

Pedagogical adaptations of general education teachers in teaching learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the level of preparedness of general education teachers in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities and the inclusive teaching strategies they employed at Buanoy National High School during the School Year 2025–2026, as basis for an Action Plan. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, the study involved thirty teachers. Data were collected using an adapted survey questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive statistics—frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation—and inferential statistics using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. Results revealed that most teachers were either relatively new in inclusive classrooms with one to three years of experience or had longer service of seven years and above. The majority handled only a small number of mainstreamed learners, and more than half had not attended inclusive education-related trainings in the last three years. In terms of preparedness, teachers rated themselves as generally prepared, with higher ratings in involving parents, creating safe and welcoming classrooms, and managing learner behavior, while lower ratings were noted in differentiated instruction and assessment practices. Inclusive strategies were often employed, with teachers frequently using step-by-step instructions, visual aids, parental involvement, and task breakdowns, although advanced strategies were applied less consistently. Correlation analysis indicated no significant relationship between preparedness and inclusive teaching practices. The study concluded that while teachers were prepared and often employed inclusive strategies, gaps in advanced practices and professional development highlighted the need for continuous training and institutional support. It is recommended to use the Action Plan which is the output of the study.

Keywords: Special education, inclusive education, teacher preparedness, inclusive teaching, strategies, action plan

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INTRODUCTION

The integration of learners with special needs into regular classroom settings demonstrates the emphasis placed on inclusive education in the Philippines. Despite the existence of policies which encouraged inclusive practices and mandated equal access, the challenges of unsystematic support on the readiness, instructional ability and relationships of general education teachers approached the realities of the classroom. Without appropriate and systematic preparation, teachers were expected to adjust lessons, cope with unsupported diverse classroom challenges and develop full instructional environments. This research aimed to ascertain the levels of preparedness and the strategies implemented by teachers as ranged within the Buanoy National High School general education cohort with respect to inclusion of mainstreamed disability learners, as well as to highlight the gaps which needed to be addressed to refine to strengthen the inclusive education practices offered in the school.

Through research and policy, inclusive education was strengthened globally, although many countries still reported gaps with teacher training and implementation. Mahmood, et al. (2025) emphasized how important structured guidance was for teachers, and administrators facilitating the assimilation of students with special needs in mainstream high schools. Sitoy, et al. (2025) reported that general classroom teachers used a very narrow range of instructional techniques when teaching special needs students, which points to limited problem-solving. Ozodova (2025) similarly stated that inclusive education lacked purposeful approaches to engage students with disabilities, especially with differentiated teaching methods within the classroom. Alvarez, et al. (2025) noted that secondary school teachers still struggled with the persistent challenges of classroom control and the adjustment of instruction particularly for mainstreamed students, yet they managed to create contextually relevant methods to cope with the managed integration of the class. Parveen, et al. (2025) noted the need for sustained imaginative practice to achieve true integration of disabled students into inclusive classrooms. To further support this, Darwish, et al. (2025) found that general education teachers faced gaps with inclusion without adequate training and systemic support.

Preparedness of teachers has been investigated in relation to particular groups of learners in different scenarios. For example, Dseagu et al. (2025) studied teachers in mainstream schools in Ghana, and found that the preparedness of teachers to assist learners with autism had a remarkable impact on instructional effectiveness. In the Philippines, Olayer et al. (2025) presented comparable observations, and offered explanations, stating that teachers' readiness to accept, and train learners with special needs, and the school culture, trained, and untrained teachers, varied greatly depending on the access to training and the school culture. In discussing the mainstreaming of students with visual impairments, Lalwani and Sakarwal (2025) observed that inclusive teachers exhibited greater adaptability, and flexibility, in teaching compared to trained teachers from special schools. In a different report, Derguy et al. (2025) noted that attitudes of teachers toward including learners with autism were affected by self-efficacy and knowledge, where special education teachers had a more positive attitude toward inclusion compared to their general education counterparts.

At the local level, studies highlighted the challenges that came along the way as inclusive education continued to expand, implementing inclusive education continued to be inconsistent. Sitoy et al. (2025) indicated that although teachers in the Visayas region were increasingly aware of inclusive strategies, numerous teachers were still unable to competently implement inclusive strategies because of insufficient resources. Large class sizes, and lack of other support mechanisms were some of the challenges from Alvarez et al. (2025) which documented that secondary school teachers in the inclusive education system were willing to adopt inclusive education practices. These gaps suggested the need for localized interventions, particularly in divisions like Cebu Province, from which there was little to no recent literature on the inclusive strategies general education teachers evaluated. This research aimed to fill this gap from documented literature by focusing on the preparedness of teachers at Buanoy National High School and the influences on their instructional strategies in integrating mainstream learners with disabilities.

To conclude, studies across the world, in different countries and local areas, show that teacher preparedness was essential for the success of inclusive education within clear and established policies that were often poorly implemented for lack of training, support, and application within the classroom. This illustrated the need for research regarding the preparedness level of general educators and inclusive teaching strategies deployed. Therefore, the objectives of this research included assessing teacher preparedness, identifying inclusive teaching strategies that were implemented, and establishing the relationship between the two in order to design proposed action plans geared towards reinforcing inclusive education.

Statement of the problem

This research investigated their level of preparedness in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities and their inclusive teaching strategies used by general education teachers in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities at Buanoy National High School, school year 2025-2026 and as basis for Action Plan. Specifically, it sought to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of their years of teaching experience in inclusive settings, number of mainstreamed learners with disabilities handled, inclusive education-related trainings or seminars attended, educational attainment, and teaching position?
2. What is the level of preparedness of general education teachers in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities?
3. What inclusive teaching strategies are used by general education teachers in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the level of preparedness of general education teachers and their use of inclusive teaching strategies?
5. Based on the findings, what action plan can be proposed to enhance teachers' preparedness and effectiveness in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities?

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive correlational research design to analyze the correlation between the preparedness of teachers and the inclusive teaching strategies employed by general education practitioners while managing learners with disabilities. This approach was appropriate for the investigation because it examined how two or more variables were connected without manipulating them. In this case, the independent variable was the level of teacher preparedness, and the dependent variable was the degree of inclusive teaching strategies employed in classroom practices. Using this design, the researcher sought to determine whether higher levels of preparedness correlated with greater use of inclusive strategies in actual teaching practice.

The respondents of this study were thirty (30) general education teachers from Buanoy National High School in Balamban, Cebu, who were purposively selected because they were directly handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities in inclusive classroom settings. Their active involvement in inclusive practices positioned them as credible sources of data for examining the relationship between teacher preparedness and the inclusive strategies they applied in managing diverse learners. Consistent with the definition of purposive sampling by Palinkas et al. (2015), the participants were chosen based on their relevance and direct engagement with the phenomenon under investigation, ensuring that the information gathered was rich, meaningful, and context-specific. Teachers were included in the study if they were officially employed as general education teachers at Buanoy National High School, had at least one year of teaching experience in an inclusive setting, and were currently handling learners with disabilities in their classrooms, provided that they voluntarily gave informed consent to participate.

The initial steps of the data collection process of the study included ethical considerations, ensuring that appropriate procedures such as receiving institutional approval were aligned with policy. The researcher first obtained clearance from the Schools Division Office of Cebu, which oversaw the operations of public schools in the division. This marked the attainment of recognition at the division level. After this, written consent was also requested from the principal of Buanoy National High School in Balamban, Cebu.

After identifying the eligible participants, the researcher conducted an orientation session at Buanoy National High School to ensure that all respondents clearly understood the study's rationale and methodology. During this session, the researcher outlined the goals of the study, described the framework and content of the survey questionnaire, and explained the rights of the participants as respondents. Special emphasis was given to the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of responses, and the right of participants to withdraw at any time without negative consequences. Following the orientation, the researcher distributed the survey questionnaires. Printed copies were provided to the thirty (30) identified general education teachers of Buanoy National High School, who were given one to two weeks to complete them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic profile of the respondents

The succeeding tables present, analyze, and interpret the data gathered from the respondents of Buanoy National High School in line with the objectives of the study. The

discussion begins with the demographic profile of the respondents, which includes their years of teaching experience in inclusive settings, the number of mainstreamed learners with disabilities handled, participation in inclusive education-related trainings or seminars, highest educational attainment, and teaching position. Establishing the demographic profile was considered essential, as it provided the contextual foundation for understanding the respondents' professional backgrounds and allowed for a more meaningful interpretation of the findings in relation to the study variables.

Years of teaching in inclusive settings

The table presented below contained the data on the years of teaching of respondents in inclusive settings. These data were presented in tabular form.

Table 2
Years of Teaching in Inclusive Settings

Length of Service (in years)	f	%
Less than 1 year	6	20
1-3 years	10	33.33
4-6 years	4	13.33
7 years and above	10	33.33
Total	30	100.00

Table 2 displayed the distribution of the years of service respondents had in inclusive settings at Buanoy National High School. It was shown that one-third of teachers, or 33.33 percent, had served between one to three years, while another one-third, or 33.33 percent, had served seven years and above. Alternatively, 20 percent reported having less than one year of experience, and the 4-6 years set had 13.33 percent.

These results mean that the teaching staff experienced a divergence between less experienced teachers, who were still learning how to manage the inclusive classroom, and the more senior teachers, who had adapted their teaching to manage the diverse learner requirements. The respondents in the 4-6 years cohort were relatively small and this perhaps more strongly indicates a transitional stage in which teachers proceeded to take more 'corporate' or 'parent' roles, having an impact on inclusive role retention.

This suggests the necessity of targeted interventions. All novice teachers on the staff would need some form of structured mentoring and ongoing professional development to build their skills and self-efficacy in the management of inclusive classrooms. In contrast, more tenured teachers could fulfill mentoring responsibilities by demonstrating inclusive practices and assisting their peers. This imbalance highlighted the importance of professional learning communities in which teachers of different experience levels worked together and shared methods to achieve effective inclusion.

The findings of this study reaffirm prior research and highlight its relevance. Aftab, Amjad, and Chaudhry (2024) stated that the effective inclusion of learners goes beyond the willingness of teachers and involves sustained contact with a range of learners and the strategic application of inclusive methods. Their study noted that, during their initial years, novice teachers experienced difficulties with both classroom management and differentiated instruction, and that more experienced teachers had not only accumulated practical strategies over the years, but had also developed a certain level of confidence in modifying instructional approaches to meet diverse needs. This was especially true for the findings in Table 2, in which teachers with seven or more years of experience were in a position to demonstrate greater readiness in meeting the demands of inclusive education, unlike those with less than a year of service. Teaching experience, it appeared, provided the opportunity for professional reflection and the development of inclusive practices, which underscored the importance of retaining experienced teachers in inclusive classrooms.

Furthermore, as pointed out by Crispel and Kasperski (2021), bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical work pertaining to inclusive classrooms rests on the quality of teacher training. With teaching experience, teachers indeed become more familiar with the practice of inclusion, but the ‘effectiveness’ of the incorporation of inclusive practices into everyday teaching was indeed greater for those with specialized training in inclusion as well as in Special Education. In addition, their research captured the difference with regards to dependency on formal training and mentorship in which inexperienced teachers relied on it substantially whereas experienced teachers relied more on informal training captured in their experience. This helped to explain the described distribution in Table 2, where teachers within the first year and those within the 1-3 year category teaching were primarily in need of professional development and mentorship structuring whereas teachers in the 7+ year category were expected to function as a mentor and role model. The balance of both research findings pointed to the fact that experience and training together formed the basis of inclusive sustained effective practices.

In conclusion, these studies verified the significance of tenure in the profession in the shaping of teacher readiness and affirmed that experience, albeit a significant determinant of proficiency in inclusive education, needs reinforcing through continuous training and support from the institution.

Numbers of mainstreamed learners with disabilities

The table presented below contained the data on the number of mainstreamed learners with disabilities. These data were presented in tabular form.

Table 3

Numbers of Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities		
Number of Mainstreamed Learners	f	%
None	14	46.67
1 to 3	16	53.33
4 to 6	0	0
More than 6	0	0
Total	30	100.00

Table 3 showed how many learners with disabilities were integrated into classes taught by the teachers of Buanoy National High School. Most teachers integrated classes with one to three learners with disabilities—53.33 percent—while 46.67 percent integrated classes with no learners at all. Most telling, no teachers were integrating classes with four to six, or six or more, learners with disabilities.

Most teachers are respondents have at least some experiences with inclusion, although limited. One could argue to suggest this pattern reflects limited or tentatively implemented inclusion at this school. Teachers with no experience at all may find it difficult to build confidence in teaching inclusively, while teachers with only one or a few mainstreamed learners may only be exposed to a narrow spectrum of disabilities. This could limit their differentiated teaching to a few patterns or not allow a full range of differentiation expected for different learners. The absence of teachers with classes of four or more learners with disabilities may be a sign that inclusion strategies in the school lack depth, which could continue to hold back the school from reaching its inclusive vision.

These implications suggest two things. The first is that teachers' limited exposure to mainstreamed learners may prevent the attainment of inclusive competencies, especially the ability to respond to complex needs of learners having different disabilities. From a different perspective, these findings reinforce the need for simulation, peer mentoring, collaborative lesson construction, and other school-based initiatives to fill the gap, wherein teachers can gain experience even when there are not enough mainstreamed learners in the classroom.

These findings align well with the literature. For example, Bindhani and Gopinath (2024) pointed out that a persistent difficulty of inclusive education is the sparsity and uneven distribution of learners with disabilities in class. They explain that in situations where teachers have scant exposure, there are few opportunities for them to gain mastery in differentiated instruction and other adaptive competencies. The same is true for Buanoy National High School, where nearly half of the teachers claimed to have no exposure to mainstreamed learners. Conversely, Jabinez and Natividad (2024) argued that a small number of mainstreamed learners provides teachers with opportunities to practice equity-focused strategies and make modifications to their instruction.

Inclusive education-related training/seminars attended

The table presented below contained the data on the inclusive education-related training or seminars attended. These data were presented in tabular form.

Table 4

Inclusive Education-Related Training/Seminars Attended in the Last 3 Years		
Inclusive Education Related Training	f	%
None	16	53.33
1 to 2	12	40
3 to 4	0	0
5 and above	2	6.67
Total	30	100.00

Table 4 detailed the respondents' involvement in inclusive education related trainings and seminars during the recent three years at Buanoy National High School. As discussed in the previous chapter, findings indicated that slightly over half, or 53.33 percent and 40 percent of the respondents, reported attending only one to two training sessions, 6.67 percent claiming they attended five or more sessions, while none attended trainings that fell within the three to four training range during the aforementioned period.

Such findings portray the picture of a serious gulf in the teachers' professional development. The fact that over half of the respondents reported having attended no sessions at all practically undermines their ability to construct inclusive Lesson and thereby effectively teach on any of the inclusive strategies during their lessons. Teachers attending one to two training sessions probably have a real but basic awareness of the inclusion principles, but of the practical and consistent inclusive techniques that needs to be employed in a diverse and inclusive classroom. The small percentage of teachers claiming to have attended five or more sessions would in all probability represent a very small minority of the teachers that would more willing and more likely to employ inclusive techniques.

The implications of these results suggest that institutions should have a greater focus on building capacity. Teachers will have a more challenging time adapting lessons, accommodating various learner needs, and cultivating an inclusive classroom if they are not trained. This may, too, increase the disparity in teacher preparedness, as the more trained teachers will become more competent, and the majority, with little or no training, will continue to stay less competent. This means that the leadership of a school, and not just the leadership of a school, is important in striving for all teachers to have equal opportunity to develop professionally.

The findings in the study by Abu-Alghayth, Lane, and Semon (2024) also support this assertion. They explored the inclusive practices taught in special education teacher preparation programs in Saudi universities. Their study noted that teachers' preparedness for inclusive education is more effective when there is systematic and structured training. They noted that when teachers do not have training and comprehensive resources, the inclusive practices they use are fractured, with uneven application and substantial confidence gaps. They also noted that professional training with resources not only enhances teachers' technical capacity but also sustains their philosophical commitment to inclusion so that they can move from the theory to the practice of implementation in the classroom.

This connects with the information presented in Table 3, where over 50% of instructors at Buanoy National High School have no training at all. The lack of training points to a specific absence towards structured preparation. Although a few individuals could depend on self-initiative or informal group learning, these do not adequately replace the absence of systematic training addressing the integral structured evidence-based inclusive practices. The reiterated findings of Abu-Alghayth et al. extends to the necessity of professional continuing development programs along with the findings to sufficiently enable all teachers with the competence and self-assurance needed to effectuate true inclusion.

Highest educational attainment of the respondents

The table presented below contained the data on the highest educational attainment of the respondents. These data were presented in tabular form

Table 5

Highest Educational Attainment of the Respondents		
Highest Educational Attainment	f	%
Bachelor's Degree	8	26.67
Master's Degree (Units)	14	46.67
Master's Degree(Completed)	6	20.00
Doctorate (Units)	2	6.67
Total	30	100.00

Table 5 displayed the highest educational attainment from the respondents who were from Buanoy National High School. Results indicated that almost half of the teachers, 46.67 percent, possessed master's degree units, while 26.67 percent had bachelor's degrees. 20 percent had a master's degree, while a smaller 6.67 percent had doctoral units.

The implication is that a significant number of the teachers had made considerable progress and effort in attaining graduate higher education. This shows a steadfast commitment to the educational profession. The respondents having master's degrees and completed doctoral units reflects upon the emerging highly qualified educators the school system is gaining. Conversely, those who remain at the bachelor's level, face challenges due to the lack of advanced higher educational attainment, especially in pedagogy, teaching research, and educational policy. This gap in education attainment shows discrepancies of variations in graduate level preparedness that educators possess, which could result in the inconsistency in the inclusive education that is taught and is prepared in.

The implications are remarkable. Educators who are pursuing or have earned higher degrees are likely to have encountered contemporary educational theories along with innovative research methods and inclusive pedagogies. These exposures can provide educators with a more comprehensive orientation to the management of diverse learners. Their higher degrees also empower educators to take on mentoring and leadership roles, fostering a more vibrant professional culture around the school. Conversely, the indicators also point to the necessity of implementing support frameworks—like scholarships, equitable workloads, and systemic acknowledgment—to stimulate educational advancement for those educators who have, for the most part, remained engaged in the school without pursuing higher degrees. This guarantees that the outcomes of advanced learning are equitably distributed and primarily directed towards the enhancement of inclusive practices across the school.

Namanyane and Shaoan (2021) underscore the role of teachers' preparation and formal education as critical factors influencing attitudes and abilities toward inclusive education. They pointed out that inadequate training and lower qualifications heighten difficulties regarding differentiated instruction, diverse classroom management, and the disposition toward students with disabilities. This is evident in the current findings, as the 26.67% of respondents with only a

bachelor's degree may lack the inclusive advanced competencies of their graduate study counterparts.

Mahmood, Huang, and Rehman (2025) recognize the importance of both educators and administrators in fostering the inclusion of students with special needs in regular high schools, yet emphasize that the training and education of these stakeholders greatly affects the quality of their contribution. This scholarship illustrates that the more advanced the training educators receive, the more likely they are to employ inclusive tactics and work cooperatively with school administrators to offer comprehensive support for students with disabilities. In the case of Buanoy National High School, the considerable number of instructors holding master's degrees is encouraging, though the uneven dispersion of such attainment indicates the crucial importance of targeted institutional initiatives that encourage all staff toward comprehensive educational and professional advancement.

Current teaching position of the respondents

The table presented below contained the data on current teaching position of the respondents. These data were presented in tabular form.

Table 6

Current Teaching Position of the Respondents		
Current Teaching Position	f	%
Teacher I	10	33.33
Teacher II	8	26.67
Teacher III	6	20.00
Master Teacher	4	13.33
Special Science Teacher	2	6.67
Total	30	100.00

Table 6 displays the teaching positions currently held by the respondents for Buanoy National High School. The findings indicate that 33.33 percent of the teachers hold positions as Teacher I, 26.67 percent are Teacher IIs, and 20 percent are Teacher III. The remaining 13.33 percent of teachers are Master Teachers, and 6.67 percent are classified as Special Science Teachers.

These findings suggest that the respondents are predominantly in the lower tiers of the profession, most likely attributable to the fact that the majority are still in the ranks of Teacher I and Teacher II. It is therefore likely that a significant proportion of the teaching faculty are early in their careers or have yet to meet the criteria for promotion—for example, advanced education, years of service, or exceptional performance reviews. The Master Teachers and Special Science Teachers, in contrast, indicate that the school also possesses experienced teachers and other advanced professionals who can offer academic leadership, serve as role models in the promotion of inclusive teaching, and assist in the general supervision of faculty.

The noted implications remain significant. Teachers at lower echelons might still be in the early stages of building their instructional repertoire. Hence, mentoring and organized professional growth focusing on the competence of inclusive classrooms may be necessary. Those at higher

echelons, particularly Master Teachers, assume equally important responsibilities in the mentorship of junior teachers, leading innovations, and in the stewardship of principles of inclusive education at the practice level, as well as school-wide integration. The availability of Special Science Teachers also underscores the need for discipline-specific teachers. This subject expertise, aligned with inclusive pedagogical approaches, can significantly improve the academic experiences of students with disabilities in the more technical, scientific aspects of education.

These findings are also consistent with the work of Namanyane and Shaoan (2021), who noted that teachers' preparedness for inclusive education credentialed their academic qualifications as well as professional rank and years of practice. They noted that entry-level teachers lacked classroom exposure and confidence, particularly with diverse learners whereas higher-level teachers command inclusive practices modeled and shaped the school culture. This also mirrors the situation at Buanoy National High School, where most of the respondents are at Teacher I and II rank, which still describes the larger portion of the teaching staff, although these higher ranked educators also exist and can mentor that teaching cadre.

The effectiveness of inclusive education, as highlighted by Mahmood, Huang, and Rehman (2025), hinges on the collaborative partnership of educators and school leadership. Higher-ranking teachers and school leaders are key in fostering supportive climates where more junior or lower-ranking teachers are empowered to adopt inclusive practices. Thus, in the present context, the Master Teachers and Special Science Teachers at Buanoy National High School can offer not just their instructional expertise but also their leadership in inclusive school culture, thereby compensating for the gaps of lower-ranked teachers.

Preparedness in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities

This part of the study presented the Preparedness in Handling Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities. The data were presented in tabular form

Table 7
Preparedness in Handling Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	I can identify the academic and behavioral needs of learners with disabilities	2.37	0.67	Prepared
2	I can adjust lessons and activities to fit the different needs of my learners	2.60	0.81	Prepared
3	I know how to manage classroom behavior while addressing diverse learner needs.	2.63	0.56	Very Prepared
4	I am able to work with SPED teachers or support staff when needed.	2.57	0.90	Prepared
5	I can use available materials or improvised tools to support learners with disabilities.	2.43	0.77	Prepared

6	I can conduct differentiated instruction even with time or resource limitations.	2.47	0.63	Prepared
7	I am confident in assessing learners with disabilities using fair methods.	2.23	0.68	Prepared
8	I can create a welcoming and safe classroom for all types of learners.	2.97	0.76	Prepared
9	I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child's learning.	3.33	0.71	Very Prepared
10	I know how to support the emotional and social needs of learners with disabilities.	2.43	0.73	Prepared
11	I can apply what I learned from trainings or seminars in actual classroom practice.	2.73	0.78	Prepared
12	I know when and how to refer learners to proper support services.	2.57	0.63	Prepared
	Aggregate Mean	2.61		
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.72	Prepared

Legend: 3.25-4.00- Very Prepared ; 2.50-3.24-Prepared ; 1.75-2.49- Slightly Repaired ; 1.00-1.74- Not Prepared

As shown in Table 7, the teachers' preparedness in dealing with mainstreamed learners with disabilities, according to the aggregate mean of 2.61, was "Prepared." Indicators "I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child's learning" with a weighted mean of 3.33, "I can create a welcoming and safe classroom for all types of learners" with a weighted mean of 2.97, and "I know how to manage classroom behavior while addressing diverse learner needs" with a weighted mean of 2.63, all contribute a lot to this preparedness. This shows that mostly, teachers are confident in engaging parents as partners in education, in creating safe and inclusive learning spaces, and in addressing and managing diverse behaviors in learners. This shows that emphasis on parental involvement is acknowledged in the Philippines as Teachers' confidence in the maintenance of order and discipline may result from their behavior training and practitioner preparation programs.

The findings illustrate that preparedness is somewhat disproportionate within the different facets of inclusive teaching. While the respondents indicated a greater sense of preparedness within the relational and the environmental domains, they expressed relatively low levels of confidence in the more technical instructional modifications, such as differentiated assessments and the use of specialized techniques aimed at learners with disabilities. This seems to indicate that their practice is more focused on the aspects of developing a welcoming atmosphere and forming solicitous relationships rather than the more intricate specialized teaching. This leads to the conclusion that more focused training aimed at the professional development of teachers would have to include the more technical aspects necessary to balance the teachers' collaborative skills and their classroom management.

Supporting data comes from Sumayang, Celendron, Declaro, and Flandez Jr. (2022) who described how teachers' preparedness focuses more on environmental supports and parental involvement as opposed to the instructional particulars. They noted that the successful inclusiveness of a classroom hinges on the teachers' relational and pedagogical aspects. In the same

vein, Kamran, Siddiqui, and Adil (2023) pointed out that teachers' unwillingness to accommodate students, particularly those with mild learning disabilities, predetermines the scope of inclusive practices. In this context, teachers' positive and proactive attitudes enhance classroom management and parent collaboration, but they may need more training on individualized instructional approaches. Such evidence supports the assertions in Table 6. While teachers at Buanoy National High School show readiness in several fundamental areas, the need to enhance technical aspects of their pedagogical approaches to inclusive education remains.

Inclusive teaching strategies in managing learners with disabilities

Table 8 presented the Inclusive Teaching Strategies in Managing Learners with Disabilities. The data were presented in tabular form.

Table 8
Inclusive Teaching Strategies in Managing Learners with Disabilities

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	I use visual aids, realia, or illustrations to help learners understand lessons.	3.27	0.74	Always
2	I give clear, step-by-step instructions when introducing tasks.	3.60	0.67	Always
3	I provide extra time or simplified activities for learners who need them..	3.10	0.80	Often
4	I assign classmates as peer buddies to assist learners with disabilities.	2.80	0.92	Often
5	I allow students to express learning in different formats (e.g., oral, visual, written).	3.23	0.94	Often
6	I break down complex tasks into smaller, more manageable parts .	3.27	0.87	Always
7	I give regular feedback and praise to support student progress.	3.20	0.76	Often
8	I adjust seating or grouping arrangements to support learners' needs.	3.17	0.95	Often
9	I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child's learning.	3.43	0.82	Always
10	I modify written activities so that learners with disabilities can participate.	3.20	0.85	Often
11	I regularly reflect on how my strategies meet the needs of diverse learners	3.17	0.87	Always
12	I apply inclusive teaching techniques I learned from recent trainings.	2.97	0.96	Often
	Aggregate Mean	3.20		

Aggregate Standard Deviation	0.85	Slightly Prepared
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Legend: 3.25-4.00- Always ; 2.50-3.24- Often ; 1.75-2.49- Sometimes ; 1.00-1.74- Never

Table 8 demonstrated how the respondents employed inclusive teaching methods while supporting learners with disabilities, attaining an overall mean score of 3.20 classified as “Often.” Among the specific items, the most prominent were “I give clear, step-by-step instructions when introducing tasks” with a mean score of 3.60 classified as Always, “I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child’s learning” with a mean score of 3.43 classified as Always, and “I use visual aids, realia, or illustrations to help learners understand lessons” and “I break down complex tasks into smaller, more manageable parts” each scored a 3.27 and were also classified as Always. This reinforces the theory that teachers most consistently perform the tasks of lesson simplification using visual aids, scaffolding and structured instructional tasks, and parental engagement in learning as active partners. The use of peer buddies, modifying written tasks, and the application of concepts learned in workshops were cited less frequently and, as a result, were considered to have lower integration into the everyday teaching practices.

Data indicates teachers are more confident employing traditional strategies that are more straightforward to manage in classroom contexts—such as task breakdown and visuals—while more progressive methods, like peer-assisted learning and training-based innovations, remain used less consistently. Possible reasons are the greater use and familiarity teachers have with traditional strategies, as well as resource, institutional support, and confidence constraints surrounding experimentation with more advanced inclusive strategies. The consistently high levels of preparedness with engaging parents, as dependent variable in the present study, reflects both Philippine cultural and institutional practice, wherein family involvement in the education of children is endorsed and highly valued.

Findings imply that, while inclusive education practices are evident among teachers of Buanoy National High School, their reliance on rudimentary strategies indicates that inclusivity may not yet be deeply rooted within all instructional practices. This, in turn, underscores the need to refine professional development towards more complex inclusive practices, like the use of differentiated instructional materials, peer mentoring systems, and training transfer. In this regard, the information helps to delineate where teachers' self-efficacy lies—parent involvement and classroom scaffolding

Subarna et al. (2022) supports the claim of the previous paragraph by stating that teachers of learners with disabilities integrated in regular classes utilize general techniques like providing clear instructions, visual aids, and simplification of tasks, and are less probable to use specialized or individualized techniques without special training. They claimed that although these basic techniques are a good starting point, teachers need to undergo training to facilitate inclusion at a more advanced level. Professional training to use these techniques in a more meaningful and applied manner is necessary. Mahmood, Huang, and Rehman (2025) argued teachers and administrators are key to the successful adaptation of learners with special needs in high school, and effective inclusion hinges on support at all levels, not just individual teachers.

Test of relationship between the preparedness and inclusive practices for mainstreamed learners with disabilities.

Table 8 displayed the Test of Relationship Between the Preparedness and Inclusive Practices for Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities. These data were presented in tabular form.

Table 9
Test of relationship between the availability of support systems and the respondents' perceptions on the effectiveness of the available support systems

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p-value	Decision	Remarks
Preparedness and Inclusive Practices for Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities	0.217	Negligible Positive	0.49855	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant

*significant at $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

Table 9 outlined the relationship between the variables “Preparedness” and “Inclusive Practices for Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities”. The relationship between the variables was tested with the use of Pearson’s r . The r -value of 0.217 which points to a weak positive correlation shows that there is a slight increase in one variable (preparedness) and a slight increase in the other variable (inclusive practices) but the correlation is weak and not of any real significance. The p -value of 0.49855 is also well above the critical value of 0.05 which leads to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This means that there is a lack of a significant relationship between the variables preparedness and inclusive practices which shows that teachers that report being prepared do not implement inclusive strategies any more effectively than those teachers who report feeling less prepared.

This result is important because it tests the assumption that preparedness is the same as practice. One possible explanation is that, in this study, the measurement of preparedness refers more to the teacher's self-perception than to the skills actually employed in the classroom. Teachers may feel ready in principle, yet when it comes to integrating learners with disabilities—including challenges such as limited resources, the diverse needs of learners, and lack of institutional support—the inclusive practices do not match reported preparedness. It may also be the case that preparedness is, of necessity, accompanied by ongoing training, mentoring, and systemic scaffolding. Teachers may attain training-related confidence, but the consistent implementation of inclusive practices is not likely to be achieved in the absence of structured follow-up, modeling, and peer support.

These findings are significant for inclusive education. It suggests that teachers’ professional development should also create opportunities for teachers to translate their knowledge into consistent classroom practice. Buanoy National High School’s administrators and policymakers must see that teacher readiness is only one part of the equation. Support systems such as mentoring, resource provision, co-teaching, and practice-focused coaching are necessary to meet the gap between preparedness and practice. This corresponds with the understanding that inclusive education should not be just the effort of the teachers, but rather a whole school.

The findings are consistent with existing literature. While teachers might report feeling prepared, Pocaan (2022), and many others argue, this is often due to challenges in the implementation of inclusive strategies. Contextual barriers, such as gaps in resources, inadequately aligned training, and systemic barriers, are detrimental in fully realizing the inclusive vision. As in the current results, this equates to preparedness levels with no inclusive practices on the other end. Oliver-Kerrigan, Christy, and Stahmer (2021) findings that general education teachers working with students with autism claim to feel confident in their training, but do not consistently apply inclusive practices, resonates with this. Inadequate training and institutional support as downstream barriers are logical in the claim that preparedness, in isolation, is insufficient. Legally mandated policies will only have value if teachers feel social support. Equally pointed out the value in autism-specific training, Bertuccio, Runion, Culler, Moeller, and Hall (2022) stress, is that unifying inclusive practices are not to be taken for granted and only stands as an assumption in many policies, and, policies might be of uneven and inequitable training distributions and grades of sustenance thereafter. In the end, equitable support and reinforcement seems to be the other side of the coin to make policies usable and, in that, workable.

Findings

The study yielded the following findings. In terms of years of teaching in inclusive settings, the largest proportion of teachers had served for 1 to 3 years at 33.33 percent, matched by those with 7 years and above also at 33.33 percent. With regard to the number of mainstreamed learners with disabilities handled, 53.33 percent reported having 1 to 3 learners, while 46.67 percent indicated none. For inclusive education-related trainings or seminars attended in the past three years, 53.33 percent of teachers had not attended any, 40 percent had attended 1 to 2, and 6.67 percent had attended 5 and above. As to educational attainment, 46.67 percent had earned units in a master's degree, 26.67 percent held a bachelor's degree, 20 percent had completed a master's degree, and 6.67 percent had doctoral units. Regarding current teaching position, 33.33 percent were Teacher I, 26.67 percent were Teacher II, 20 percent were Teacher III, 13.33 percent were Master Teachers, and 6.67 percent were Special Science Teachers.

In relation to preparedness in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities, the highest rating was obtained in the statement "I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child's learning" with a weighted mean of 3.33 described as Very Prepared. This was followed by "I can create a welcoming and safe classroom for all types of learners" with a weighted mean of 2.97 described as Prepared, and "I know how to manage classroom behavior while addressing diverse learner needs" with a weighted mean of 2.63 described as Very Prepared. The overall aggregate mean was 2.61 described as Prepared. With respect to inclusive teaching strategies in managing learners with disabilities, the highest rating was recorded in "I give clear, step-by-step instructions when introducing tasks" with a weighted mean of 3.60 described as Always. Other strategies rated Always included "I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child's learning" with a weighted mean of 3.43, "I use visual aids, realia, or illustrations to help learners understand lessons" with a weighted mean of 3.27, "I break down complex tasks into smaller, more manageable parts" with a weighted mean of 3.27, and "I regularly reflect on how my strategies meet the needs of diverse learners" with a weighted mean of 3.17. The aggregate mean was 3.20 described as Often.

As to the test of relationship between preparedness and inclusive practices for mainstreamed learners with disabilities, the computed r -value was 0.217 indicating a negligible positive correlation, while the p -value was 0.49855 which exceeded the 0.05 level of significance. The decision was not to reject the null hypothesis, showing that the relationship was not significant.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that teachers of Buanoy National High School were generally prepared in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities and often employed inclusive strategies, with strengths in involving parents, ensuring classroom safety, and giving clear instructions. It is recommended that Buanoy National High School implement an Action Plan to strengthen teacher preparedness and inclusive strategies, particularly in differentiated instruction, assessment, and the application of training-based techniques, while sustaining strengths in parental involvement and classroom management.

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