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Teacher self-efficacy and attitudes towards differentiated instruction in inclusive educational settings: A study of perceptions and practices in Toledo National Vocational School

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the relationship between the level of perceived self-efficacy and attitude towards inclusive education to their differentiated instruction practices of the 60 in-service secondary teachers of Toledo National Vocational School. Quantitative descriptive research design was employed. Survey questionnaire was administered to the participants which include TEIP adopted from Park et al. (2016) that measured their Perceived Self-Efficacy, AIS-ITICS Scales adopted from Pivarc (2024) that measured their Attitudes towards Inclusive Education, and DI-Quest adopted from Coubergs et al. (2017) that measured their Differentiated Instruction Practices. Descriptive statistics showed that the participants had very high levels of perceived self-efficacy (M=5.164, SD=0.502), very high levels of attitude towards inclusive education (M=5.247, SD=0.597), and high levels of differentiated instruction practices (M=4.525, SD=0.298). Pearson r correlation reports a statistically significant moderately positive correlation between perceived self-efficacy ($r=0.446$, $p<.05$) and attitude ($r=0.390$, $p<.05$) with differentiated instruction practices. This study concludes that as the teachers' perceived self-efficacy and attitude towards inclusive education increases, this increase also tends to be reflected in their differentiated instruction practices. A professional development plan was developed as an output of this research.

Keywords: Special Education, perceived self-efficacy, attitude towards inclusive education, perceived differentiated instruction practices, quantitative descriptive-correlational design, Cebu, Philippines.

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INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education (IE) is widely recognized as a fundamental approach for ensuring equitable, high-quality education for all learners, irrespective of their backgrounds, learning needs, or abilities (Ainscow, 2020; UNESCO, 1994). Shifting from the conventional perspective that IE only focuses on specialized intervention designed exclusively for students with disabilities, inclusion is now conceptualized as a foundational principle of equitable and

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responsive education systems (Kimhi & Bar Nir, 2025). With this, it extends beyond physical or curricular access by fostering social cohesion, promoting mutual respect and acceptance, thereby preparing learners for active and equitable participation in diverse societies (Pozas & Letzel-Alt, 2023). In i emphasizes the integration of students with varied learning needs into mainstream classrooms, dismantling systemic barriers to learning and fostering environments in which every learner can realize their full potential.

Inclusive education is now a central global policy priority, evolving from a specialized approach into a universal principle of equity. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) established it as a legal obligation, while the Incheon Declaration and Education 2030 Framework for Action (2015) reinforced inclusion and equity as core to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (UNESCO, 2015; United Nations, 2006). Together, these frameworks reflect a global consensus that inclusive education is fundamental to equitable and responsive education systems.

In the Philippine context, the legal foundation for inclusive education is articulated through Republic Act No. 10533, otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, and Republic Act No. 11650, or the Inclusive Education Act of 2022, both of which institutionalize and mandate inclusive educational practices. The Department of Education (DepEd) has also established significant policies and standards that align with the national frameworks for inclusive education. For example, DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019 requires a learner-centered, inclusive, and developmentally relevant curriculum not just for those with disabilities but for all Filipino learners (DepEd, 2019). Other issuances such as DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009 and DepEd Order No. 23 s. 2022 promotes "Inclusive Education for All" aim to equip stakeholders, particularly teachers, with the tools necessary to meet the diverse needs of learners (Espeño, Babiano, Bucoy, Busime, & De Borja, 2024; Cañoso, 2024). The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) also highlights the core responsibilities of teachers in inclusive education, particularly in Domain 3: Diversity of Learners (DepEd, 2017).

Teachers are central to the effectiveness of inclusive education and practices. Research shows that the sustainability of inclusive education hinges on teachers' preparedness, beliefs, and competencies, as change agents within classrooms and schools (Pozas, Letzel, & Schneider, 2020). In inclusive classrooms, teachers are responsible not only for delivering curriculum content but also ensuring that the needs of diverse learners are supported (Alnahdi, Lindner, & Schwab, 2022).

Teachers often adopt various learning approaches to adapt their practices to learners' needs. One such widely recognized approach is Differentiated Instruction (DI). In DI, teachers purposefully and proactively tailor content, processes, and assessments based on students' varied readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles (Gheyssens et al., 2022). Differentiated instruction is especially important in inclusive classrooms in mainstream education, as it provides a structured yet flexible framework to ensure learner engagement and support, reducing barriers to participation (Aurora, 2025; Lawrence-Brown, 2020). Studies across varied contexts support this assertion as their findings highlight the positive impact of DI on both academic and socio-emotional outcomes of learners (Pozas, Letzel, & Schneider, 2020; Pozas & Letzel-Alt, 2023; Woodcock, Sharma, Subban, & Hitches, 2022). In the Philippines, classroom-based investigations similarly affirm DI's effectiveness: Antonio (2024) reported that varied instructional strategies, including visual aids and collaborative activities, promoted active engagement and inclusivity in schools, while Ferrer and Naanep (2025) found significant improvements in elementary pupils' learning outcomes through DI practices.

While differentiated instruction (DI) is theoretically robust and empirically supported, its classroom implementation continues to face barriers such as time constraints, limited resources, inadequate assessment strategies, challenges in classroom management, and

insufficient training and professional development opportunities (Onyishi & Sefotho, 2020). Literature further underscores that teachers' DI practices are shaped not only by structural conditions but also by psychosocial factors, particularly their behavioral intentions (Kupers, de Boer, Bakker, de Jong, & Minnaert, 2024), self-efficacy in inclusive settings, and attitudes toward inclusion (Romano et al., 2024; Schwab, Sharma, & Hoffman, 2022).

Self-efficacy in inclusive education refers to teachers' confidence in their ability to organize and execute actions necessary for effective inclusive teaching (Sharma, Loreman, & Forlin, 2012). High levels of efficacy are consistently linked to greater motivation, persistence, and innovative instructional decisions (Cañoso, 2024; Woodcock, Sharma, Subban, & Hitches, 2022). Complementing this construct are teachers' attitudes toward inclusion, which reflect cognitive, affective, and behavioral dispositions toward embracing diversity and equity (Romano et al., 2024). These two factors are intertwined, jointly influencing teachers' intentions and practices in inclusive education (Ismailos et al., 2019; Miesera et al., 2018). Thus, understanding these psychosocial constructs provides critical insights into the factors enabling or hindering teachers' readiness and capacity to enact inclusive education, particularly in their differentiated instruction practice.

Although prior studies affirm the role of teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes in adopting inclusive instructional strategies such as differentiated instruction (DI), findings remain inconsistent across cultural and institutional contexts, indicating the influence of local norms, policies, and school conditions (Romano et al., 2024; Charitaki et al., 2022). Moreover, limited research has examined how these psychosocial constructs relate specifically to teachers' perceived DI practices, particularly within the Philippine context (Pozas et al., 2025; Mudhar et al., 2024). While local studies recognize DI's potential to enhance student engagement and learning, persistent gaps in teacher preparedness and resources remain (Antonio, 2024). These limitations highlight the need for context-specific research investigating how teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes shape readiness to implement DI within the framework of Philippine education laws and DepEd mandates.

It is in this context that this study sought to investigate the interrelations among DepEd in-service teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes towards IE, DI practice. Doing so can deepen our understanding of what supports or hinders effective inclusive teaching in context of DepEd and the public school system and provide valuable insights for professional development, curriculum design, and policy-making. A deeper understanding of how variations in teachers' behavioral intentions influence their implementation of inclusive education in general and differentiated instruction in particular can clarify why some teachers effectively address diverse student needs, while others still struggle to do well in this aspect.

By examining these relationships in the Philippine context, this study aimed to generate empirical evidence that can guide the development of a contextually grounded professional development plan aimed at strengthening teachers' inclusive competencies. Ultimately, the study contributes to improving inclusive classroom practices, ensuring that DepEd's vision of equitable and learner-centered education is translated into meaningful classroom realities.

This study is anchored on Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), and relevant Department of Education (DepEd) policies and mandates (see Figure 1). Collectively, these frameworks explain how teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes toward inclusive education influence their differentiated instruction practices in inclusive classroom settings and provide the foundation for developing an action plan based on empirical findings.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura (1986), fundamentally asserts that the multi-directional interactions and dynamic

interplay among personal factors, behaviors, and environmental contexts influence human learning and behavior (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2015). An and Meaney (2015), referred to this interactive process as "triadic reciprocality" (p. 144). In the context of inclusive education, teachers' intentions, actions, persistence, and instructional decisions (behaviors) are shaped not just by social and organizational context (environment) but also by their personal beliefs and attitudes (personal factors) (Sabinorio, Presno, Mamac, & Fernandez, 2025).

Personal factors (e.g. self-efficacy in inclusive education, attitude towards inclusion) interact continuously with environmental factors (such as legal mandates and issuances, standards, school culture) and teachers' own behaviors (actual use of differentiated instruction), creating the triadic reciprocality, the feedback loop that in turn supports skill acquisition and strengthen positive attitudes. Enhancing teachers' self-efficacy, is associated with the development of positive attitudes toward inclusion (Savolainen, Malinen, & Schwab, 2020) and greater willingness to implement inclusive practices (Pozas & Letzel-Alt, 2025). While environmental factors may be governed by policies and standards, teachers still have the freedom and flexibility in interpreting and responding to these conditions (An & Meaney, 2015). Among the personal factors, self-efficacy is a key variable influencing behavior (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2015) and practice in inclusive education (Cañoso, 2024).

Self-efficacy as a central determinant of behavior (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2015) and practice in inclusive education (Cañoso, 2024). It is the individuals' belief in their ability to execute behaviors and specific actions necessary to produce desired outcomes (Bandura, 1997; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2015). Applied to teachers, self-efficacy refers to their own belief in their own capabilities in their instructional decisions and classroom management to facilitate positive learning outcomes (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teachers with higher self-efficacy are more likely to persist in implementing inclusive strategies, experiment with differentiated instruction, and respond positively to learner diversity.

Extant literature affirms that self-efficacy is a significant predictor of inclusive teaching practices. For example, Krainer et al. (2024) reported that teachers with high sense of self-efficacy and positive attitudes towards inclusion exhibited greater confidence in implementing differentiated instruction (DI) and were more likely to adopt inclusive practices, even with resource constraints. Similarly, Mudhar, Ertesvåg, and Pakarinen (2024) identified distinct teacher profiles showing that high self-efficacy and positive attitudes co-occur and reinforce each other, leading to more consistent and innovative inclusive practices.

In the Philippine setting, Cañoso (2025) explored the relationship between teacher motivation, self-efficacy, and competence in inclusive classrooms. The findings indicated that teachers with higher self-efficacy demonstrated greater instructional adaptability and confidence in managing diverse learners. Similarly, Dalan and Matsuka (2017) found that Filipino teachers' sense of efficacy in inclusion classes was influenced by their professional preparation and emotional support, aligning with SCT's emphasis on environmental and social influences. Sabinorio et al. (2024) further supported these results when they applied SCT to understand the behavior of special education teachers in the Philippines. These studies highlight how self-efficacy beliefs, shaped by both personal experiences and institutional support, influenced teachers' willingness to innovate and persist in inclusive settings.

SCT also supports the reciprocal relationship between self-efficacy and attitudes. This construct reflects cognitive, affective, and behavioral dispositions towards embracing diversity, valuing equity, and committing to inclusive ideals (Romano et al., 2024). These two factors are intertwined and are factors of teachers' intention and practice in inclusive education (Ismailos, Gallagher, Bennett, & Li, 2019; Miesera, DeVries, Jungjohann, Gedhardt, & Markus, 2018). Teachers who hold positive attitudes toward inclusive education are more likely to report higher self-efficacy, and those with strong efficacy beliefs tend to develop and sustain more

inclusive attitudes (Balias & Fouka, 2023). This cyclical interaction reinforces inclusive practices and contributes to the sustained implementation of DI.

Theory of Planned Behavior. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Azjen (1985) also provides a strong theoretical anchor for understanding how teachers' self-efficacy and attitude towards inclusion influence their practice particularly in inclusive education and differentiated instruction. TPB connects behavior to behavioral intentions and posits that the former can be rationally explained as stemming from the latter. The three factors that influence behavioral intentions are a person's attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. Attitudes can be conceptually distinguished into cognitive attitudes and affective attitudes (e.g. feelings of competence and beliefs). Subjective norms describe an individual's perception of how others view the behavior. Perceived behavioral control, which closely aligns with the construct of self-efficacy, refers to the extent to which an individual believes they possess the capability and resources necessary to perform the behavior effectively (Kupers, de Boer, Bakker, de Jong, & Minnaert, 2024).

In the context of this research, teachers' behavioral intentions which refer to intentions to implement differentiated instruction, are the immediate antecedents of teachers' inclusive practices. Attitudes toward inclusion play a critical role in shaping their willingness to implement differentiated instruction strategies (Sharma, Loreman, & Forlin, 2012). Subjective norms, such as institutional policies and mandates and peer influences, also contribute to shaping these intentions (Dignath et al., 2022). Most notably, perceived behavioral control, which closely aligns with the construct of self-efficacy, determines the extent to which teachers feel capable of executing inclusive practices effectively (Pozas, Jordan, & Letzel-Alt, 2025; Woodcock, Sharma, Subban, & Hitches, 2022).

Literature that support SCT also support the predictive power of TPB in educational settings, particularly when examining the interplay between teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy beliefs and their intentions and actual implementation of differentiated instruction in inclusive classrooms. This theoretical grounding not only supports the selection of key variables but also provides a structured lens through which to interpret behavioral outcomes in educational practice.

Deped Order No. 21, s. 2019. The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines has institutionalized inclusive education and differentiated instruction through key policy instruments that guide curriculum implementation and teacher professional standards. DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019, titled Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program, affirms the government's commitment to providing equitable, learner-centered education that responds to the diverse realities of Filipino learners, schools, and communities. It emphasizes the need for flexible and responsive teaching strategies, including differentiated instruction, to meet individual learning needs. Annex 5 of the order outlines the Inclusive Education Policy Framework, which recognizes learner diversity in terms of ability, socioeconomic background, culture, and language, and calls for teacher capacity-building to implement inclusive pedagogies effectively.

DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017. This policy entitled the National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), embeds inclusive education and differentiated instruction across multiple domains and indicators. Specifically, Domain 3 (Diversity of Learners) requires teachers to demonstrate understanding of learners' varied characteristics and to apply differentiated, developmentally appropriate learning experiences. Indicator 3.1.2 explicitly mandates the use of differentiated instruction to address learners' gender, needs, strengths, interests, and experiences. Domain 4 (Curriculum and Planning) promotes the design of responsive and inclusive lesson plans. Together, these

policies establish a coherent framework that not only promotes inclusive education but also operationalizes it through curriculum design and teacher accountability, thereby reinforcing the importance of teacher attitudes and self-efficacy in implementing differentiated instruction.

In summary, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) serves as the framework for this study in understanding how teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and attitudes influence their use of differentiated instruction in inclusive education. Teachers' self-efficacy plays a central role in fostering positive attitudes toward inclusion and motivating the implementation of inclusive strategies like differentiated instruction. Higher self-efficacy is linked to greater instructional adaptability and confidence in managing diverse learners, with institutional support further shaping these beliefs. Complementing SCT, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) underscores how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived self-efficacy determine teachers' intentions to adopt inclusive practices. Philippine education policies reinforce these theoretical insights by mandating differentiated instruction and inclusive education within professional standards and curriculum guidelines, emphasizing the critical role of teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy in delivering equitable, learner-centered inclusive education.

Statement of the problem

The researchers assessed the in-service teachers' perceived self-efficacy and attitudes in inclusive education and investigated the relationship of these factors with teachers' differentiated instruction practices at Toledo National Vocational School in the school year 2025-2026 as a basis for a professional development plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of gender, age range, highest educational attainment, years of service, and number of hours of relevant trainings and seminars attended?
2. What is the in-service teachers' level of perceived self-efficacy in inclusive education?
3. What is the in-service teachers' level of attitude towards inclusion?
4. What is the in-service teachers' level of perceived differentiated instruction practices?
5. Is there a significant relationship between perceived self-efficacy and perceived differentiated instruction practices of in-service teachers?
6. Is there a significant relationship between attitude towards inclusion and perceived differentiated instruction practices of in-service teachers?
7. Based on the findings, what professional development plan can be developed?

METHODOLOGY

This section presents a comprehensive and systematic account of the research design, data collection procedures, analytical methods, and ethical considerations employed to address the objectives of the study. It outlines the selection criteria, instruments, and statistical techniques utilized to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings, thereby providing a clear and replicable framework for conducting the research and enabling critical evaluation by other scholars.

The study employed a quantitative descriptive correlational research design to examine the relationships between teachers' perceived self-efficacy and attitudes toward inclusion and their perceived level of differentiated instruction practices. This design was selected due to its suitability in systematically describing existing conditions while simultaneously determining the strength and direction of associations among variables. It facilitated the observation of naturally occurring relationships within authentic classroom contexts, allowing for an in-depth exploration of how teachers' psychological constructs and attitudes interact with their

instructional practices in inclusive education settings. Through this approach, meaningful patterns were identified that may inform professional development initiatives and policy formulation.

The methodological framework of the study followed an input process output model. The input component included the demographic characteristics of the participants such as age and gender, highest educational attainment, years in service, and number of hours of relevant trainings and seminars attended within the past five years. It also incorporated the independent variables consisting of teachers' perceived self-efficacy and attitudes toward inclusion, as well as the dependent variable which was the level of perceived differentiated instruction practices. The process component involved the administration of informed consent and survey questionnaires, followed by data consolidation, presentation, and analysis using statistical software. The output of the study was the development of a professional development plan in the form of a School based Learning Action Cell plan with an activity design grounded on the findings of the research.

The study was conducted in a public secondary school located in an urban area, specifically at Toledo National Vocational School situated in Barangay Ilihan, a semi urban district within Toledo City on the western coast of Cebu Province. At the time of the study, the school had 1 principal, 1 assistant principal, 2 department heads, 75 licensed teachers, and 6 non-teaching personnel. It was located near the Naga Toledo Road, a major transportation route connecting Toledo City to nearby municipalities and urban centers. The surrounding terrain was moderately elevated and accessible, consisting of a combination of residential and institutional zones. This geographic context supported the school's function in delivering both vocational and academic education to learners from urban and rural barangays.

The respondents of the study were in service secondary public school teachers from Toledo National Vocational School. The total population consisted of 75 teachers. Slovin's formula was applied to determine the target sample size, where N represented the population, n the sample size, and e the margin of error set at 5%, resulting in a target sample of 63 respondents. Simple random sampling was then utilized to select participants, ensuring representation across diverse teaching experiences and backgrounds. However, all 75 teachers participated in the study, thereby exceeding the target sample and representing 84.00% relative to the intended sample size. This full participation enabled comprehensive data collection and provided a holistic understanding of teachers' perceptions, self-efficacy, and instructional practices in inclusive education contexts.

The research instrument consisted of five parts. The first part included the informed consent form, where participants indicated their voluntary agreement to participate by marking the appropriate option, particularly for those who received the instrument digitally. The second part gathered demographic information to describe the respondents' profiles. Parts three to five comprised structured questionnaires adopted from established sources. The third part utilized the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices instrument developed by Park, Dimitrov, Das, and Gichuru in 2016. This instrument measured perceived self-efficacy across three dimensions, namely efficacy to use inclusive instruction for items 1 to 6, efficacy in collaboration for items 7 to 12, and efficacy in managing behavior for items 13 to 18. It consisted of 18 items and demonstrated high internal consistency reliability with Cronbach $\alpha = 0.977$. The validity indices indicated acceptable model fit with $X2 = 260.58$, $df = 132$, $CFI = 0.994$, $TLI = 0.993$, $WRMR = 0.886$, and $RMSEA = 0.085$ with a 90% confidence interval. No reverse scoring was applied in this instrument.

The fourth part employed the AIS ITICS Scales adapted from Pivarc in 2024. The Attitudes to Inclusion Scale consisted of eight items with two dimensions, beliefs about

inclusion for items 1 to 4 and feelings about inclusion for items 5 to 8. The Intention to Teach in Inclusive Classroom Scale contained seven items corresponding to items 9 to 15 without subdimensions. The instrument demonstrated adequate validity based on scalar invariance model indices. For AIS, X2 = 154.28, df = 46, CFI = 0.983, RMSEA = 0.041, and SRMR = 0.023. For ITICS, X2 = 148.728, df = 38, CFI = 0.944, RMSEA = 0.045, and SRMR = 0.040. Although initially stated that there was no reverse scoring, items 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 were reverse scored. Mean scores were computed to derive both dimensional and global scores, where higher mean values indicated higher levels of the construct being measured.

The fifth part utilized the Differentiated Instruction Questionnaire adapted from Coubergs, Struyven, Vanthournout, and Engels in 2017. This instrument measured teachers' perceived differentiated instruction practices through 31 items distributed across five dimensions, namely teacher's mindset for items 1 to 5, ethical compass for items 6 to 11, flexible grouping for items 12 to 19, output equals input referring to assessment for learning and feedback practices for items 20 to 23, and differentiated instruction referring to adaptation to learners' differences for items 24 to 31. The instrument demonstrated adequate validity with goodness of fit indices X2 = 11023.574, df = 465, CFI = 0.909, TLI = 0.899, and RMSEA = 0.043 at a 90% confidence interval.

Data collection was conducted in three stages. In the preliminary stage, approval of the research proposal was secured, followed by the distribution of permission letters, informed consent forms, survey instruments, and interview guides to relevant authorities including the college dean, research adviser, school heads, and the Schools Division Superintendent. Participants were invited to take part in the study, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection, ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality. Clear instructions were provided to guide respondents in completing the questionnaire. During the data gathering stage, the instrument was administered either in printed or electronic format depending on accessibility and participant preference. Data collection lasted three to four weeks to allow sufficient time for completion. Completed questionnaires were reviewed for completeness and consistency prior to encoding. In the post data gathering stage, responses were organized, cleaned, and screened for accuracy and completeness, with invalid or incomplete responses excluded. The validated data were encoded and tabulated using SPSS version 20, facilitating statistical analysis. The results were then interpreted in alignment with the research objectives and theoretical framework, and all hard copies were shredded while electronic responses were deleted to ensure data security.

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study. The research adhered to institutional ethical standards and complied with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 or Republic Act No. 10173. Ethical clearance was obtained from the institution's Ethics Review Committee prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent, which detailed the purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, and the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. The study declared no conflict of interest and received no external funding that could influence the findings. Participants' privacy and confidentiality were protected through anonymization and secure data storage. The respondents, who were in-service public school teachers, were not considered a vulnerable population, and participation posed minimal to no risk. Recruitment followed equitable and inclusive procedures, initially applying clustered random sampling to determine the study locale and subsequently simple random sampling to select participants. The study ensured that there were no physical, psychological, or legal risks associated with participation, and participants' contributions were recognized as valuable in advancing knowledge on inclusive education practices.

The scoring procedure for parts three to five of the instrument utilized a six-point Likert scale with numerical ratings of 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for somewhat disagree, 4 for somewhat agree, 5 for agree, and 6 for strongly agree. This approach minimized the

tendency of respondents to select a neutral midpoint, thereby reducing response bias. Mean scores were computed and interpreted using a six-level descriptive scale. Mean values from 5.16 to 6.00 indicated a very high level and corresponded to strongly agree. Scores ranging from 4.33 to 5.15 indicated a high level and corresponded to agree. Values between 3.50 and 4.32 represented a moderately high level and corresponded to agree. Mean scores from 2.67 to 3.49 indicated a moderately low level and corresponded to somewhat disagree. Scores ranging from 1.84 to 2.66 indicated a low level and corresponded to disagree, while values from 1.00 to 1.83 represented a very low level and corresponded to strongly disagree. These interpretations served as the basis for the verbal descriptions in the analysis of results.

The statistical treatment of data included frequency distribution and percentage to describe respondents' demographic characteristics such as gender, age, highest educational attainment, years of service, and number of relevant trainings. Frequency represented the number of respondents in each category, while percentage indicated their proportion relative to the total sample. Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to determine the central tendency and variability of responses related to perceived self-efficacy, attitudes toward inclusion, and differentiated instruction practices. Pearson r correlation was applied to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable, with statistical significance set at $p < .05$.

For clarity and consistency in interpretation, key terms were operationally defined within the context of the study. Attitude to inclusion referred to teachers' beliefs and feelings toward inclusive education as measured by the AIS ITICS Scales. Differentiated instruction referred to the extent to which teachers implemented instructional strategies that addressed learner diversity as measured by the DI Quest. Efficacy in collaboration, efficacy in managing behavior, and efficacy in using inclusive instruction described specific dimensions of perceived self-efficacy as measured by the TEIP. Ethical compass, flexible grouping, output equals input, and teacher's mindset represented dimensions of differentiated instruction practices derived from the DI Quest. Inclusive education was defined as an approach that ensures all learners are supported within mainstream classrooms. In service teachers referred to the respondents actively teaching during the school year 2025 to 2026. Intention to teach in inclusive classroom referred to teachers' readiness to implement inclusive practices as measured by the ITICS. Perceived attitudes toward inclusion, perceived differentiated instruction practices, and perceived self-efficacy in inclusive education referred to measurable constructs assessed through their respective instruments. Special needs education referred to tailored instructional programs for learners with disabilities, while professional development plan referred to a structured program designed to enhance teachers' instructional competencies based on the findings of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study involved 60 in-service elementary and secondary public school teachers from Toledo National Vocational School, drawn from a population of 75 teachers using Slovin's formula and simple random sampling. The target sample was 63, and 60 survey questionnaires were retrieved, yielding a return rate of 95.2%, which provided a statistically adequate basis for making inferences from the collected data. Using a descriptive correlational research approach, the study examined the respondents' perceived self-efficacy, attitudes toward inclusive education, and differentiated instruction practices through a survey questionnaire. Percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to describe the data, while Pearson r was used to determine the correlations among the studied variables. The discussion is grounded

entirely in the gathered data and interpreted in direct relation to the study objectives, with relevant literature used to contextualize the patterns, implications, and relationships revealed by the findings.

The demographic profile of the respondents provides an important foundation for interpreting their perceived self-efficacy, attitudes toward inclusion, and differentiated instruction practices. In terms of gender, the respondents were predominantly female, with 40 teachers or 66.7%, while 20 teachers or 33.3% were male, for a total of 60 or 100.0%. This distribution reflects the broader pattern in the teaching profession, where women often constitute the majority of educators. The predominance of female respondents may influence perspectives on pedagogy, collaboration, and professional development, particularly because existing literature suggests that female teachers often demonstrate more positive attitudes toward inclusive education due to stronger relational and emotional orientations in teaching. Catalano et al. (2024) and Woodcock et al. (2022) similarly emphasize that empathy and relational responsiveness may support inclusive practices, although clear gender-based differences in differentiated instruction remain inconclusive because male teachers are often underrepresented in such studies. Thus, while the gender profile enriches understanding of the respondents' teaching context, it also suggests the need for future research that examines the differentiated instruction practices of male teachers more specifically.

With respect to age, the largest group of respondents consisted of teachers aged 46 years old and above, with 16 participants or 26.8%. This was followed by 14 participants or 23.3% who were 26-30 years old, 12 participants or 20.0% who were 31-35 years old, 8 participants or 13.3% who were 36-40 years old, another 8 participants or 13.3% who were 41-45 years old, and 2 participants or 3.3% who were 21-25 years old, for a total of 60 or 100.0%. The data indicate that the respondents represented a professionally stable group with both younger and more experienced teachers, although entry-level perspectives were limited because only 2 participants or 3.3% belonged to the 21-25 years old group. The combined number of respondents in the 21-25, 26-30, and 31-35 age groups was 28 participants, showing that a considerable portion of the sample still belonged to the younger or early-to-mid career segment of the profession. Omoro and Possi (2024) suggest that older and more experienced teachers often report stronger self-efficacy in inclusive practices because of accumulated successful classroom experiences, whereas teachers below 30 years old may demonstrate lower confidence depending on their training and exposure to diverse classrooms. Havik (2025) further notes that organizational support may outweigh age in shaping inclusive outcomes. Therefore, the age profile suggests that professional development should support both younger teachers who are still developing confidence and older teachers who may already possess experience that can be used for mentoring.

In terms of highest educational attainment, 45 teachers or 75.0% held bachelor's degrees, 0 or 0% completed a Diploma in Professional Education, 13 teachers or 21.7% held master's degrees, and 2 teachers or 3.3% held doctor's degrees, for a total of 60 or 100.0%. The result shows that most respondents met the standard entry qualification for teaching, while only 15 teachers or 25.0% combined had advanced graduate degrees. This suggests that the respondents were baseline-qualified but not predominantly postgraduate-trained. The absence of respondents with a Diploma in Professional Education indicates that all in-service teachers completed preparatory education degrees rather than non-education programs supplemented by professional education units. The dominance of bachelor's degree holders point to the need for institutional support for graduate studies and research-based pedagogical training, especially in inclusive education. Papasin et al. (2024) state that teachers with entry-level qualifications may report moderate self-efficacy when specialized training is limited, while those with master's or doctoral degrees tend to demonstrate greater confidence due to deeper theoretical and practical preparation. Alnahdi et al. (2022) and Kimhi and Bar Nir (2025)

likewise suggest that advanced academic preparation can promote positive attitudes, reduce resistance to inclusion, and strengthen differentiated strategies. Thus, teachers with advanced degrees may serve as models or peer mentors for colleagues whose preparation remains concentrated at the bachelor's level.

Regarding years of service, 38 respondents or 63.3% had 1-10 years of teaching experience, 12 respondents or 20.0% had 11-20 years of service, and 10 respondents or 16.7% had 20 years and above, for a total of 60 or 100.0%. The data indicate that the teaching workforce was largely composed of novice-to-mid-level teachers, while long-term veterans were underrepresented. This pattern suggests a workforce that may be adaptable to new strategies but still developing long-term expertise in inclusive and differentiated instruction. The smaller group with more than 20 years of experience may nevertheless provide institutional memory and mentoring capacity. Cañoso (2024) notes that novice educators with 1-10 years of experience often report lower self-efficacy in inclusive practices because of limited exposure to diverse classrooms, although they may show strong potential for growth through mastery experiences. Mid-level teachers with 11-20 years of experience may demonstrate moderate to high confidence, while veterans with more than 20 years may show the greatest resilience. Woodcock et al. (2025) similarly emphasize that early-career teachers may hold cautiously positive attitudes that can become more favorable through practical adaptation and mentorship. Therefore, the experience profile underscores the importance of peer coaching, mentoring, and professional development that scaffolds early-career growth.

In terms of training received, 1 respondent or 1.7% reported none, 5 respondents or 8.3% reported 1 year: 1-8 hrs, 1 respondent or 1.7% reported 1 year: 25-32 hrs, 12 respondents or 20.0% reported 1 year: 33-40 hrs, 5 respondents or 8.3% reported 2 years: 41-48 hrs, 1 respondent or 1.7% reported 2 years: 57-64 hrs, 1 respondent or 1.7% reported 2 years: 65-72 hrs, 3 respondents or 5.0% reported 2 years: 73-80 hrs, 1 respondent or 1.7% reported 3 years: 81-88 hrs, 1 respondent or 1.7% reported 4 years: 145-152 hrs, 5 respondents or 8.3% reported 5 years: 161-168 hrs, 1 respondent or 1.7% reported 5 years: 169-176 hrs, 8 respondents or 13.3% reported 5 years: 193-200 hrs, and 15 respondents or 24.9% reported more than 200 hrs, for a total of 60 or 100.0%. The data further indicate that 18 participants had training in the past year, 10 participants received training in the last two years, 1 participant received training in the past three years, 1 participant had training in the last four years, and 14 participants received training with a maximum of 200 hours in the last five years. The finding that 15 participants or 24.9% had accumulated more than 200 hours of relevant in-service training suggests that a substantial group may be well-equipped to handle inclusive classrooms, while the presence of 1 participant or 1.7% with no training suggests a need for targeted support. The source discussion also refers to a minority without training as 9.5%, and this reported value is retained as stated. Kimhi and Bar Nir (2025) and Woodcock et al. (2022) indicate that teachers with more than 200 hours of training tend to demonstrate higher self-efficacy and more positive attitudes toward inclusive practices because sustained professional development provides both simulated and real-world mastery experiences. Therefore, continuous professional development is essential for strengthening untrained and mid-level participants, refreshing highly trained teachers, and preventing the gradual erosion of inclusive attitudes over time.

The respondents' perceived self-efficacy was examined using the framework of Park et al. (2016), which measures teachers' confidence in implementing inclusive education through efficacy to use inclusive instruction, efficacy in collaboration, and efficacy in managing behavior. Across these dimensions, the respondents generally reported high to very high levels of confidence, with mean scores ranging from 5.106 to 5.229 and standard deviations below 1.0, indicating relatively consistent perceptions among the teachers. In the dimension of

efficacy to use inclusive instruction, the overall mean was 5.229 with SD=0.454, interpreted in the source as a high level and also discussed as a very high level of self-efficacy. The highest-rated item was the ability to provide an alternate explanation or example when students are confused, with M=5.517 and SD=0.567, interpreted as very high level. Other items also received strong ratings, including the use of varied assessment strategies such as portfolio assessment, modified tests, and performance-based assessment, with M=5.267 and SD=0.516; confidence in designing learning tasks so that the individual needs of students with disabilities are accommodated, with M=5.200 and SD=0.605; ability to accurately gauge student comprehension, with M=5.233 and SD=0.593; and ability to provide appropriate challenges for very capable students, with M=5.200 and SD=0.659, all interpreted as very high level. The lowest-rated item was confidence in adapting school-wide or state-wide assessment so that students with all disabilities can be assessed, with M=4.967 and SD=0.663, interpreted as high level. These results suggest that teachers are highly confident in flexible explanation, assessment variety, and adapting learning tasks, but comparatively less confident in specialized assessment adaptation. This pattern supports Holmquist et al. (2022), who note that educators often excel in flexible re-teaching strategies that sustain engagement in heterogeneous classrooms. However, the lower rating for adapting school-wide or state-wide assessment indicates a need for training in individualized assessment design and inclusive assessment policies.

In the dimension of efficacy in collaboration, the overall mean was 5.106 with SD=0.589, interpreted as high level. The respondents reported high confidence in assisting families in helping their children do well in school, with M=5.150 and SD=0.659, and in working jointly with other professionals and staff such as aides and other teachers to teach students with disabilities in the classroom, with M=5.150 and SD=0.732. They also reported high confidence in getting parents involved in school activities of their children with disabilities, with M=5.050 and SD=0.699; making parents feel comfortable coming to school, with M=5.450 and SD=0.649; collaborating with other professionals such as itinerant teachers or speech pathologists in designing educational plans for students with disabilities, with M=4.983 and SD=0.748; and informing others who know little about laws and policies relating to the inclusion of students with disabilities, with M=4.850 and SD=0.799. The highest item was making parents feel comfortable coming to school, with M=5.450 and SD=0.649, while the lowest was informing others about laws and policies relating to inclusion, with M=4.850 and SD=0.799. These findings indicate that teachers feel prepared to collaborate with parents, colleagues, and professionals, reflecting proactive teamwork in inclusive classrooms. However, the comparatively lower confidence in policy-related communication reveals a specific vulnerability in legal and advocacy knowledge. Since Park et al. (2016) emphasize that collaboration is both central and challenging in inclusive education, these results suggest that teachers' relational strengths should be complemented by professional development on inclusion laws and policy frameworks.

In the dimension of efficacy in managing behavior, the overall mean was 5.156 with SD=0.592, interpreted as high level. The respondents rated their confidence in preventing disruptive behavior before it occurs at M=5.033 and SD=0.663, controlling disruptive behavior in the classroom at M=5.117 and SD=0.585, calming a disruptive or noisy student at M=5.217 and SD=0.691, getting children to follow classroom rules at M=5.350 and SD=0.755, dealing with physically aggressive students at M=5.117 and SD=0.691, and making expectations clear about student behavior at M=5.100 and SD=0.681. The highest-rated item was the ability to get children to follow classroom rules, with M=5.350 and SD=0.755, followed by calming a disruptive or noisy student, with M=5.217 and SD=0.691, both interpreted as very high level. The lowest-rated item was confidence in preventing disruptive behavior before it occurs, with M=5.033 and SD=0.663, although it remained at a high level. These findings suggest that

teachers perceive themselves as capable of sustaining classroom order and responding to disruptive behavior, but prevention remains a comparatively weaker area. This has practical significance because inclusive classrooms require both responsive and preventive behavior management. Training in aggression-focused simulations, structured de-escalation protocols, and proactive behavior support may help strengthen this dimension further.

The respondents' attitudes toward inclusive education were examined using the framework of Pivarc (2024), focusing on attitude to inclusion and intention to teach in an inclusive classroom. In the dimension of attitude to inclusion, the overall mean was 5.192 with SD=0.704, interpreted as very high level. The respondents rated the belief that all students regardless of ability should be taught in regular classrooms at M=5.067 and SD=1.118, interpreted as high level; the belief that inclusion is socially beneficial to all students at M=5.283 and SD=0.904, interpreted as very high level; the belief that inclusion benefits all students academically at M=5.083 and SD=0.979, interpreted as high level; the belief that all students can learn in inclusive classrooms if teachers are willing to adapt the curriculum at M=5.250 and SD=0.856, interpreted as very high level; being pleased to teach students with lower academic ability alongside other students at M=5.200 and SD=5.183, interpreted as very high level; being excited to teach students with a range of abilities at M=5.183 and SD=0.725, interpreted as very high level; being pleased that including students with a range of abilities will make the teacher better at M=5.267 and SD=0.821, interpreted as very high level; and being happy to have students who need assistance with daily activities included in classrooms at M=5.200 and SD=0.879, interpreted as very high level. The highest rating was for the belief that inclusion is beneficial to all students socially, with M=5.283 and SD=0.904, while the lowest was the belief that all students regardless of ability should be taught in regular classrooms, with M=5.067 and SD=1.118. These findings suggest that teachers strongly affirm the social and professional value of inclusion, but they may still hold nuanced reservations about the placement of all learners in regular classrooms, especially when severe needs, resource limitations, or implementation demands are considered.

In the dimension of intention to teach in an inclusive classroom, the overall mean was 5.310 with SD=0.545, interpreted as very high level. The respondents rated their intention to change the curriculum to meet the learning needs of a student with learning difficulty at M=5.033 and SD=0.920, interpreted as high level; consult with parents of a struggling student at M=5.567 and SD=0.593, although the source discussion also reports this value as M=5.67 and SD=0.593; consult with colleagues to identify possible ways to assist a struggling student at M=5.467 and SD=0.596; undertake a professional development program to teach students with diverse learning needs well at M=5.417 and SD=0.591; consult with a student displaying challenging behaviours to find better ways to work with him or her at M=5.450 and SD=0.594; include students with severe disabilities in a range of social activities at M=4.833 and SD=1.137; and change assessment tasks to suit the learning profile of a struggling student at M=5.400 and SD=0.616. The highest indicator was consultation with parents, while the lowest was including students with severe disabilities in a range of social activities, although this item still reached a high level. The high mean and narrow SD suggest that the respondents not only endorsed inclusion in principle but also intended to act inclusively through parent consultation, peer collaboration, professional development, and assessment modification. Cañoso (2024) supports this pattern by emphasizing that such commitments strengthen mastery-oriented inclusive practices. However, the lower rating for integrating students with severe disabilities into social activities indicates a specific hesitation that may be addressed through structured professional development, peer networks, and practical strategies for severe disability inclusion.

The respondents' differentiated instruction practices were assessed using the DI-Quest instrument of Coubergs et al. (2017), which examines teacher's mindset, ethical compass, flexible grouping, output=input, and differentiated instruction. The results showed varying levels of differentiated instruction practices, with means ranging from 2.464 to 5.358 and with standard deviations indicating different levels of consistency across dimensions. In the teacher's mindset dimension, the overall mean was 4.257 with SD=0.466, interpreted in the table as moderately low level, although the source discussion interprets it as moderately high level of differentiated instruction practices. The respondents rated the statement that despite the learning potential of students, teachers cannot change their intellectual capacities at M=2.667 and SD=1.271, interpreted as low level. They rated the statement that the way a teacher teaches influences students' intellectual capacities at M=5.200 and SD=0.605, interpreted as very high level; classroom experiences of success can influence students' intellectual capacities at M=5.367 and SD=0.551, interpreted as very high level; a teacher's belief in the competences of a student can influence intellectual capacities at M=5.383 and SD=0.640, interpreted as very high level; and the statement that the way a teacher motivates students is not of influence for students' intellectual capacities at M=2.677 and SD=1.298, interpreted as moderately low level. The source discussion also identifies M=2.667 and SD=1.271 as the least rating for the statement on teacher motivation. These results indicate that respondents generally endorsed growth-oriented beliefs, particularly the role of teacher belief, classroom success, teaching methods, and motivation in shaping student development. This aligns with Dweck (2006), Tomlinson (2014), and Coubergs et al. (2017), who argue that growth mindset and teacher responsiveness support differentiated instruction. At the same time, the low ratings on fixed-mindset statements suggest that some teachers may still show traces of belief in limited intellectual change, which may weaken adaptive practice if not addressed through professional development.

In the ethical compass dimension, the overall mean was 2.464 with SD=0.991, interpreted in the table as low level, although the source discussion states that this can be interpreted as high level of differentiated instruction practices in this dimension. The respondents rated the statement that the curriculum does not provide any flexibility to cope with an individual student at M=2.567 and SD=1.155, interpreted as low level; the curriculum is overloaded on content and goals at M=2.000 and SD=1.025, interpreted as low level; the curriculum does not provide any room to foresee in differentiated instruction at M=2.450 and SD=1.254, interpreted as low level; governmental inspection on curriculum implementation limits professional freedom as a teacher at M=2.500 and SD=1.172, interpreted as low level; following the curriculum makes differentiated instruction impossible at M=2.600 and SD=1.167, interpreted as low level; and following the criteria of governmental inspection makes the teacher less qualitative at M=2.667 and SD=1.203, interpreted as low level. The highest mean in this dimension was M=2.667 and SD=1.203, while the lowest was M=2.000 and SD=1.025 for the statement that the curriculum is overloaded on content and goals. The generally low endorsement of these constraint-oriented statements may indicate that teachers did not strongly perceive the curriculum or governmental inspection as making differentiated instruction impossible. However, the relatively higher score for inspection-related concerns suggests that some teachers may still experience tension between professional autonomy and external accountability. Coubergs et al. (2017) frame ethics as the core philosophy of differentiated instruction, while Tomlinson (2014) and Loreman (2017) emphasize the need to balance curriculum expectations with responsiveness to learners. Therefore, reflective practices, student feedback loops, and autonomy-supportive policy implementation may help teachers strengthen the ethical foundation of differentiated instruction.

In the flexible grouping dimension, the overall mean was 5.344 with SD=0.430, interpreted as very high level. The respondents rated regularly changing between homogeneous

and heterogeneous groups at M=4.717 and SD=0.865, interpreted as high level; teaching students to help each other at M=5.650 and SD=0.515, interpreted as very high level; explicitly ensuring a good relationship with all students at M=5.650 and SD=0.547, interpreted as very high level; requiring students to work together during lessons to progress in the learning process at M=5.483 and SD=0.624, interpreted as very high level; ensuring that every student has a specific function in the classroom at M=5.450 and SD=0.594, interpreted as very high level; recognizing that working in heterogeneous groups gives students the opportunity to learn from each other at M=5.400 and SD=0.558, interpreted as very high level; ensuring that every student who needs extra guidance receives it at M=5.350 and SD=0.606, interpreted as very high level; and differentiating by switching between heterogeneous and homogeneous groups at M=5.050 and SD=0.622, interpreted as high level. The source discussion also reports that the least rating was changing between homogeneous and heterogeneous groups, with M=4.024 and SD=1.158. The results show that teachers strongly valued peer support, positive relationships, student roles, and collaborative learning, which are central to flexible grouping. Gillies (2016) supports the importance of interpersonal relations and peer-mediated learning in promoting motivation and skill transfer. However, the comparatively lower rating on changing groupings suggests that some teachers may still use grouping less dynamically than differentiated instruction requires. Tomlinson (2014), Coubergs et al. (2017), and Suprayogi et al. (2017) emphasize that flexible shifts between homogeneous and heterogeneous groups allow teachers to address readiness, interest, and learning profile without isolating learners.

In the output=input dimension, the overall mean was 5.358 with SD=0.535, interpreted as very high level. The respondents rated using assessment to gain insight into students' learning processes at M=5.367 and SD=0.581, interpreted as very high level; using assessment to determine how lessons can be adjusted to students' learning processes at M=5.417 and SD=0.619, interpreted as very high level; teaching students how to cope with feedback at M=5.317 and SD=0.624, interpreted as very high level; and giving students the opportunity to rework a task based on given feedback at M=5.333 and SD=0.601, interpreted as very high level. The highest item was using assessment to adjust lessons to the learning processes of students, with M=5.417 and SD=0.619, while the lowest was teaching students how to cope with feedback, with M=5.317 and SD=0.624, although it remained very high and had the highest variability within the domain. These findings indicate that teachers strongly practiced assessment-driven instructional adjustment, reflecting a formative assessment orientation in which student output informs teacher input. This aligns with Tomlinson (2014), Black and Wiliam (2018), Coubergs et al. (2017), and Hattie and Timperley (2007), who stress that feedback, rework opportunities, and diagnostic assessment are essential for responsive teaching. Nevertheless, the relatively lower rating for helping students cope with feedback suggests that feedback literacy and student support during assessment for learning remain areas for strengthening.

In the differentiated instruction dimension, the overall mean was 5.002 with SD=0.536, interpreted as high level. The respondents rated choosing learning content and teaching methods based on students at M=5.233 and SD=0.647, interpreted as very high level; adjusting assessment based on students or groups of students at M=5.417 and SD=0.591, interpreted as very high level; assigning different tasks with different levels of difficulty during lessons at M=5.133 and SD=0.724, interpreted as high level; giving every student the same assessment at M=4.750 and SD=1.035, interpreted as high level; allowing students to decide with the teacher which assignment they need to work on at M=4.650 and SD=0.880, interpreted as high level; selecting learning content, materials, and teaching methods based on knowledge of students at M=5.150 and SD=0.685, interpreted as high level; allowing students to choose

between learning content and teaching methods based on their learning profile at M=4.500 and SD=0.983, interpreted as moderately high level; and choosing learning content and teaching methods during lessons based on students' learning profiles at M=5.183 and SD=0.701, interpreted as very high level. The highest-rated item was adjusting assessment based on students, with M=5.417 and SD=0.591, while the lowest was allowing students to choose between learning content and teaching methods based on their learning profile, with M=4.500 and SD=0.983. The source discussion also states that the least-rated statement concerned students deciding with the teacher which assignments they need to work on, with M=4.500 and SD=0.983. These results show that teachers were confident in adjusting assessment, content, materials, and methods, but were less inclined to share decision-making power with learners. Tomlinson (2014), Coubergs et al. (2017), Suprayogi et al. (2017), and Patall et al. (2010) affirm that student voice, task choice, and guided autonomy can enhance motivation and achievement, particularly when combined with teacher-directed adaptation. Therefore, the findings suggest that while teachers demonstrate strong technical adaptation, differentiated instruction could become more transformative through greater student participation in instructional decisions.

The global results showed high to very high levels across the three studied constructs. For perceived self-efficacy, the table reports a Global Mean (N=42) of 5.163 with SD=0.502, interpreted as very high level, while the source narrative also reports the global mean as 5.164 with a standard deviation of 0.502 and interprets it as high level of perceived self-efficacy. This low variability suggests that respondents consistently perceived themselves as capable of implementing inclusive education. Park et al. (2016) explain that higher self-efficacy is associated with sustained inclusive teaching practices and improved student outcomes, which supports the interpretation that the respondents possessed efficacy-supportive dispositions for inclusive classrooms. For attitude towards inclusive education, the table reports a Global Mean (N=42) of 5.247 with SD=0.597, interpreted as very high level, while the source narrative also reports a global mean rating of 5.171 with SD=0.563, interpreted as very high level of attitude towards inclusion. This variable was also described as having the highest global mean rating among the three variables, with relatively low variability, suggesting that positive attitudes toward inclusion were widely shared among the participants. For differentiated instruction practices, the global mean was 4.525 with SD=0.298, interpreted as high level, and this construct recorded both the lowest mean and lowest SD among the three variables. These values suggest that teachers applied differentiated instruction strategies effectively, although the lower mean compared with self-efficacy and attitude may indicate that implementation was less developed than belief and intention.

The Pearson r correlation results were tested at a significance level of $p<.05$. The relationship between perceived self-efficacy and differentiated instruction practices yielded $r=0.446$, $p< .05$, interpreted as a moderate positive correlation. Because the result was statistically significant at $p<.05$, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This means that as the perceived self-efficacy of the participants increased, their differentiated instruction practices also increased. The relationship between attitude towards inclusion and differentiated instruction practices yielded $r=0.390$, $p< .05$, also interpreted as a moderate positive correlation. Since this result was likewise statistically significant at $p<.05$, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This indicates that more positive attitudes toward inclusion were associated with higher levels of differentiated instruction practices, although the strength of this relationship was slightly lower than the relationship between perceived self-efficacy and differentiated instruction. These results are consistent with Cañoso (2024), Woodcock et al. (2022), Coubergs et al. (2017), Sharma et al. (2013), and Savolainen et al. (2012), who found that teachers with stronger self-efficacy and more positive inclusive attitudes are more likely to implement differentiated

instruction. The findings suggest that self-efficacy may enable teachers to take instructional risks and adapt strategies, while positive attitudes toward inclusion may reduce resistance to learner diversity and support equitable classroom practices.

Overall, the findings show that the 60 in-service teachers generally possessed strong psychological and professional foundations for inclusive education and differentiated instruction. The respondents were predominantly female, varied in age and years of service, largely bachelor's degree holders, and diverse in training exposure, with 15 participants or 24.9% having more than 200 hrs of training and only 1 participant or 1.7% reporting no training. Their perceived self-efficacy was high to very high across inclusive instruction, collaboration, and behavior management, while their attitudes toward inclusive education were very high in both belief and intention. Their differentiated instruction practices were strongest in output=input and flexible grouping, but comparatively weaker in ethical compass and in areas involving learner autonomy and dynamic grouping. The statistically significant moderate positive correlations between perceived self-efficacy and differentiated instruction practices, $r=0.446$, $p< .05$, and between attitude towards inclusion and differentiated instruction practices, $r=0.390$, $p< .05$, confirm that teachers' confidence and inclusive attitudes are meaningfully associated with their differentiated instruction practices. These findings address the study objectives by demonstrating not only the levels of the studied constructs but also the relationships among them, thereby contributing evidence that professional development, mentoring, policy literacy, assessment adaptation, feedback support, flexible grouping, and student voice may strengthen inclusive differentiated instruction in the school context and provide a strong basis for the succeeding chapter.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between in service teachers' perceived self-efficacy, attitudes toward inclusive education, and their differentiated instruction practices within the context of Toledo National Vocational School. Drawing from a quantitative descriptive design involving 60 out of 63 target participants selected through simple random sampling, the study established that the respondents, who were predominantly female, generally within older age brackets, holders of bachelor's degrees, and with relatively limited years of service, nonetheless demonstrated substantial engagement in professional development activities over the past five years. These demographic characteristics offer an important contextual backdrop for interpreting the consistency and strength of the reported perceptions and practices.

Across all measured domains, the results revealed that teachers possessed very high levels of perceived self-efficacy in inclusive education, particularly in implementing inclusive instructional practices, while also maintaining high levels of confidence in collaboration with stakeholders and behavior management. The relatively low variability in responses indicates a shared and stable perception among participants regarding their professional capabilities in inclusive settings. Similarly, attitudes toward inclusive education were consistently very high, both in terms of general disposition toward inclusion and intention to teach in inclusive classrooms, reflecting a strong collective commitment to inclusive principles and practices.

In relation to differentiated instruction practices, the findings demonstrated that teachers were able to implement key strategies at high to very high levels, particularly in flexible grouping and the alignment of instructional input and output, suggesting a strong capacity for adaptive and responsive teaching. The overall level of differentiated instruction practices was high, supported by a moderately high level of teacher mindset, which indicates a

generally positive orientation toward differentiation that continues to develop. However, the ethical compass dimension emerged as comparatively low, highlighting a critical area where teachers may require further support in exercising professional judgment and ethical decision making within inclusive contexts. Despite this variation, the overall pattern of responses remained consistent, reinforcing the reliability of the findings.

The inferential analysis further strengthened these observations by revealing statistically significant moderate positive relationships between perceived self-efficacy and differentiated instruction practices, as well as between attitudes toward inclusive education and differentiated instruction practices. The slightly stronger association observed between perceived self-efficacy and differentiated instruction practices underscores the pivotal role of teacher confidence in translating inclusive beliefs into effective classroom implementation. These results confirm that both self-efficacy and attitudes are meaningful predictors of differentiated instruction practices, thereby supporting the acceptance of the alternative hypotheses and emphasizing their combined influence in fostering inclusive teaching environments.

Taken together, the findings indicate that the participants possess a solid foundation of readiness for inclusive education, characterized by strong confidence, positive attitudes, and effective instructional practices. However, the presence of variability in specific dimensions, particularly in ethical aspects of differentiation, suggests that this readiness must be further strengthened through targeted and sustained professional development. In this regard, it becomes evident that positive perceptions alone are insufficient unless they are continuously supported by structured opportunities for skill enhancement and reflective practice.

In light of these conclusions, the study underscores the necessity of implementing a comprehensive and systematic Professional Development Plan that is responsive to the identified needs of teachers. The proposed plan, designed to align with DepEd SLAC guidelines, PPST domains, and the PMES framework, emphasizes the strengthening of ethical decision making, professional autonomy, inclusive assessment practices, collaborative engagement, and behavior management competencies. It further recognizes the importance of translating teachers' positive attitudes toward inclusion into sustained and consistent classroom practices through reflective dialogues, mentoring programs, and collaborative learning structures.

Moreover, the recommendations highlight the critical role of institutional support in ensuring the success of such initiatives. School administrators are encouraged to provide the necessary resources, time allocation, and policy support to facilitate the effective implementation of the Professional Development Plan, while teachers are expected to actively participate in training sessions, workshops, and mentoring activities to enhance their competencies. The potential adoption of this plan by the Department of Education as a model for broader application also presents an opportunity for systemic improvement in inclusive education practices across schools.

Ultimately, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on inclusive education by demonstrating that teacher self-efficacy and attitudes are integral to the effective implementation of differentiated instruction. It affirms that while teachers exhibit strong readiness for inclusive practice, continuous and context responsive professional development is essential to sustain and deepen this capacity. The integration of these insights into policy and practice holds significant implications for advancing equitable and inclusive learning environments, thereby ensuring that all learners are meaningfully supported within the educational system.

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