

Instructional methods used in inclusive classrooms: A study on general education teachers

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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 CEPOC Central Elementary School during the School Year 2025–2026 as basis for a proposed Action Plan. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, the study involved thirty respondents. Data were gathered using an adapted survey questionnaire and analyzed through frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation—and using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. Findings revealed that most teachers were relatively new to inclusive classrooms, with limited years of service and only a small number of mainstreamed learners in their classes. Many had minimal participation in inclusive education-related trainings over the last three years, while their academic qualifications were mostly at the bachelor's level, with few pursuing graduate studies. In terms of preparedness, teachers rated themselves as generally prepared in areas such as lesson adjustment, classroom management, collaboration with SPED personnel, and parental involvement, though weaknesses were evident in using improvised instructional materials and conducting fair assessments. Inclusive teaching strategies were frequently employed, with high ratings in providing step-by-step instructions, visual aids, and differentiated tasks, although more advanced practices were less consistently applied. Correlation analysis indicated no significant relationship between preparedness and inclusive strategies. The study concluded that while teachers are prepared and committed to inclusive practices, professional development gaps remain. An Action Plan was recommended to strengthen instructional support.

Keywords: special education, inclusive education, teacher preparedness, inclusive, strategies, descriptive correlation, action plan

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INTRODUCTION

The Philippine education system continues to focus on the integration of learners with special needs to demonstrate its commitment to equitable and inclusive education. General education teachers, particularly those at CEPOC Central Elementary School, are expected to modify instruction and manage a diverse group of learners, all while trying to foster a positive climate with very little formal training, knowledge, and instructional resources.

The enforcement of inclusive education practices continues to face challenges, particularly with regard to the insufficient training of educators. Mahmood, Huang, and Rehman (2025) explained the importance of teachers and school leaders' supportive presence within inclusive education classrooms, while at the same time, they pointed out the fact that it is still necessary to provide future teachers with structured pathways. Sitoy et al. (2025) spoke of teachers working with very limited instructional practices when working with learners with disabilities and pointed out the importance of more varied practices. Similarly, Ozodova (2025) argued the active participation and success of learners with disabilities in inclusive classrooms is impossible without thoughtful and differentiated strategies.

Teachers' lived experiences illuminated ongoing difficulties with inclusive education. Alvarez et al. (2025) noted that while teachers experienced challenges with adapting instruction and classroom management, some were able to devise contextually relevant solutions. Parveen et al. (2025) claimed that sustaining inclusive practices hinges on teaching disabled students at empowering levels. Likewise, Darwish et al. (2025) noted that the lack of formal preparation and systemic support resulted in teachers struggling with inclusion.

Preparedness of teachers within a given country has also been studied internationally in relation to specific populations of learners. In Ghana, Dseagu et al. (2025) focused on mainstream schools and found that teachers' readiness to support learners with autism directly affected their perceptions of instructional effectiveness. In the Philippines, Olayer et al. (2025) indicated that the training access and institutional culture shaped the readiness and acceptance of learners with special needs. Lalwani and Sakarwal (2025) found that teachers who worked with students with visual impairments were more adaptable than those who were trained only in specialized environments. Consistently, Derguy et al. (2025) showed that the self-efficacy and knowledge of teachers shaped their attitudes towards autistic learners, with more SPED teachers holding positive attitudes.

On a national scale, inclusive education has made remarkable progress, but practicality poses additional challenges. Sitoy et al. (2025) explains that teachers in the Visayas region possessed greater awareness around inclusive practices, but many were still challenged in the adoption of such practices due to the lack of resources. Resource challenges were also noted by Alvarez et al. (2025) by which the willingness of teachers to embrace inclusive teaching philosophies was met with the realities of large class sizes, inadequate teaching, and support material. These results seem to indicate that even though the advocacy to include all learners at a national level has reached in countries, the most important pillar in education, the teachers at the ground level, still remain unprepared.

elementary inclusive education, the need to understand the context becomes critical. Most of the large urban institutions are used to students with varied backgrounds. In contrast, many public elementary schools in the Philippines are resourced starved, have a plethora of students,

and offer limited professional opportunities for the school staff. CEPOC Central Elementary School serves as an important case in all of these aspects where teachers have to address the requirements of the curriculum as well as the needs of learners with disabilities who are integrated into the class.

Research, be it global, national, or local, consistently underscores that the preparedness of teachers is fundamental to the successful implementation of inclusive education. It is for this reason that this study intended to assess the preparedness of CEPOC Central Elementary School teachers in handling inclusive classrooms, the strategies employed, and the degree of correlation between the two variables.

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 CEPOC Central Elementary 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 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?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between the preparedness of teachers and the inclusive teaching strategies adopted by general education practitioners in managing learners with disabilities. The use of this design was deemed appropriate as it allowed the investigation of the degree of association between two or more variables without manipulating them. In this study, the independent variable was the level of teacher preparedness, while the dependent variable was the extent to which inclusive teaching strategies were applied in classroom practices. Through this approach, the researcher sought to determine whether higher levels of preparedness were associated with greater implementation of inclusive strategies in actual teaching situations.

The respondents were thirty (30) general education teachers from CEPOC Central Elementary School in Tinaan, City of Naga, purposively selected for their direct involvement in teaching mainstreamed learners with disabilities. Their participation made them credible sources for examining the relationship between teacher preparedness and inclusive strategies. Eligible

teachers were officially employed at the school, had at least one year of experience in inclusive settings, and were currently handling learners with disabilities, with voluntary informed consent. SPED specialists, non-instructional staff, teachers without mainstreamed learners, or those unavailable during data collection were excluded, ensuring that only teachers with hands-on inclusive experience participated.

The initial phase of the data collection process considered ethical requirements to ensure that procedures followed institutional policies and research standards. The researcher first secured approval from the Schools Division Office of Cebu, which supervises the operations of public schools within the division. This approval granted official recognition at the division level. Thereafter, written consent was sought from the principal of CEPOC Central Elementary School in Tinaan, City of Naga, the chosen research locale due to its strong commitment to inclusive education and the presence of mainstreamed learners with disabilities in general education classrooms.

Following the identification of qualified participants, the researcher conducted an orientation session at CEPOC Central Elementary School to ensure that all respondents fully understood the objectives and procedures of the study. During this orientation, the researcher presented the purpose of the study, described the structure and content of the survey questionnaire, and clarified the rights of participants. Particular emphasis was given to ethical considerations such as voluntary participation, the confidentiality of responses, and the right to withdraw at any point without penalty. After the orientation, printed copies of the survey questionnaire were distributed to the thirty (30) purposively selected general education teachers. Respondents were given one to two weeks to accomplish the instrument at their own pace. This arrangement allowed teachers to complete the survey thoughtfully without disrupting their daily instructional responsibilities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The different tables presented, analyzed, and interpreted the data obtained from the respondents of CEPOC Central Elementary School in accordance with the objectives of the study. The discussion commenced with the demographic profile of the respondents, which encompassed 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. Establishing the demographic profile was deemed essential as it provided the contextual foundation for understanding the respondents' professional background, thereby facilitating 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

<u>Years of Teaching in Inclusive Settings</u>		
<u>Length of Service (in years)</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than 1 year	10	33.33
1-3 years	15	50
4-6 years	2	6.67
7 years and above	3	10
Total	30	100.00

Table 2 showed the years of teaching in inclusive settings among the respondents. It shows that half of the respondents or 50% had only one to three years of teaching experience. One-third, or 33.33%, reported having less than one year of teaching service in inclusive classrooms. Only 6.67% reported having four to six years, and 10% had seven years and above. This distribution shows that most teachers are inexperienced in inclusive teaching, as over 80% have less than four years of teaching inclusive classrooms. This may suggest that inclusive classrooms are mainly taught by novice teachers in the profession. While they may bring enthusiasm and willingness to adopt new approaches, they may also have more difficulties than benefits because of their relative lack exposure and mastery of inclusive teaching. The small number of teachers with longer service years may create an additional burden of less-experienced mentors, which may lead to more variation in the inclusive practices that are taught.

The establishment of comprehensive support systems is of paramount importance, including systems of mentorship, peer support, and ongoing professional training. Newly inducted teachers often require more directed avenues through which they can acquire evidence-based practices for differentiating and sustaining the diverse positive attitudes needed for management. Friesen, Shory, and Lamoureux (2023) bolster this understanding, articulating that a teacher's inclusive self-efficacy and attitudes toward inclusive education directly impact the risk of burnout and the management of inclusive classrooms. Most importantly, their research indicates that, irrespective of a teacher's experience, fostering self-efficacy is essential and can be achieved through guided practice and feedback within supportive school contexts.

Sawyer et al. (2022) further illustrated variations of teacher self-efficacy relative to the needs of the children, particularly within early childhood inclusive settings. Their study outlined the trajectory for even the more novice and less experienced teachers to formulate inclusive practices in teaching, inclusive of the necessary confidence and skill building training necessary for teaching diverse learners. This is consistent with the idea wherein the novice-dominated teaching population illustrated in Table 2 is not an issue per se, as long as the educator professional development, training, and school supportive structures that advocate for inclusive teaching have been properly calibrated.

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	7	23.33
1 to 3	15	50
4 to 6	8	26.67
More than 6	0	10
Total	30	100.00

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of learners with disabilities who were incorporated into different inclusive classrooms. The information indicates that half of the teachers (50%) were managing one to three learners with disabilities, and 23.33% reported not having any mainstreamed learners. On the other hand, 26.67% of teachers reported having four to six learners with disabilities, and no teacher reported having more than six. This distribution signifies that most classrooms do practice inclusion, albeit with a small to moderate range of learners with disabilities. However, the presence of nearly one-fourth of teachers with no mainstreamed learners suggests that inclusive education is not implemented uniformly, potentially due to contextual barriers such as availability of resources, organizational policies, or teacher and school preparedness.

This finding implies that although inclusive education practices are observable, their implementation is inconsistent, and numerous classrooms only integrate a limited number of learners with disabilities. Teachers with four to six mainstreamed learners, although fewer in number, may face the greatest challenges in the balancing of differentiated instruction and classroom management, especially in the absence of training or support. The fact that teachers of six or more learners with disabilities are not present indicates a more careful approach to inclusion, potentially to preserve the overtaking of general education classrooms, or to the operational constraints of the school. This situation underscores the need for effective policy to support the equal distribution of learners with disabilities across classrooms. Also, this situation calls for the professional development of teachers so that they can support varying degrees of inclusion work that is most often neglected.

In support of this, Savolainen, Malinen, and Schwab (2022) pointed out the strong impact of teacher efficacy on attitudes toward inclusive education, noting that self-efficacy correlates with positive engagement and effectiveness in instructional practices. Tseeke (2021) also emphasized that teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy in meeting learner needs, particularly those with visual impairments, is vital for meaningful inclusive practices. Schwab, Sharma, and Hoffmann (2019) described how the number of learners with disabilities in a class affects the instructional demands, stating that higher numbers call for more extensive differentiation and personalization. Likewise, Nilholm and Göransson (2020) claimed that genuine inclusion is measured, not by the mere presence of learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms, but by the extent of meaningful participation and learning opportunities afforded to them. These findings, albeit with varying emphasis, highlight teacher preparedness and composition of the class as fundamental factors in the provision of inclusive education.

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

Number of Mainstreamed Learners	F	%
None	10	33.33
1 to 2	13	43.33
3 to 4	3	10
5 and above	4	13.33
Total	30	100.00

Table 4 highlighted the seminars and training on inclusive education that teachers have undertaken in the past three years. Among the teachers in question, 43.33% participated in 1 to 2 training sessions, while 33.33% engaged in absolutely no training at all. In contrast, 10% engaged in 3 to 4 seminars, and only 13.33% participated in 5 or more. Although most teachers have been exposed to some professional development in inclusive education, attendance, in general, is limited, and more than one-third of the teachers training in the past three years has been made. The figures indicate that sponsored professional development is unevenly distributed, and that, even when it is available, teachers are attending in very small numbers.

This evidence is concerning because inadequate training impacts teachers' preparedness to work with different learners in inclusive environments. Teachers who participated in only one or two seminars may arrive at a very basic understanding of inclusive practices but will not develop the depth of knowledge and sustained skill to apply it in the classroom effectively. In contrast, those who participated in three or more training sessions will, in all likelihood, possess the instruments, the self-assurance and the inclusive teaching dispositions. These findings highlight the need to design and put in place continuous professional development opportunities, where all teachers, particularly those who have had no professional development, are provided with strategies and materials. Education administrators and schools need to invest in other supportive strategies, in the form of mentorship and systematic training, in order to build teachers' competencies in inclusive classroom management, as the complexities of inclusion will not be fully addressed with sporadic or single training opportunities.

Supporting this interpretation, Terfa et al. (2022) stated mentorship programs positively impact self-efficacy of inclusive education among regular teachers, implying that informal training of senior peers may help self-efficacy scaffolding incorporation education training. Weissenfels et al. (2021) extended this idea pointing out that self-efficacy in teachers can act as a protective layer against burnout while working in inclusive classrooms. This recognition of self-efficacy portrays an area of professional development that improves skills while addressing teacher mental health. Zainalabidin and Ma'rof (2021) articulated that attitude and self-efficacy of teachers predict

readiness strongly in implementing inclusive education. This indicates that sustained and structured training programs are pivotal in developing competence in self-efficacy and motivation.

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	18	60
Master's Degree (Units)	5	16.67
Master's Degree (Completed)	4	13.33
Doctorate (Units)	3	10
Doctorate (Completed)	0	0
Total	30	100.00

Table 5 detailed the highest educational attainment of the respondents. The data showed that the majority, 60% of the teachers, held a bachelor's degree, 16.67% had master's degree units, 13.33% had completed a master's degree, and 10% had doctoral units, and none had completed a doctorate. This indicate that a significant number of teachers have graduate studies, but the teaching staff is still predominately at the undergraduate level. This suggests that many of these teachers have not gone on to complete graduate education, and therefore, have had limited exposure to advanced research, specialized coursework, and higher pedagogical education that graduate education entails.

The professional growth of these teachers is probably limited in the completed degree, which would in turn impact their readiness to fully embrace the teaching of inclusive education. A teacher with a bachelor's degree will still depend on pre-service preparation which will provide an elementary understanding of inclusive practice and inadequate preparation.

Supporting this line of interpretation, Tumkaya and Miller (2020) articulated those pre- and in-service teachers' self-efficacy about inclusivity depends on their own training and qualifications, inferring that more education can increase one's confidence to handle a continuum of learners. Keppens et al. (2021) articulated the interrelation of teachers' beliefs, self-efficacy, and professional vision around inclusive teaching practices, noting that these are enhanced through higher qualifications. In a similar vein, Masongsong et al. (2023) advanced the argument that training in inclusive education strongly correlates with teachers' sense of efficacy, suggesting that educational qualifications and professional training synergistically bolster the ability of teachers to adopt inclusive practices.

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 1	12	40
Teacher 2	12	40
Teacher 3	6	20
Teacher 4	0	0
Total	30	100

Table 6 showed the current assigned teaching positions of the respondents. About 40% of the rank-and-file teachers were Teacher I, another 40% were Teacher II, and only 20% were Teacher III. Notably, none of the respondents were Master Teachers. This illustrates the absence of the highest teaching rank. The concentration of teachers at the lower levels suggests that the respondents might be at the lower steps of the promotion ladder, indicating that the respondents might still be in the early stages of the career ladder. This also suggests the respondents still lack the qualifications, teaching experience, and accomplishments that are needed to be promoted to Master Teacher.

This suggests that within the group, professional maturity and leadership in inclusive education may be stunted, since Master Teachers, who hold the more senior ranks, generally take on mentoring responsibilities, overseeing professional growth, and leading instructional innovations within the group. All the more so, since there were no respondents in this tier, the in-school leadership rank and file were devoid of senior educators who could model best practices in inclusive education and mentorship for novice educators. This indicates that support subsystems from school administrators and outside professionals will be needed to fill the gap left by the absence of formal teacher leaders, who typically anchor major educational reforms and inclusive practices. Having many teachers concentrated at the lower levels suggests that there is still substantial unused potential in the ranks, while the absence of more seasoned educators in the upper levels indicates that there is inactive potential in this group. The lack of lower ranks, however, highlights the need for professional guidance and strategically structured support.

In support of this interpretation, Alsarawi and Sukonthaman (2023) highlighted the importance of teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and self-efficacy and how these enable the effective enactment of inclusive teaching practices. They pointed to the value of professional development in this area. Van Staden-Payne and Nel (2023) further outlines the self-efficacy constraining factors teachers perceive in teaching inclusive practices and the need for mentoring, supportive school leadership, and sustained professional development to empower teachers in inclusive settings. All these findings imply that, in the absence of Master Teachers, lower-tier teachers will need to have structured support systems and professional development aimed specifically at inclusive practice in order to manage inclusivity successfully.

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	2.60	0.67	Prepared
2	I can adjust lessons and activities to fit the different needs of my learners	2.80	0.76	Prepared
3	I know how to manage classroom behavior while addressing diverse learner needs.	2.93	0.83	Prepared
4	I am able to work with SPED teachers or support staff when needed.	2.63	0.67	Prepared
5	I can use available materials or improvised tools to support learners with disabilities.	2.40	0.77	Slightly Prepared
6	I can conduct differentiated instruction even with time or resource limitations.	2.73	0.58	Prepared
7	I am confident in assessing learners with disabilities using fair methods.	2.43	0.63	Slightly Prepared
8	I can create a welcoming and safe classroom for all types of learners.	2.90	0.71	Prepared
9	I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child's learning.	2.93	0.69	Prepared
10	I know how to support the emotional and social needs of learners with disabilities.	2.70	0.75	Prepared
11	I can apply what I learned from trainings or seminars in actual classroom practice.	2.70	0.88	Prepared
12	I know when and how to refer learners to proper support services.	2.63	0.76	Prepared
	Aggregate Mean	2.70		
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.73	Prepared

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

Table 7 showed Preparedness in Handling Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities and received an aggregate mean rating of 2.70 which corresponds to the verbal description Prepared. This indicates that, on the whole, teachers view themselves as sufficiently prepared to execute the fundamental responsibilities of inclusive education. Nonetheless, the data still show that preparedness, albeit satisfactory, remains uneven as the different indicators show an uneven spread, with some competencies receiving a relatively higher rating than others.

The strongest indicators received positive assessments from respondents. For example, teachers stated “I know how to manage classroom behavior while addressing diverse learner needs” with a weighted mean of 2.93 described as Prepared, which suggests that teachers are confident in orderly classroom behavior while accommodating diverse learner needs. Another strong area was “I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child’s learning” which also obtained a weighted mean of 2.93 described as Prepared. This indicates that teachers understand the importance of constructive parental involvement in inclusive education. The teachers’ response to “I can create a welcoming and safe classroom for all types of learners” was also positive with a weighted mean of 2.90 described as Prepared, which emphasizes the importance of fostering safe and accepting classroom climates for learners with disabilities. Moreover, the statement “I can adjust lessons and activities to fit the different needs of my learners” received a weighted mean of 2.80 and was described as Prepared, which indicates the teachers’ willingness to engage in differentiated instruction.

In tables, results must also be critically examined for areas of lower preparedness indicated by the teachers. For the statement “I can use available materials or improvised tools to support learners with disabilities”, the response had a weighted mean of 2.40 with the description of Slightly Prepared. This perhaps suggests the teachers lack a resourceful disposition in adapting or devising teaching tools for learners with disabilities, stemming either from insufficient training in materials adaptation or a lack of resource access. Likewise, “I am confident in assessing learners with disabilities using fair methods” had a weighted mean of 2.43 with the description of Slightly Prepared. This suggests the teachers’ lack of confidence in implementing assessment methods that equitably ranges the learning of students with disabilities, a indeed complex and specialized area that no doubt requires further training. Thus, it can be concluded that teachers feel competent in the less technical aspects of teaching, such as family engagement and classroom control, and the technical aspects in teaching that require much more expertise and system support is where the confidence is lacking.

The nature of teachers’ professional experiences provides a plausible explanation for these findings. Teachers cultivate proficiency in classroom management, collaboration with parents, and building inclusive climates because these are part of daily practice and strengthened through their relationships with students and parents. In contrast, the lower preparedness in adapting resources and assessments may relate to a lack of professional development, training in inclusive education, and support from the institution. Teachers, for instance, are not given enough opportunities to develop practical techniques for adapting materials and assessments in ways that are responsive to the needs of a diverse student body. Such gaps help to explain the lack of readiness they perceive in these domains.

The analysis derived from the data are essential. The results show that teachers have a well-developed interpersonal understanding of the relational components of inclusive education but may not feel confident enough when it comes to the fundamental technical aspects of the education. If inclusive education is to be realized within the education system, there will be a need to provide more focused preparation, professional development on the use of resources and inclusive assessments, and on the unsupported gaps identified in the data. Without this, there is a risk that learners with disabilities may be assigned to inclusive classrooms, but will not have equitable access to appropriate sustained involvement or fair inclusive assessments. Practitioners, in this

case, need to ensure that professional development designed for the inclusive education of school leaders incorporates a focus not on just inclusive education broader strategies, but also on strengthening teachers' competencies in developing materials that are designed to be accessible, and assessments that are aligned with the real competencies of the learners with disabilities in the classrooms.

The findings of this research are consistent with findings of other research studies as well. Alharbi and Iqtadar (2024) stated that teachers do not feel adequately prepared for teaching students with disabilities, even if they possess some knowledge of inclusive teaching. Herzig Johnson (2023) stated that teacher self-efficacy is a huge determining factor for the execution of inclusive strategies and that self-efficacy is positively correlated with the effective application of inclusive practices. Emmers et al. (2020) stressed that the constructs of self-efficacy and attitudes are pivotal in determining the level of teacher preparedness in inclusive education, especially in the context of higher education. Francois (2020) described the importance of pre service training in developing a teacher's self-efficacy, which highlights the importance of the initial training and professionally development which is still needed in order to become properly prepared for inclusive teaching.

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.	3.43	0.63	Always
2	I give clear, step-by-step instructions when introducing tasks.	3.60	0.50	Always
3	I provide extra time or simplified activities for learners who need them.	3.43	0.63	Always
4	I assign classmates as peer buddies to assist learners with disabilities.	3.40	0.72	Always
5	I allow students to express learning in different formats (e.g., oral, visual, written).	3.40	0.72	Always
6	I break down complex tasks into smaller, more manageable parts.	3.30	0.70	Always
7	I give regular feedback and praise to support student progress.	3.47	0.73	Always
8	I adjust seating or grouping arrangements to support learners' needs.	3.43	0.73	Always
9	I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child's learning.	3.40	0.67	Always

10	I modify written activities so that learners with disabilities can participate.	3.40	0.62	Always
11	I regularly reflect on how my strategies meet the needs of diverse learners	3.57	0.57	Always
12	I apply inclusive teaching techniques I learned from recent trainings.	3.40	0.67	Always
Aggregate Mean		3.44		Prepared
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.66	

Legend: 3.25-4.00- Always; 2.50-3.24-Often; 1.75-2.49- Sometimes ;1.00-1.74- Never

Table 8 displayed the Inclusive Teaching Strategies in Managing Learners with Disabilities and showed an aggregate mean of 3.44, which corresponds to the verbal description Always. This result means that the teachers consistently applied inclusive strategies in the class and showed a considerable commitment to the support of learners with disabilities. The teachers offer a variety of techniques to modify the instruction, adapt accommodations, and provide inclusive learning environments.

Highlighted notable indicators include, “I give clear, step-by-step instructions when introducing tasks,” which achieved a weighted mean of 3.6 and described as Always, and “I regularly reflect on how my strategies meet the needs of diverse learners,” which attained a weighted mean of 3.67 described as Always. This implies that the respondents continue to refine their practice. Other strong areas “I give regular feedback and praise to support student progress,” has a weighted mean of 3.47 described as Always. This shows teachers do understand the importance of feedback as a motivational tool to keep learners engaged. Also, “I use visual aids, realia, or illustrations to help learners understand lessons,” and “I provide extra time or simplified activities for learners who need them,” both with weighted means of 3.43 described as Always. This shows that teachers do, in fact, as instructional and visual modifications to lessons to make them more accessible.

The statements “I assign classmates as peer buddies to assist learners with disabilities,” “I allow students to express learning in different formats,” “I break down complex tasks into smaller, more manageable parts,” “I adjust seating or grouping arrangements to support learners’ needs,” “I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child’s learning,” “I modify written activities so that learners with disabilities can participate,” and “I apply inclusive teaching techniques I learned from recent trainings” scored in the Always range, with weighted means between 3.30 and 3.43. Thus, the data indicates that the practitioners in this study incorporate the principles of inclusive education into their everyday work. They demonstrate routine, flexible collaboration, and a focus on the needs of the learners.

The consistently high ratings across indicators can be explained by the rising importance of inclusive education across the continuum of teacher preparation and in-service training. Teachers’ adoption of inclusive practices, including differentiated instruction, peer support, and multi-modal approaches for diverse learners, has become increasingly integrated. Modern

pedagogical approaches that integrate self-reflection and feedback loops on instruction justify the high self-assessments teachers gave regarding these components. Overall, the results indicate that teachers not only recognize inclusive practices, but that there is intentionality and regularity in the application of these practices in support of learners with disabilities.

The internalized inclusive practices that teachers have adopted show that these practices have become habitual. The evidence of readiness is seen not only in the supportive classroom environments teachers have created, but also in the adaptations made to content, delivery, assessment, and interaction of all learners. The professional implication for these results is that teachers have already made significant progress in the implementation of inclusive practices. Schools need to provide ongoing professional development in the areas of collaborative planning, continued resource provision, and support interdependently. The results of all indicators indicate a level of 'Always' suggests that the prevailing challenge is to expand the depth and sustainability of these practices and to address potential inconsistencies across varied school environments.

These findings are consistent with the literature. According to Wilson et al. (2020), the relationship between mastery experiences and supportive school environments predicts teachers' self-efficacy implementing inclusive teaching, which fosters the routine use of inclusive practices. Likewise, Olayvar (2022) showed that teachers' demographic features and their self-evaluated skills impacted their assimilation of inclusive practices. This again illustrates that self-preparedness and situational backing are crucial in retaining a high degree of inclusive teaching.

Test of Relationship Between the Preparedness and Inclusive Practices for Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities.

Table 9 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 Preparedness and Inclusive Practices for Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p value	Decision	Remarks
Preparedness and Inclusive Practices for Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities	0.065	Negligible Positive	0.84127	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant

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

Table 9 shows the results of the test of the relationship between preparedness and inclusive practices for mainstreamed learners with disabilities using Pearson's product-moment correlation. The r-value of 0.065 denotes a negligible positive correlation. The p-value of 0.84127 exceeds 0.05. Because the p-value exceeds the threshold of 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between teachers' preparedness and inclusive practices. The degree to which teachers perceive themselves as prepared, therefore, no significant

correlation with the consistency of inclusive strategies implementation within practice when dealing with mainstreamed learners with disabilities.

The results reveal an important insight: teacher preparedness, while vital, is not always practiced. Teachers may feel confident about their ability to teach inclusively, yet that self-assurance does not translate to the use of inclusive pedagogical approaches within the teaching-learning interaction. Such a gap may be explained with factors like system support, continued training, and resources. Teachers may feel prepared in a theoretical sense, for instance, but their significantly constrained training, diminished educational resources relative to the number of students in a class, and inadequate organizational support that's geared for teaching, could prevent the exercising of practical elements in what they know. These factors indicate that the dimensions of preparedness cannot be understood in an isolated manner and must be supplemented with contextual elements that significantly support teachers to enact inclusive practices.

This is also noted in the study conducted by Michael et al. (2020) on teachers' preparedness for inclusive education where there was also no significant association between teachers' self-reported preparedness and the actual practices in the classrooms. They noted that teachers report being ready but often struggle in the implementation of inclusive practices because of the lack of specialized focal training and the limited adaptive materials available. Long et al. (2025) in his study on teachers in mainland China describes similar experiences, where teachers reported being moderately prepared but the implementation barriers of overwhelming class sizes, inadequate training, and lack of support from the administration were still there. These examples further illustrate that preparedness is but one facet in inclusive education, and there is no doubt that systemic barriers can impact the actualization of preparedness.

Yet, the findings contradict the studies by Wilson et al. (2020) which researched the positive correlation between a teacher's perceived preparedness and actual inclusive practice. Wilson et al. (2020) claimed that the more prepared advocates teachers became, the more inclusive strategies they employed such as differentiated instruction, peer-assisted learning, and modification of instruction. Relative contextual differences might account for the dissimilarity between the two. For example, Wilson et al. (2020) examined contexts with better developed professional educational training alongside supportive educational ecosystems whereby teachers were able to materialize their perceived preparedness through actual teaching practice. In contrast, the findings of the current study suggest contexts with structural and resource deficits, which might help explain a weaker correlation between perceived preparedness and practice.

This assertion is also supported by Olayvar (2022), who noted that preparedness does not guarantee implementation. In her view, the effective practice of inclusive education also hinges on backed classroom management, professional learning opportunities, and the availability or absence of systemic policies that cover and support teachers' efforts. Recent studies bring to the forefront the systemic and resource alignment, which has to accompany preparedness, to turn theoretical readiness into adaptable inclusive practice.

Based on the information in Table 9, preparedness should not be seen as a standalone predictor of inclusive practices but as a part of a larger ecosystem. Self-assessed preparedness of teachers does not allow for exclusion of the lack of systemic backing (training, resources, and administrative support) on their inclusive strategies. These findings, for the professional practice, points to the need to not only work on the improvement of teacher preparation programs, but also

the enhancement of the systemic pillars of inclusive education. Teacher preparedness should be in line with effective inclusive strategies being practiced. Schools and educational authorities need to create systemic appropriate resources.

Findings

The data revealed that most teachers had limited experience in inclusive education. Out of 30 respondents, 15 or 50% had been teaching in inclusive settings for only 1–3 years, while 10 teachers or 33.33% had less than one year of experience. Only 10% of the respondents had more than six years of service in such settings, which implies that the majority are still in the early stages of exposure to inclusive education practices. In terms of learner load, another 50% of respondents handled 1 to 3 mainstreamed learners with disabilities, while 23.33% reported having none. Only 10% of the teachers had more than six learners with disabilities in their classes, indicating that most teachers had limited but manageable experiences with diverse learners.

Training participation in inclusive education also appeared limited. Ten teachers or 33.33% had not attended any inclusive education-related training or seminar in the last three years, while 43.33% had only attended 1 to 2 trainings. This indicates moderate exposure to professional development opportunities, which may affect their level of readiness in applying inclusive strategies. Academically, 60% of the teachers held a Bachelor's degree, while only 13.33% had completed a Master's degree, and none had completed a Doctorate. These figures suggest a strong need for further academic advancement and specialization in inclusive education. Likewise, 40% of respondents were ranked as Teacher I, another 40% as Teacher II, and 20% as Teacher III, with no Master Teachers represented in the sample—highlighting a lack of senior instructional leadership in inclusive classrooms. 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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