

**Assessing learner's behavior and classroom management in inclusive education:
A comprehensive intervention plan in public elementary school**

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the behavior problems encountered among diverse learners and the corresponding classroom management practices in inclusive education at Tipolo National High School during the 2025-2026 school year as a basis for an intervention plan. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, it involved 30 teachers selected via purposive sampling. Data were gathered using a survey questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics, including Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Regression. The findings revealed that the teachers were from age group of 41 to 50 years old, taking masteral units, with 10 years and more teaching experiences, and are usually teaching learners with difficulties in communication, reading, writing, & number problem. The findings show that teachers frequently applied behavior and classroom management strategies, with actions such as promoting good conduct consistently practiced. Statistical analysis further revealed that years of teaching experience was the only factor significantly linked to the level of behavior and classroom management. Other variables—age, highest educational attainment, types of disabilities handled, and trainings attended—showed no significant relationship to teachers' management practices or to the specific behavioral problems encountered. Schools are encouraged to enhance peer-mentoring and coaching programs so that the expertise of veteran teachers can guide and support colleagues with fewer years of experience and may implement the intervention plan formulated for specialized approaches to address t

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INTRODUCTION

Behavioral management is a cornerstone of effective teaching and learning, particularly in special education settings. It fosters a safe, structured, and positive environment, enabling students with diverse needs to engage meaningfully in the educational process. For primary learners at SPED centers, well-implemented behavioral management strategies are essential for promoting social-emotional growth, minimizing disruptions, and supporting the

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development of self-regulation skills. These outcomes are critical, as they lay the foundation for academic achievement and lifelong adaptive behaviors.

In the context of special education, individualized behavioral interventions help address the unique challenges faced by learners with disabilities, such as communication barriers, sensory sensitivities, and social difficulties. Effective behavioral management not only benefits the students but also supports teachers by reducing stress and burnout, enhancing instructional time, and improving overall classroom climate. The importance of these strategies is underscored by research highlighting their role in creating inclusive, supportive, and productive learning environments for all learners.

Despite the recognized benefits of behavioral management, international research reveals persistent gaps in the implementation and evaluation of these strategies. A study by World Health Organization and the ECDC (2024) identified significant skills and resource shortages that hinder the effective use of behavioral and cultural insights in educational and health settings. These gaps impede the translation of evidence-based practices into policy and everyday classroom interventions, calling for increased investment in teacher training and organizational support (ECDC, 2024).

In United Arab Emirates, a study conducted by Opoku et al. (2023) revealed that the respondents had a moderate trauma management that highlights the need for curriculum reform for teachers' behavioral management in handling students in inclusive classroom. In Chinese middle school revealed that the better classroom management strategies led to fewer instances of student behavioral problems and increase teachers' competence in managing inclusive classroom (Jie, 2024). With the foregoing global literature contexts to conceptual confusion and methodological challenges in behavioral intervention research. Issues such as inconsistent terminology, limited empirical evidence on best practices, and a lack of clarity regarding intervention fidelity and effectiveness across diverse populations remain unresolved. These barriers complicate efforts to design, implement, and scale interventions that are responsive to the evolving needs of students with special needs (Gitlin et al., 2023).

In the Philippines, research on behavioral management in special education is limited, with most studies focusing on clinical interventions rather than preventive or school-based strategies. The Philippine Mental Health Strategic Plan 2019–2023 highlights significant gaps in mental health governance, service delivery, and information systems, particularly the lack of proactive efforts to promote mental health and prevent behavioral issues in schools (Lazo, 2019). In addition, a study conducted in the Division of Zambales revealed that to implement an effective classroom management strategies teachers should establish a supportive environment for children with emotional and behavioral disturbances (Elbancol & Marquez, 2025). Moreover, the integration of behavioral science concepts in public administration and education research remains superficial, with few studies employing rigorous methodologies or addressing the unique needs of Filipino learners (Antolino & Salonga, 2022).

These gaps are further intensified by insufficient funding, inadequate teacher training, and limited access to culturally relevant resources. The lack of evidence-based, context-specific interventions hampers the development of comprehensive behavioral management programs that can effectively support students with special needs in Philippine schools (Lazo, 2019; Antolino & Salonga, 2022).

At the local level, studies focusing on behavioral management in Tipolo Elementary School are scarce. Existing research highlights the importance of managing student behavior for successful inclusion in mainstream classrooms, yet teachers often report significant challenges. These include managing a wide spectrum of behavioral characteristics—from inattention and hyperactivity to defiance and aggression within large, diverse classrooms with limited support. This often leads to reliance on traditional, sometimes inconsistent teaching strategies that leads to a not effective teaching delivery of the lesson that does not meet all

learners' needs, resulting in teacher stress and compromised instructional time. It is this pressing challenge observed within the local context that motivates the researcher to engage in this study, aiming to translate these everyday struggles into a structured and supportive intervention plan.

Given the critical role of behavioral management and the documented challenges at international, national, and local levels, this study is urgently needed. The identified challenges derived such as teachers' stress, inconsistent strategies used by the teacher, and the lack of training will be addressed through the intervention plan formulated for this study. Thus, the researcher opted to conduct this study to assess the behavior problems encountered among diverse learners and the level of classroom management practices employed by teachers at Tipolo Elementary School. The findings of this study will serve as the basis for developing a targeted and evidence-based intervention plan designed to empower teachers, enhance behavioral outcomes for learners, and ultimately contribute to a more effective and inclusive learning environment.

Statement of the problem

This study aimed to assess the behavior problems encountered among diverse learners and classroom management in inclusive education at Tipolo Elementary School during school year 2025-2026 as basis for an intervention plan. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of teacher respondents in terms of age and gender, highest educational attainment, number of years in teaching, type of disabilities or difficulties handled, and relevant trainings and seminars attended?
2. What behavior problems are encountered among diverse learners in inclusive education?
3. As perceived by the teacher respondents, what is the level of behavior and classroom management practices in dealing with diverse learners?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the profile of teacher respondents and the level of behavior and classroom management practices in dealing with diverse learners, and between the behavior problems encountered among diverse learners in inclusive education and the level of behavior and classroom management practices in dealing with diverse learners?
5. Based on the findings of the study, what intervention plan can be crafted?

METHODOLOGY

This section presented the research design, locale of the study, respondents, data gathering instruments, data gathering procedure, and data analysis procedure. The study employed a descriptive correlational research design using a quantitative approach to assess the behavioral management practices of primary learners as implemented by teachers in Tipolo Elementary School within the Mandaue City Division during the school year 2025–2026. Descriptive research was utilized to systematically describe current practices, behaviors, and challenges without manipulating variables, thereby providing a clear snapshot of how behavior management was conducted in the target population. This design enabled the researcher to examine both the existing conditions and the relationships among variables relevant to inclusive education and classroom management.

The study was conducted at Tipolo Elementary School located in Tipolo, Mandaue City, Cebu, Philippines. This public elementary school serves diverse learners from the

surrounding urban community and operates under the supervision of the Department of Education, Mandaue City Division. It caters to a diverse group of primary learners, including those with special needs, as it is recognized as a SPED inclusive institution. The school implements various special needs and Inclusive Education programs and services that cater to learners with special needs and learners with difficulties in class. Moreover, the school has the most numbered of teachers who are handling students with difficulties in class and teachers who are enrolling in post graduate studies major in SPED, which makes it an appropriate setting for the investigation of behavioral management practices in inclusive classrooms.

The respondents of the study were the teachers of Tipolo Elementary School who are currently teaching students with special needs and directly supervise their academic success while facilitating various SPED programs in the school. The distribution of respondents consisted of 30 teachers, comprising three male teachers and twenty seven female teachers. This study utilized a purposive sampling technique to select the 30 teacher respondents who were directly involved in the behavioral management of primary learners with special needs and learners with difficulties in class, ensuring that the data collected was relevant and specific to the research objectives. This distribution reflected the study's focus on gathering comprehensive perspectives from all teachers directly engaged in the behavioral management of learners, thereby providing a holistic understanding of current practices and challenges essential for developing an effective intervention plan.

The research instrument used in this study was a survey questionnaire adopted from Torregosa et al. (2024) in the study titled "Strategies in Dealing with Disruptive Behavior of Learners with Special Education Needs." The questionnaire was divided into three main parts. The first part focused on the demographic profile, which gathered essential background information from teachers including age, gender, highest educational attainment, years in the teaching profession, and the types of trainings and seminars they have attended. The second part of the questionnaire focused on behavior management practices and included a list of 15 specific strategies such as praising the child, encouraging open communication, giving recognition, corporal punishment, and scolding. The third part aimed to identify the common behavioral problems encountered in the classroom, such as inattentiveness, hyperactivity, defiance, aggression, and low self-esteem. Respondents were asked to check all issues that apply, allowing the researcher to gather detailed data on prevalent student behaviors that may require targeted interventions. In addition, respondents were asked to rate how frequently they use each practice using a five point Likert scale, where 5 represents "Always" and 1 means "Never."

The process of collecting data for this study was carried out in three key stages consisting of the preliminary stage, the data gathering stage, and the post data gathering stage, each of which ensured that the research was conducted ethically, systematically, and efficiently. In the preliminary stage, the researcher sought approval from the school head and the school's division superintendent through a formal transmittal letter. This stage also involved the preparation of research instruments, particularly the questionnaire, which was validated by field experts to ensure its clarity, relevance, and appropriateness for the target respondents. Furthermore, informed consent was secured from all respondents including teachers, parents, and learners to ensure that they were fully aware of the study's purpose, confidentiality procedures, and voluntary nature of participation. During the data gathering stage, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the identified respondents at Tipolo National High School. Respondents were given sufficient time to answer each section of the instrument thoughtfully and honestly while maintaining confidentiality and anonymity. Assistance was provided when clarifications were requested. The data collected focused on the demographic profiles of the respondents, behavior management practices, and the behavioral issues commonly encountered among primary learners. The anonymity of the respondents was

safeguarded by not requiring them to write their names on the survey questionnaires, ensuring that responses could not be personally identified. All collected data were treated with utmost confidentiality and were used solely for the purposes of this academic research, with access limited only to the researcher. In the post data gathering stage, the completed questionnaires were collected, reviewed for completeness, and systematically organized. The responses were encoded and subjected to appropriate statistical treatments to analyze patterns, trends, and relationships between variables. This analysis served as the foundation for interpreting the data and drawing meaningful conclusions, which subsequently led to the formulation of findings and recommendations and the development of a targeted intervention plan aimed at improving behavioral management practices at the school.

The data collected through the survey questionnaire were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods to ensure accurate interpretation of the results. The level of significance was set at 0.05 to determine whether the observed relationships are statistically meaningful. Frequency counts and percentages were employed to present the demographic profiles of the respondents. In addition, the means and standard deviations were used to summarize the levels of behavior management practices employed by teachers and parents. Furthermore, the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and regression were utilized to test the significance of the profile of teacher respondents and the level of behavior and classroom practices in dealing with diverse learners, as well as to examine the significant relationship between the behavior problems encountered among diverse learners in inclusive education and the level of behavior and classroom practices in dealing with diverse learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion presented in this section are based on data gathered from 30 teacher respondents of Tipolo Elementary School who were selected through purposive sampling. The study employed a descriptive correlational research design using a quantitative approach, and data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire adopted from Torregosa et al. (2024). The analysis utilized both descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations, and inferential statistics such as Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis, with the level of significance set at 0.05. The discussion that follows is grounded on the empirical data obtained and is interpreted in direct relation to the objectives of the study, particularly in assessing teachers' profiles, behavioral problems encountered among diverse learners, classroom management practices, and the relationships among these variables.

The demographic profile of the respondents revealed patterns that are relevant to understanding their capacity to manage diverse learners in inclusive classrooms. In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents were within the age group of 41 to 50 years old, comprising 57% of the sample population. This was followed by those aged 31 to 40 years old at 20%. The least represented groups were those aged 51 to 60 years old with four teachers accounting for 13%, and those aged 21 to 30 years old at 10%. With respect to gender, 27 respondents were female, representing 90%, while only 10% were male. These findings suggest a predominance of mid-career female educators, which reflects varied levels of teaching experience that may influence behavioral management practices in inclusive settings. The importance of demographic characteristics in shaping classroom practices is supported by Reyes and Santos (2021), who emphasized that teachers' profiles contribute significantly to understanding behavioral management effectiveness in classrooms.

In terms of educational attainment, 53.33% of the respondents had acquired units in masteral programs in various universities in Cebu City, while 23.33% had completed a master's

degree. Additionally, 20% held a bachelor's degree, and only 3.33% had pursued doctorate units. This distribution indicates that a large proportion of teachers are engaged in ongoing professional development through postgraduate education. Such advancement is essential in enhancing pedagogical competence and equipping teachers with the knowledge required to manage diverse learners effectively. This finding aligns with Santos and Villanueva (2024), who noted that higher educational qualifications improve teachers' confidence and effectiveness in addressing diverse student needs.

The length of teaching experience further demonstrated that 63.33% of the respondents had ten or more years of teaching experience in public schools, followed by those with 4 to 6 years and 1 to 3 years of experience, each comprising 16.67%. Only 3.33% had 7 to 9 years of teaching experience. The dominance of highly experienced teachers suggests a strong foundation of practical expertise within the school, which may positively influence classroom management practices. This supports the findings of Martinez and Cruz (2021), who reported that teachers with over a decade of experience exhibit higher resilience and adaptability in managing behavioral challenges.

The types of disabilities encountered by teachers were also examined, revealing that the most commonly handled difficulties were learners' challenges in communication, reading, and writing numbers at 46.67%. This was followed by emotional and behavioral disorders at 22.22%, ADHD at 11.11%, specific disabilities at 8.89%, autism at 6.67%, and intellectual disabilities at 4.44%. These findings indicate that teachers are exposed to a wide spectrum of learner needs, requiring comprehensive and flexible behavioral management strategies. The results highlight the necessity for targeted training programs that address both academic and behavioral dimensions of inclusive education. This is consistent with Santos et al. (2022), who emphasized the need for specialized knowledge in managing diverse learner difficulties.

With regard to professional development, 60% of teachers attended trainings and seminars at the division level, 30% at the school level, and 10% at the district level. This suggests that teachers have access to various professional development opportunities that enhance their competencies in handling diverse learners. The findings underscore the importance of continuous training across multiple levels to strengthen teachers' skills in behavioral and classroom management. De Guzman and Bautista (2021) highlighted that participation in relevant trainings significantly improves teachers' ability to manage diverse learners effectively.

The analysis of behavioral problems encountered among diverse learners revealed that inattention or lack of focus was the most frequently reported issue at 13.92%. This was followed by disrupting others during class at 11.34%, impulsiveness at 9.79%, tantrums or emotional outbursts at 9.27%, and not participating in class activities at 8.76%. Other concerns included absenteeism or tardiness at 7.22%, aggressive behavior at 6.70%, hyperactivity at 6.19%, defiance or refusal to follow instructions and low self-esteem both at 5.15%, overdependence on the teacher at 4.12%, bullying or teasing at 3.61%, lying or dishonesty at 2.06%, excessive shyness or withdrawal at 1.03%, and stealing at 0.56%. These results indicate that attention-related and disruptive behaviors are the most prevalent challenges in inclusive classrooms. The findings suggest that intervention programs should prioritize improving attention, self-regulation, and emotional control. This is supported by Cruz and Garcia (2023), who identified attention difficulties as a major barrier to learning in inclusive settings, and by Reyes and Luna (2021), who emphasized the importance of integrating emotional regulation strategies in teacher training.

The perceived level of behavior and classroom management practices demonstrated that teachers frequently employed positive and proactive strategies. The highest mean scores were observed in giving feedback on improper conduct with $M = 4.57$ and $SD = 0.57$, encouraging socially responsible behavior with $M = 4.40$ and $SD = 0.67$, using physical

restraint when absolutely necessary with $M = 4.40$ and $SD = 0.67$, encouraging good behaviors with $M = 4.27$ and $SD = 0.52$, singling out a child or group for misbehavior with $M = 4.27$ and $SD = 0.74$, providing time out for aggression with $M = 4.23$ and $SD = 0.73$, and giving a loud verbal reprimand with $M = 4.23$ and $SD = 0.77$. These values fall within the “Often” to “Always” range, indicating consistent application of structured and direct management strategies. Conversely, the least utilized strategies included reporting inappropriate behavior to parents with $M = 2.03$ and $SD = 1.28$ and ignoring minor misbehavior with $M = 2.18$ and $SD = 1.31$, both categorized as “Rarely,” while threatening expulsion with $M = 2.62$ and $SD = 1.13$ and sending a child to the principal’s office with $M = 2.70$ and $SD = 1.49$ were used only “Sometimes.” These findings suggest a preference for immediate, classroom based interventions over punitive approaches. This aligns with Jayme and Tantiado (2025), who found that positive and supportive classroom management strategies contribute to improved learner behavior.

The test of significance examining the relationship between the profile of respondents and the level of behavior and classroom management practices revealed that only years of teaching experience showed a statistically significant relationship, with $f = 3.41$ and $p = 0.025$, which is below the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for this variable. In contrast, age with $f = 1.88$ and $p = 0.412$, highest educational attainment with $f = 1.74$ and $p = 0.243$, experience handling students with disabilities with $f = 1.11$ and $p = 0.279$, and trainings attended with $\rho = -0.19$ and $p = 0.317$ all showed no significant relationship, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis for these variables. These findings indicate that practical teaching experience is a critical factor in shaping effective classroom management practices, whereas formal qualifications and training exposure alone do not significantly influence these practices. This is consistent with Smith and Johnson (2021) and Brown et al. (2023), who emphasized that experiential learning plays a more significant role than theoretical knowledge in developing classroom management competencies.

The relationship between behavioral problems encountered among diverse learners and the level of behavior and classroom management practices was also examined. The results indicated that none of the behavioral problems showed a statistically significant relationship with management practices, as all p values were greater than 0.05. The intercept was statistically significant with $p < 0.001$, indicating the baseline level of management practices, but individual behavioral variables such as inattention, hyperactivity, defiance, and bullying did not yield significant coefficients. This led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis, suggesting that variations in classroom management practices are not determined by specific behavioral problems encountered. These findings imply that teachers employ generalized and adaptable strategies that can be applied across different behavioral challenges rather than tailoring approaches to specific issues. This is supported by Carter and Green (2021) and Nolan et al. (2023), who argued that flexible and comprehensive behavior management strategies are more effective in inclusive education settings.

In summary, the findings of the study demonstrate that the respondents are predominantly experienced, professionally developing teachers who handle a wide range of learner difficulties in inclusive classrooms. The most common behavioral problems identified were related to attention and disruptive behaviors, while teachers predominantly employed positive and proactive classroom management strategies. The analysis further revealed that years of teaching experience significantly influence management practices, whereas other demographic factors and specific behavioral problems do not. These results contribute to the understanding of effective behavioral management in inclusive education by highlighting the importance of experiential learning and adaptable strategies. The findings provide a strong empirical basis for the development of intervention plans aimed at enhancing classroom

management practices and support the advancement of inclusive education practices, thereby setting the stage for the subsequent presentation of conclusions and recommendations.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that the teachers generally applied behavior and classroom management strategies often, with practices like encouraging good conduct being always implemented. Statistical analysis showed that only years of teaching experience significantly influenced the level of behavior and classroom management. Other factors such as age, educational attainment, types of disabilities handled, and trainings attended showed no significant relationship to management practices or to specific behavior problems. Thus, schools may strengthen peer-mentoring or coaching programs so that the extensive experience of veteran teachers can guide and support those with fewer years in the profession. Professional development efforts may focus on refining broad, consistent management strategies while introducing specialized approaches for learners with specific behavioral or learning challenges.

In light of the findings and conclusion of this study, the primary recommendation is the immediate adoption and implementation of the proposed Intervention Plan detailed in Chapter This plan is specifically designed to address the identified gaps and strengthen the behavioral management ecosystem at Tipolo Elementary School.

It is highly recommended that the School Administrators endorse and provide the necessary support and resources for the execution of this plan. The Teachers are encouraged to actively participate in the outlined activities, such as targeted training sessions and the establishment of a mentoring system, to enhance their skills and promote consistent application of effective management strategies. Furthermore, the Department of Education division office may consider this intervention plan as a potential model for improving inclusive education practices in other schools within the district, thereby extending the study's impact beyond the immediate research environment.

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