

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 Atop-Atop Elementary School during the School Year 2025–2026 as basis for a proposed Action Plan. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, the study involved thirty respondents. Data were collected using an adapted survey questionnaire and analyzed through frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results revealed that 50% of the teacher-respondents had been teaching in inclusive settings for seven years and above, suggesting substantial experience in inclusive education. However, 60% reported that they were not currently handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities, which implies limited integration or assignment of such learners to selected teachers. In terms of professional growth, 40% had not attended inclusive education-related training in the past three years, while only 10% had attended five or more. Academic qualifications showed that 46.67% had earned master's degree units, 33.33% held only a bachelor's degree, and none had completed a doctorate. Regarding preparedness, the aggregate mean of 2.68 indicated that teachers generally perceived themselves as "Prepared." On the other hand, inclusive teaching strategies obtained an aggregate mean of 3.32, verbally interpreted as "Always," reflecting frequent use of inclusive practices. Correlation analysis revealed no significant relationship between preparedness and inclusive teaching strategies. The study concluded that while teachers felt prepared and consistently applied inclusive strategies. It is therefore recommended that an Action Plan be developed to strengthen teacher capacity.

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

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INTRODUCTION

The Philippine educational system is undergoing continuous reform in its efforts to provide every learner, including those with case special needs integrated in regular classrooms, equitable opportunities. While national policies provide guarantees regarding access to education and promote inclusive practices, teachers' realities in the classroom have repeatedly shown gaps around preparedness, teaching, and support systems. The case of Atop-Atop Elementary School, general education teachers modifying lessons and supportive environments and managing diverse learning needs with little training and resources is as much a system problem as it is a problem of the educators themselves. This study therefore sought to assess the extent to which teachers in the school were equipped to accommodate and support mainstreamed learners with disabilities in their classrooms and the instructional approaches they employed, with a view to identifying the gaps needed to focus on to reinforce the implementation of inclusive education.

Although inclusive education is supported by research and policy at a global scale, many countries still cite significant gaps in teacher training and implementation. Mahmood, Huang, and Rehman (2025) underscored the pivotal part teachers and administrators took in guiding the integration of learners with special needs in inclusive settings, albeit requiring structured support. Similarly, Sitoy et al. (2025) noted the challenges general classroom teachers experienced in diversifying their strategies beyond a narrow spectrum when dealing with learners with special needs, again suggesting the need for a greater variety. Ozodova (2025) contended the need for more strategic and inclusive education, highlighting the participation of students with disabilities as a focus through varied, differentiated approaches. Similarly, Alvarez, Futralan, and Sedillo (2025) acknowledged the recurrence of challenges relating to management, as well as the ongoing need for instructional flexibility, in integrated classes where secondary school teachers had developed context-appropriate strategies. Parveen et al. (2025) stressed the need to transform teaching methods for the meaningful integration of learners with disabilities, as the foundation for sustainable inclusive practices. This aligns with the findings of Darwish, Alodat, Al-Hendawi, and Ianniello (2025), who noted that general education teachers' difficulties in including students were largely a matter of inadequate training and lack of systemic support.

In different parts of the world, research has focused on the preparedness of teachers for specific learner populations. For example, Dseagu et al. (2025) investigated how the preparedness of Ghanaian teachers to work with students with autism affected their instructional effectiveness. In the Philippines, Olayer et al. (2025) noted that the readiness of teachers to work with, and acceptance of students with special needs, depended on their training, as well as the school's prevailing culture. Regarding research on the visually impaired, Lalwani and Sakarwal (2025) noted that inclusive educators showed more flexibility as compared to those confined to training in special education. Derguy et al. (2025) showed that the perspective of special education teachers on including autistic students was more positive, and their attitudes were influenced by self-efficacy and knowledge, whereas teachers of general education exhibited more negative attitudes.

Research on the local level shows that while inclusive education is expanding, its uneven implementation continues. Sitoy et al. (2025) noted that teachers in the Visayas region were becoming aware of inclusive strategies, though many found it challenging to implement these due to limited resources. Alvarez et al. (2025) added that while teachers were ready to adopt inclusive practices which remained problematic due to issues such as large class sizes and lack of support

from the school as an institution. Focusing on localized interventions is necessary for schools such as Atop-Atop Elementary, where the research on the preparedness of teachers and the inclusive strategies they employ is scarce. This constituted a gap that, once addressed, would provide a clearer picture of what might be done to strengthen inclusive education within the context of the school.

Thus, this study at Atop-Atop Elementary School focused on the correlation of teacher preparedness and the inclusive pedagogical approaches that were being implemented. More precisely, this study aimed to evaluate the level of preparedness and the documented teaching strategies so as to understand their correlation and formulate proposals for inclusive education improvement in the school.

Statement of the problem

This study investigated 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. The results of this investigation served as the basis for the formulation of an action plan aimed at improving inclusive education practices. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

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 of the study, what action plan can be proposed to enhance inclusive education practices at Buanoy National High School?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive correlational research design to examine the relationship between teacher preparedness and the inclusive teaching strategies utilized by general education practitioners in managing learners with disabilities. This design was deemed appropriate as it allowed the analysis of the connection between two or more variables without subjecting them to manipulation. 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.

The study involved 30 general education teachers from Atop-Atop Elementary School in Bantayan Island, Cebu, purposively selected for directly handling mainstreamed learners with

disabilities. Their active engagement in inclusive classrooms made them ideal for examining the relationship between teacher preparedness and instructional strategies. Following purposive sampling principles (Palinkas et al., 2015), participants were chosen based on relevance and experience. Eligible teachers were officially employed at the school, had at least one year of inclusive teaching experience, and voluntarily consented to participate. Excluded were SPED specialists, administrators not teaching, teachers without mainstreamed learners, and those unavailable during data collection. This ensured that the data reflected the perspectives of teachers with firsthand experience in inclusive education.

The initial phase of the data collection process placed strong emphasis on ethical considerations to ensure that all procedures aligned with institutional policies. The researcher first secured approval from the Schools Division Office of Cebu, which supervises the operations of public schools in the division, thereby obtaining clearance at the division level. Following this, written permission was sought from the principal of Atop-Atop Elementary School in Bantayan Island, Cebu.

Once the respondents were identified, the researcher conducted an orientation session at Atop-Atop Elementary School to ensure that participants had a clear understanding of the study's purpose and procedures. During the orientation, the objectives of the research were explained, the content and structure of the survey questionnaire were presented, and the rights of participants were thoroughly discussed. Emphasis was placed on the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of responses, and the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. After this orientation, the survey questionnaires were distributed in printed form to the thirty (30) general education teachers of Atop-Atop Elementary School who met the inclusion criteria.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic profile of the respondents

The different tables in this chapter present, analyze, and interpret the data collected from the respondents of Atop-Atop Elementary School, in accordance 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 education settings, the number of mainstreamed learners with disabilities they have handled, their participation in inclusive education-related trainings or seminars, highest educational attainment, and current teaching position.

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	f	%

(in years)		
Less than 1 year	0	0
1-3 years	7	23.33
4-6 years	8	26.67
7 years and above	15	50
Total	30	100.00

Table 2 illustrated the Atop-Atop Elementary School teachers' experience with teaching in inclusive classrooms. The largest group of respondents, 50.00%, reported more than seven years of experience working in inclusive classrooms. Teachers with 4-6 years and 1-3 years of inclusive teaching experience accounted for the remaining 26.67% and 23.33%, respectively. Most importantly, there were no teachers with less than a year of experience in inclusive education. There was no teaching staff in this school with less than a year of experience in inclusive education, which means most of the staff have working experience in inclusive environments. Over 76% teachers with more than 3 years working experience in inclusive environments strengthens the diversity and inclusivity of the education system used in this school, particularly the practice of embedded inclusive education. Teachers with longer service in inclusive settings likely have more developed competencies in the practical aspects of dealing with different learners, adjusting curriculum to accommodate varying needs, and building inclusive environments.

The fact that there are no teachers with less than one year of experience might further indicate that more inclusive teaching positions at the school are given to teachers with an adequate level of experience. One could view this as a way to make sure that specialists are the ones working with students with disabilities. However, this also underscores the importance of ongoing professional development for experienced teachers, as the sophisticated, inclusive educational constructs and policies necessitate advanced teaching practices. This aligns with the work of Wilson et al. (2020), which centered on the interplay of mastery experiences and the school context and its implications for teachers' self-efficacy regarding inclusive practices. Likewise, Olayvar (2022) studied the teachers' personal demographics, self-perceived competencies, and their effect on confidence and effectiveness in teaching inclusive classrooms.

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	18	60
1 to 3	8	26.67
4 to 6	2	6.67
More than 6	2	6.67

Total	30	100.00
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These two studies, in confirming that teaching experience is an essential component in the development of effective inclusive practices, bolster the current findings. Teaching experience at Atop-Atop Elementary School is also an asset.

Table 3 showed the distribution of general education teachers in Atop-Atop Elementary School per the number of mainstreamed learners with disabilities each teacher handles. Most of the teachers (60.00%) indicated that they do not handle any learners with disabilities. 26.67% reported that they have 1 to 3 mainstreamed learners with disabilities. 4 to 6 learners were reported by 6.67% of the teachers, while another 6.67% reported handling more than 6 mainstreamed learners with disabilities.

The results indicate that inclusive education is present in the school, albeit not uniformly across all classes. The large number of teachers not handling any learners with disabilities could indicate not all such learners have been identified and placed in regular classes, or some more systemic limitations such as lack of support personnel, resources, or some classrooms being unprepared. The lack even distribution of learners with disabilities in regular classes could also suggest that only a few teachers, perhaps those with more experience or training, have been entrusted with inclusive teaching.

The distribution of data makes three points. First, as the literature has documented, there are gaps in the inclusive education which points to the fact that integration of learners with disabilities is less equitable and therefore, it requires attention. Second, many teachers may not have the opportunity to work directly with learners with disabilities which might contribute to their unpreparedness, and possible lack of confidence and competence to teach inclusively.

These results reflect the findings of recent literature. Alharbi and Iqtadar (2024) noted that teachers' feelings of lack of preparation and difficulties in teaching learners with disabilities translates to ineffective teaching and lower self-efficacy. Teaching self-efficacy has been noted to be a central predictor, and in Herzig Johnson (2023) study, self-efficacy and confident teaching were demonstrated to be highly correlated to the successful implementation of inclusive practices. Both of these studies point towards the necessity of targeted professional development, and systemic and continuous mentoring in order to establish and nurture effective inclusive teaching practices.

Engaging all teachers actively in inclusive teaching, and not a select few, enhances their individual professional growth, builds a shared vision of inclusion at the school, and differentially supports all learners with disabilities.

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

Number of Mainstreamed Learners	f	%
None	12	40

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1 to 2	10	33.33
3 to 4	5	16.67
5 and above	3	10
Total	30	100.00

Table 4 showed the number of inclusive education-related training or seminar sessions attended by the teachers at the Atop-Atop Elementary School for the last three years. According to the data, 40.00% of the participants did not attend any training within the indicated duration. Another 33.33% attended one to two training sessions, 16.67% attended three to four sessions, and just 10.00% of teachers attended five or more inclusive education-related professional development activities.

data point to a lack of professional development and training opportunities for the teachers in more advanced inclusive education. 73.33% of the respondents had attended only two training sessions or none at all. This indicates a lack of professional development in the inclusive education taught at the institution. This is problematic, as professional training opportunities are vital in replenishing the teachers' skills, so they are better able to accommodate diverse learners.

The impact of limited participation in relevant professional development training may have resulted in some of the inconsistencies in the implementing of inclusive instructional practices across classrooms. It may also point to inequities in access to some level of professional development or the absence of school-directed professional development initiatives. Even with some level of experience in teaching, the absence of training during the period of implementation may have made it all the more difficult for educators to put some of the more contemporary best practices to use in inclusive education, especially with some of the more entrenched and complex issues with learners with disabilities and the associated evolving policies.

The absence of professional development, particularly of the more concrete and structured variety, did not appear to be present in the rationale. The experience of Emmers, Baeyens, and Petry (2020) resonates with many in that the attitudes of educators with respect to inclusion, particularly self-efficacy, were enhanced through more focused training, which in turn, positively altered classroom management and differentiated instruction. The findings of Francois (2020) extended this to not only pre-service training but also in-service training as a direct conduit to increasing educators' confidence and competence in inclusive practices. The contribution of Alsarawi and Sukonthaman (2023) extended the conversation in those educators who participated in inclusive teaching professional development documented increases in knowledge and more positive attitudes and self-efficacy in inclusive teaching.

Collectively, these studies highlighted that expanding availability and involvement in inclusive education training was essential to ensuring sustained meaningful inclusion at Atop-Atop Elementary School. School leaders were urged to promote equitable and ongoing professional development, so that all teachers, irrespective of their prior experience, would be able to assist students with disabilities in an effective and confident manner.

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	10	33.33
Master's Degree (Units)	14	46.67
Master's Degree (Completed)	4	13.33
Doctorate (Units)	2	6.67
Doctorate (Completed)	0	0
Total	30	100.00

Table 5 provided data on the educational attainment of teachers at Atop-Atop Elementary School. It showed that 46.67% of the teacher's respondents attained master's degree units, 33.33% of respondents attained a bachelor's degree. Only 13.33% of the respondents had a master's degree and 6.67% had doctorate units. Notably, no respondents had a completed doctorate degree.

The majority of the teaching staff engaged in or were pursuing graduate studies. This showed growth in the professional attainment the teaching staff in Atop-Atop Elementary School and the recognition of advanced degree attainment the taught professional and the teaching and learning in the school. The teaching staff were aware of the benefits of advanced degree attainment to teaching professional, especially to more focus and critical areas of teaching and learning like inclusive education. The large proportion of the teaching staff who had attained master's degree units showed that they were in the process of advanced degree attainment in pedagogy. This was a positive professional attainment growth in the teaching staff.

This data highlighted the small proportion of the faculty who had attained graduate qualifications, and the limited enrolment in doctoral programs. Such patterns may be indicative of time, financial constraints, lack of access to advanced program, and institutional disinterest in promoting further higher educational development. Completing graduate studies may help teachers for research-based teaching and strengthen the adoption of inclusive educational practices.

These were consistent with recent studies. Self-efficacy and effectiveness of inclusive practices are determined by the same factors (Van Staden-Payne and Nel, 2023). Prior training, teaching experience, and professional development were essential in determining pre-service and in-service teachers' self-efficacy in teaching inclusively (Tumkaya and Miller, 2020). Teacher effectiveness in managing and teaching adaptively diverse classrooms also increased with educational attainment (Keppens et al., 2021). Mentally interrelated self-efficacy, professional vision, and teaching belief all strengthened inclusive practices.

Together, these studies validated the implication that promoting and assisting teachers at Atop-Atop Elementary School in attaining higher educational degrees would result in more effective and inclusive teaching. The implementation of organizational policies like research incentives, study leaves, and educational scholarships would probably further increase the

qualifications of teachers, and by extension, the outcomes of the learners.

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	%
Master Teacher	3	10
Teacher III	4	13.33
Teacher II	5	16.67
Teacher I	18	60
Total	30	100.00

Table 6 provided the distribution of respondents from Atop-Atop Elementary School based on their current teaching positions. The majority, 60.00%, were ranked as Teacher I. This was followed by 16.67% who occupied Teacher II positions, and 13.33% who were Teacher III. Only 10.00% of the respondents held the rank of Master Teacher.

The data suggested that most of the school's teachers were at the entry level of the teaching career. This meant that the school might be staffed primarily with novice educators, or educators lacking promotion in rank, perhaps due to tenure, absence of advanced degrees, or the absence of higher rank positions, or other promotion barriers. While teachers with limited rank could certainly be effective, the absence of career advancement was likely to constrain their access to positions that provided increased leadership, the ability to mentor other teachers, and active participation in the development of school-based initiatives like inclusive education programs.

The small number of Master Teachers suggested a lack of instructional leadership regarding inclusion. Master Teachers were expected to take on mentoring roles, coach colleagues, model best practices, and lead learning action cells (LACs), particularly in areas of specialized inclusion teaching. More recent literature backs these findings. Masongsong et al. (2023) found that teachers with advanced training in inclusive education had stronger self-efficacy and were able to implement more effective instructional practices for diverse learners. In the same vein, Terfa et al. (2022) showed that self-efficacy of regular teachers was more empowered through inclusive classroom practices and mentoring. The studies emphasize the need for leadership and formal school-wide inclusive practices structured mentorship.

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	2.80	0.71	Prepared
2	I can adjust lessons and activities to fit the different needs of my learners	2.70	0.75	Prepared
3	I know how to manage classroom behavior while addressing diverse learner needs.	2.67	0.71	Prepared
4	I am able to work with SPED teachers or support staff when needed.	2.67	0.76	Prepared
5	I can use available materials or improvised tools to support learners with disabilities.	2.73	0.74	Prepared
6	I can conduct differentiated instruction even with time or resource limitations.	2.83	0.79	Prepared
7	I am confident in assessing learners with disabilities using fair methods.	2.53	0.86	Prepared
8	I can create a welcoming and safe classroom for all types of learners.	2.57	0.63	Prepared
9	I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child's learning.	2.53	0.86	Prepared
10	I know how to support the emotional and social needs of learners with disabilities.	2.77	0.68	Prepared
11	I can apply what I learned from trainings or seminars in actual classroom practice.	2.83	0.70	Prepared
12	I know when and how to refer learners to proper support services.	2.57	0.57	Prepared
	Aggregate Mean	2.68		
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.73	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

Table 6 presented the Preparedness in Handling Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities at Atop-Atop Elementary School across various indicators related to inclusive teaching. The weighted mean scores across all twelve indicators fall within the range of 2.50 to 3.24, which corresponds to the verbal description “Prepared”, based on the scale provided. Among the most salient indicators, teachers rated highest on the statement “I can conduct differentiated instruction even with time or resource limitations” with a weighted mean of 2.83 (Prepared). This was matched by another high-scoring item, “I can apply what I learned from trainings or seminars in actual classroom practice”, also with a weighted mean of 2.83 (Prepared). These results suggest that teachers are capable of adjusting instruction based on learner diversity, even under constraints, and are able to integrate professional learning into their classroom routines.

Another notable indicator is “I can identify the academic and behavioral needs of learners with disabilities”, which scored a weighted mean of 2.80 (Prepared). This implies that teachers have a reasonable grasp of recognizing the specific learning and behavioral challenges of students with disabilities—an essential skill in inclusive teaching. The indicator “I know how to support the emotional and social needs of learners with disabilities” received a weighted mean of 2.77 (Prepared), reflecting the teachers’ awareness that inclusivity goes beyond academics and includes the socio-emotional well-being of learners.

The consistency of scores within the “Prepared” category across all indicators indicates that teachers feel moderately equipped to handle inclusive classrooms. These results may be attributed to their years of experience, foundational exposure to inclusive education concepts, and occasional participation in related seminars or workshops. However, the absence of any indicator reaching the “Very Prepared” range (3.25–4.00) suggests that while foundational competence exists, more focused and frequent training is necessary to deepen their confidence and expertise in inclusive education.

This level of preparedness implies that teachers at Atop-Atop Elementary School are positioned to implement inclusive practices, but still need additional support, particularly in advanced application of strategies and consistent collaboration with special education professionals. The findings serve as a useful guide for school leadership in planning capacity-building programs, encouraging peer coaching, and strengthening ties with parents and support services. Furthermore, understanding that teachers feel only “Prepared” and not “Very Prepared” highlights a crucial gap in professional growth that, if addressed, can lead to more effective and sustainable inclusion in the school setting.

Supporting these findings, Van Steen and Wilson (2020) emphasized that teacher preparedness improves significantly when training is linked to practice-based learning. Their study found that when teachers are given opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in real classroom contexts, their confidence and effectiveness in inclusive teaching increases. Similarly, Kalgotra (2020) argued that differentiated instruction, especially when performed under resource constraints, becomes a core skill that boosts teacher efficacy in inclusion.

Inclusive teaching strategies in managing learners with disabilities

Table 7 presented the Inclusive Teaching Strategies in Managing Learners with Disabilities. The data were presented in tabular form.

Table 7
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.	3.30	0.79	Always
2	I give clear, step-by-step instructions when introducing tasks.	3.23	0.77	Often

3	I provide extra time or simplified activities for learners who need them.	3.20	0.81	Often
4	I assign classmates as peer buddies to assist learners with disabilities.	3.00	0.79	Often
5	I allow students to express learning in different formats (e.g., oral, visual, written).	3.43	0.73	Always
6	I break down complex tasks into smaller, more manageable parts.	3.40	0.72	Always
7	I give regular feedback and praise to support student progress.	3.33	0.66	Always
8	I adjust seating or grouping arrangements to support learners' needs.	3.30	0.79	Always
9	I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child's learning.	3.63	0.49	Always
10	I modify written activities so that learners with disabilities can participate.	3.37	0.61	Always
11	I regularly reflect on how my strategies meet the needs of diverse learners	3.27	0.78	Always
12	I apply inclusive teaching techniques I learned from recent trainings.	3.40	0.62	Always
	Aggregate Mean	3.32		
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.71	Prepared

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

Table 7 showed Inclusive Teaching Strategies in Managing Learners with Disabilities. It describes how frequently teachers at Atop-Atop Elementary School utilize different inclusive methods in working with mainstreamed learners with disabilities. This table contains twelve basic indicators. These indicators mirror certain instructional actions as described in inclusive teaching practices paradigms. Results first organized in means and standard deviations described and analyzed using a four-point Likert scale. Within these data, the indicators achieved means between 3.00 and 3.63, with an overall mean of 3.32. This figure is categorized as “Always”. This suggests that teachers implement inclusive strategies in an uninterrupted, constant manner.

One of the indicators with the most visibility recorded the highest mean score with, “I am capable of involving parents or guardians in supporting their child’s learning,” with a weighted mean of 3.63 (Always). This indicates a high level of family engagement, where teachers understand parents as integral collaborators in the educational journey of learners, especially those with disabilities. Another highly evaluated indicator is, “I allow students to express learning in different formats (e.g., oral, visual, written),” with a weighted mean of 3.43 (Always). This position teachers’ willingness to adapt to various learning needs as well as embrace flexible assessment as described by Pfeiffer (1991). “I apply inclusive teaching techniques I learned from recent trainings” and “I break down complex tasks into smaller, more manageable parts” are also notable at a weighted mean of 3.40 (Always). This tells us that teachers are not merely integrating elements from professional training, but are also purposeful in their effort to ease complexity in teaching all learners.

The positive feedback on most metrics' points to the successful embedding of inclusive approaches within the teaching practices at Atop-Atop Elementary School. Educators seem to be implementing practices designed to encourage participation, engagement, and support for all students, including those with disabilities. The adoption of these practices can perhaps be linked to the length of teaching experience, training exposure, and the school's inclusive culture. The understanding of inclusion demonstrated by the focus on differentiated assessment, task simplification, and collaboration with parents is certainly admirable, as it incorporates elements beyond teaching to the instructional relationship and the entire educational ecosystem.

The findings represent several positive implications. The consistent "Always" rating on several metrics reflects awareness and high impact in the implementation of inclusive educational practices in everyday teaching. It confirms the school's potential for offering effective and equitable education for all learners. These inclusive practices target the individual learning needs of students, help in overcoming educational barriers, and nurture the academic, emotional, and social growth of children with disabilities. It is evident from the findings that teachers are moving beyond mere compliance with inclusive mandates and are actively redesigning their teaching to make it accessible to all students. Such insights can effectively support school-based strategic and integrated planning and assist in the purposeful mentoring of novice teachers in alignment with current standards. They also highlight effective practices that can be sustained and expanded.

Current literature supports these results. Weissenfels, Benick, and Perels (2021) pointed out that inclusive approaches, especially those that feature parent participation, feedback loops, and scaffolding of instruction, have a strong correlation with positive academic and behavioral results for students with special needs. Based on their study, the sustained use of these approaches was linked to higher levels of participation and retention for students with disabilities. Zainalabidin and Ma'rof (2021) similarly stated that effective use of inclusive practices goes beyond training and has to do with teachers' real-time adaptive and reflective teaching. Their work highlighted the convergence of practical experience and professional learning as a key element to maintaining inclusive approaches, which also was the case for the teachers in this study as evidenced by their reported use of training-based strategies.

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

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
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Preparedness and Inclusive Practices for Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities	-0.228	Negligible Negative	0.47632	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant
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*Significant at $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

Table 9 showed the results from the Preparedness and Inclusive Practices for Mainstreamed Learners with Disabilities Relationship study. This section describes the results from teachers' preparedness level and the inclusive practices teachers are implementing for learners with disabilities. The Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficient determines the correlation of the two continuous variables preparedness of teachers and the inclusive practices which tests the hypothesis to see if inclusive practices are more applied with increased preparedness of teachers.

The analysis' r correlation value of -0.228 is the indication of a negative correlation between the two variables where one increases and the other decreases. The variables are so weakly correlated that the increase of one variable does not affect the other dependent variable. The result of the correlation analysis and level of significance 0.47632 was greater than the 0.05 that was set. Therefore, in the analysis it correlates that 0.47632 is greater than the 0.05, which concludes that 0.47632 was not statistically significant.

In this case, the null hypothesis, stating that there is no significant relationship between preparedness and inclusive practices, was correctly not rejected. This implies that, from a statistical point of view, the study had not demonstrated that the teachers' preparedness had any influence on the use of inclusive practices with mainstreamed learners with disabilities.

Thus, there was no significant relationship between the two variables in question. While the data, as indicated in the earlier tables, demonstrated that teachers were generally prepared and routinely engaged in inclusive teaching practices, this influence was not significant. This means that even those who reported high levels of preparedness did not, revise the inclusive teaching practices, use the prepared materials with greater frequency or in a more sophisticated manner.

On the one hand, this finding is consistent with and, on the other, inconsistent with some studies documented in the literature. For instance, in the study conducted by Savolainen, Malinen, and Schwab (2022), it is documented that teacher efficacy predicted attitudes toward inclusion. This means that teachers with higher self-efficacy ranked more inclusionary practices over the given time. On the contrary, Tseeke (2021) reports that there is no significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy perceptions and classroom practices toward learners with visually impaired, stating that signs of preparedness do not predict practice because of intervening issues like availability of resources, administrative support, and classroom structuring.

Moreover, Friesen, Shory, and Lamoureux (2023) pointed out that even though self-efficacy and inclusive beliefs are crucial, teacher burnout and other systemic issues may limit the extent to which prepared teachers practice. This explains the position that even prepared teachers struggle to execute inclusive practices because there is a lack of support, reflection, and institutional consolidation.

Findings

The results of the study show that 50% of the teacher-respondents at Atop-Atop Elementary School have been teaching in inclusive settings for seven years and above, indicating that the majority possess considerable experience in inclusive education. However, despite this level of experience, 60% of the respondents reported that they are not currently handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities, which may suggest limited classroom integration or the assignment of such learners to specific teachers.

In terms of professional development, 40% of the teachers indicated they had not attended any inclusive education-related training or seminar in the last three years, while only 10% had attended five or more, highlighting the need for more accessible and consistent in-service training. Regarding academic qualifications, 46.67% of the respondents had earned master's degree units, while 33.33% held only a bachelor's degree, and none had completed a doctorate, indicating a moderately advanced level of educational attainment within the faculty.

As for their teaching positions, the majority or 60% are classified as Teacher I, while only 10% are Master Teachers, which may reflect limited leadership capacity in terms of mentoring and modeling inclusive instructional practices.

The results on preparedness in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities yielded an aggregate mean of 2.68 with a verbal interpretation of Prepared. This indicates that, while teachers believe they are equipped to manage inclusive classrooms, there is still room for improvement in terms of deepening their readiness and capacity. On the other hand, the findings on inclusive teaching strategies in managing learners with disabilities showed an aggregate mean of 3.32, corresponding to the verbal interpretation Always. This suggests that teachers frequently implement inclusive practices, such as differentiated instruction, modified activities, parental involvement, and learner-centered approaches.

However, the test of relationship between preparedness and inclusive practices for mainstreamed learners with disabilities revealed an r-value of -0.228 and a p-value of 0.47632, indicating a negligible negative correlation and no significant relationship between the two variables at the 0.05 level of significance. As a result, the null hypothesis is not rejected, meaning that the level of preparedness does not significantly influence the level of inclusive practices for mainstreamed learners with disabilities reported by the teacher-respondents.

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CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that general education teachers at Atop-Atop Elementary School possess a moderate level of preparedness in handling mainstreamed learners with disabilities and consistently demonstrate the use of inclusive teaching strategies in their classrooms. The teachers' self-assessed preparedness, reflected by an overall mean rating of

“Prepared,” indicates that they have foundational competence in addressing the academic, behavioral, and emotional needs of learners with disabilities. However, their preparedness remains largely confined to basic implementation rather than advanced mastery, suggesting a need for deeper professional enrichment and stronger institutional support.

The results further reveal that teachers frequently employ inclusive strategies such as differentiated instruction, flexible assessments, parental collaboration, and varied instructional approaches, as evidenced by the overall “Always” interpretation in the data. These practices highlight the teachers’ commitment to promoting equitable participation and fostering supportive learning environments. Despite this, the study’s correlation analysis established no significant relationship between the teachers’ preparedness and their implementation of inclusive strategies. This finding implies that preparedness alone does not directly determine the effectiveness or frequency of inclusive practices. Instead, other influencing factors—such as access to resources, administrative and peer support, class size, and continuous professional development—likely play a more crucial role in the successful execution of inclusive education.

Overall, while Atop-Atop Elementary School demonstrates a commendable culture of inclusivity, the results underscore the necessity for sustained capacity building, structured mentoring systems, and institutional reforms that promote inclusive excellence. Strengthening professional development programs, fostering collaboration between general and special education teachers, and providing adequate resources are essential steps to ensure that preparedness evolves into consistent, effective, and transformative inclusive practices.

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