mean	Interpretation
		SA	A	D	SD		
1	I have clear concepts of the term "inclusion".	42	18	0	0	3.7000	Strongly Agree
2	I know how to use different approaches for the support of learners with diverse learning needs.	30	29	1	0	3.4833	Agree
3	I know how to use reinforcement strategies in an inclusive classroom.	30	28	2	0	3.4667	Agree
4	I know how to handle learners with behavioral problems in an inclusive classroom.	22	35	3	0	3.3167	Agree
5	I know how to use variety of assessment strategies such as portfolios, assessment, modified test, performance – based assessment, etc.	31	26	3	0	3.4667	Agree
6	I know how to manage the classroom layout and setting plan for the learners with special needs.	24	34	2	0	3.3667	Agree
7	I know how to use different methods of teaching to satisfy the needs of disabled learners.	24	34	2	0	3.3667	Agree
8	I know how to provide an alternate explanation for example when learners are confused.	29	29	2	0	3.4500	Agree
9	I am confident in my knowledge in designing learning tasks for the individual needs of learners with disabilities.	24	33	3	0	3.3500	Agree
10	I know how to use differentiated instruction in an inclusive classroom.	32	27	1	0	3.5167	Strongly Agree
Overall mean						3.4483	

*Strongly Agree (SA) means highly knowledgeable

*Agree (A) means knowledgeable

*Disagree (D) means less knowledgeable

*Strongly Disagree (SD) means not knowledgeable

As reflected in Table 2, indicator 1 “I have clear concepts of the term “inclusion” ($\mu=3.7000$) and indicator 10 “I know how to use differentiated instruction in an inclusive classroom” ($\mu=3.5167$) got the two highest mean and these are both interpreted as strongly agree. This means that teachers are highly knowledgeable about creating an educational environment that values diversity, promotes equity and provides opportunities for all learners to succeed, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds. In addition, they are also confident in

their understanding on how to adopt different instructional methods that address the diverse needs of the learners. Moreover, these indicators contribute to a supportive and effective classroom environment where all learners of different characteristics and difficulties feel valued and have equal rights to fully participate in an inclusive setting. For an inclusive education to be successful, teachers need to be fully equipped with significant knowledge that enables them to offer the distinct needs of the learners in inclusive classrooms [13]. Teachers being knowledgeable on how to use different instructional approaches in an inclusive learning environment is linked to having an in-depth knowledge about the different learning needs of each learner in an inclusive classroom [14].

While, indicator 4 “*I know how to handle learners with behavioral problems in an inclusive classroom*” ($\mu=3.3167$) and indicator 9 “*I am confident in my knowledge in designing learning tasks for the individual needs of learners with disabilities*” ($\mu=3.3500$) got the two lowest mean and these are both interpreted as agree. This indicates that some teachers are knowledgeable in managing and supporting learners with behavioral difficulties effectively using range of strategies that promote positive behavior. However, there is potential for further improvement in their approaches to effectively address more complex behavioral issues and better meet the different needs of all learners in an inclusive setting. Also, few of them are not fully confident on their knowledge about modifying instructions that best suited for each educational necessities of the learners. This entails that they still need professional development in potential areas to strengthen their competencies in addressing various learner’s needs in an inclusive classroom. Teachers’ practices in positively impacting student’s behavior varies which indicates a need to undergo for more and effective professional development to address diverse needs in the classroom [15].

In general, the teacher’s knowledge of teaching strategies got the overall mean ($\mu=3.448$) which is interpreted as agree with the description of the respondents are knowledgeable but needs additional improvement. This means that classrooms are unprepared as teachers are knowledgeable about teaching strategies but needs additional improvement in handling learners with individual needs. Teachers should have enough prior knowledge about necessary teaching methodology to manage classroom with diverse learning needs [16].

As suggested in Table 3, indicator 4 *assistive listening devices like microphone* ($\mu=1.900$) and indicator 2 *snellen charts* ($\mu=1.600$) got the two highest mean and these are both interpreted as available but inadequate. This indicates that even these resources are available in some classrooms, some learners who need them cannot be served. The inefficiency of assistive listening devices, such as microphones, raises the possibility that these resources could not be regularly available, usable, or inadequate numbers for learners who have hearing impairments.

Table 3 Availability of classroom resources necessary for inclusive education.

Classroom Readiness of the Respondents Based on Classroom Resources

Indicator	Frequency distribution				Mean	Interpretation
	AA	A	AI	NA		
1 Braille Machine	0	3	6	51	1.2000	Not Available
2 Snellen Charts	4	7	10	39	1.600	Available but Inadequate
3 Hearing Aids	0	3	6	51	1.2000	Not Available
4 Assistive listening devices like microphone	7	12	9	32	1.900	Available but Inadequate
5 Sense and mobility materials	1	7	8	44	1.4167	Not Available
6 Room Echo	1	4	9	46	1.3333	Not Available
7 Wheel Chairs	1	3	5	51	1.2333	Not Available
8 Talking Computers	2	4	6	48	1.3333	Not Available
Overall mean					1.4021	

*Available and Adequate (AA) means classroom resources are available and fully adequate

*Available (A) means some classroom resources are available but access may be limited

*Available but Inadequate (AI) means classroom resources are available but inadequate

*Not available (NA) means classroom resources are not available

Similar to this, there may be restrictions or limitations on the availability of Snellen charts, which are essential for recognizing and treating vision impairments which could not sufficiently assist early diagnosis and intervention. Adequate supply of necessary resources such as Snellen charts and assistive learning devices has not yet achieved by schools for visual learning which hinders them from implementing inclusive education [17]. Consequently, in order to overcome these challenges, learners with disabilities must utilize specialized instructional aids an assistive device to successfully participate in various educational activities [18].

In contrast, both indicator 1 *braille machine* and indicator 3 *hearing aids* ($\mu=1.2000$) got the lowest mean and these are both interpreted as not available. This means that these indicators represent a critical lack of essential resources for learners with specific disabilities. The unavailability of braille machines poses a significant challenge for visually impaired learners, as they rely on braille for reading and writing. Without access to this resource, their ability to engage in academic activities and achieved learning outcomes is severely limited. On the other hand, the absence of hearing aids denies learners with hearing impairments the ability to effectively participate in classroom interactions, understand lessons, and

communicate with their peers and teachers. Various assistive devices, such as hearing aids can support learners who are deaf or hard of hearing, as well as those with other auditory or learning challenges [19].

Generally, classroom resources got the overall mean ($\mu=1.4021$) which is interpreted as not available with a description of necessary classroom resources are not available, resulting frequent and major disruptions to learning. This means that classrooms are unprepared as necessary classroom resources of the teachers to implement inclusive education are not available. Inadequate resources hinder classrooms to be prepared in an inclusive setting [20].

To explore potential associations, Table 4 shows the relationship between the respondents' profiles and their knowledge of teaching strategies.

Table 4. Relationship between Profile and Knowledge of Teaching Strategies

**Test of Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the
Knowledge of Teaching Strategies**

Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Knowledge of Teaching Strategies	Computed Chi-Square	df	Chi-Square Critical Value	Result
Gender	4.286	2	5.991	Not Significant <i>(Ho accepted)</i>
Years in Teaching	5.429	6	12.592	Not Significant <i>(Ho accepted)</i>
Educational Attainment	1.369	2	5.991	Not Significant <i>(Ho accepted)</i>
Teaching Position	7.105	6	12.592	Not Significant <i>(Ho accepted)</i>
Training Related to Inclusion	3.801	2	5.991	Not Significant <i>(Ho accepted)</i>

As shown in the table 4, there was no significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the knowledge of teaching strategies. The respondent's gender, years in teaching, educational attainment, teaching position and training related to inclusion do not determine their level of knowledge of teaching strategies in handling inclusive classroom. This means that these factors alone are not reliable indicators of a teacher's preparedness or effectiveness in implementing inclusive teaching practices. Thus, this suggests other factors such as positive behavior might play a more significant role in shaping teachers' knowledge

and readiness for inclusive education. This highlights the importance of promoting a positive and open-minded attitude among teachers as their beliefs and perceptions about inclusion have a greater influence in their willingness to adopt teaching strategies for inclusive education that effectively support diverse learners. Teachers who have positive attitudes towards inclusive education tend to have more knowledge in implementing effective teaching strategies in inclusive classroom [21].

Table 5. Relationship between their profiles and the availability of classroom resources.

Test of Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Classroom Resources

Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Classroom Resources	Computed Chi- Square	df	Chi-Square Critical Value	Result
Gender	1.986	3	7.815	Not Significant (<i>Ho accepted</i>)
Years in Teaching	9.686	9	16.919	Not Significant (<i>Ho accepted</i>)
Educational Attainment	5.525	3	7.815	Not Significant (<i>Ho accepted</i>)
Teaching Position	6.600	9	16.919	Not Significant (<i>Ho accepted</i>)
Training Related to Inclusion	10.955	3	7.815	Significant (<i>Ho rejected</i>)

In terms of gender, years in teaching, educational attainment, and teaching position, there was no significant relationship found to the classroom resources. This implies that these variables do not influence how teacher perceive classroom resources. However, in terms of training related to inclusion, there was significant relationship found to the classroom resources. This indicates that teachers with training related to inclusion influences the availability of classroom resources. Teachers who have received training related to inclusion are more likely to have a greater access to classroom resources. This suggests that inclusive education training can influence the allocation of resources providing more learning materials to support teachers to be prepared in handling inclusive education. Teachers who attend trainings often well-equipped to identify and utilize appropriate resources for different learning needs in an inclusive classroom which can positively impact in acquiring resources needed for inclusive education [22].

The table 6 below presents the relationship between the respondents' knowledge of teaching strategies and the availability of classroom resources, providing insights into how these two key components interact to influence classroom readiness for inclusive education.

Table 6. Relationship between Knowledge of Teaching Strategies and Classroom Resources

Test of Relationship Between the Knowledge of Teaching Strategies and the Classroom Resources

Relationship Between the Knowledge of Teaching Strategies and the Classroom Resources	Computed Chi-Square	df	Chi-Square Critical Value	Result
Knowledge of Teaching Strategies	5.314	6	12.592	Not Significant (<i>Ho accepted</i>)

As displayed in table 6, there was no significant relationship between the knowledge of teaching strategies and the classroom resources. This entails that the teachers' understanding about teaching strategies operates independently and does not rely on the resources available to them. This suggests that classroom resources are not a determining factor in whether a teacher has a strong grasp of effective teaching strategies. Although teachers face constant challenges like inadequate educational resources, they are having knowledge in integrating innovative teaching practices that foster inclusivity [23].

Conclusion

Findings revealed that classroom materials and tools necessary for inclusion were largely lacking. Many teachers reported that they did not have access to assistive devices, specialized learning materials, or an inclusive-friendly classroom setup. This lack of resources created a gap between their willingness to implement inclusive education and their actual capacity to do so. Despite these limitations, teachers still showed a strong interest in professional development and acknowledged the value of inclusive practices in improving student learning.

Public elementary school teachers face notable challenges in implementing inclusive education due to limited knowledge of inclusive teaching strategies and a lack of sufficient classroom resources. While teachers show a basic understanding of inclusive practices, they still need further training particularly in managing students with behavioral difficulties and designing tasks tailored to individual learning needs. Many essential resources, such as assistive listening devices and visual aids, are either insufficient or completely unavailable, which further limits classroom readiness. Teachers with prior inclusion training are more equipped to identify and use available resources effectively, highlighting the need for continuous professional development. Despite these setbacks, teachers remain positive and willing to adapt, but meaningful change requires support from school leadership and

collaboration with NGOs and private organizations to provide the necessary resources and training for inclusive education.

Recommendations

The study recommends that teachers shall participate more in training programs and the schools should provide more available if not complete assistive learning devices. The study highlighted the need for structured training programs, increased resource allocation, and stronger support systems to ensure that inclusive education can be effectively practiced in public elementary school settings. While they were aware of the importance of inclusion, their skills in applying differentiated instruction, managing diverse classrooms, and using inclusive techniques remained underdeveloped.

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