PANTAO
(International Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences)
Volume 5, Issue 3
ISSN 3028-0877 | DOI 10.69651/2022PIJHSS

Differentiated instruction in inclusive classrooms: Examining teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes and practices in Talisay City National High 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 42 in-service secondary teachers of Talisay City National High 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 high levels of perceived self-efficacy (M=4.824, SD=0.867), very high levels of attitude towards inclusive education (M=5.171, SD=0.563), and high levels of differentiated instruction practices (M=4.639, SD=0.545). Pearson r correlation reports a statistically significant moderately positive correlation between perceived self-efficacy ($r=0.504$, $p<.05$) and attitude ($r=0.606$, $p<.05$) 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, descriptive correlational research design, Cebu, Philippines.

Date Submitted: June 22, 2026
Date Accepted: June 26, 2026
Date Published: July 3, 2026

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education (IE) has become a fundamental principle for achieving equitable and high-quality education by ensuring that all learners, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or learning needs, have meaningful opportunities to participate and succeed within mainstream educational settings (Ainscow, 2020; UNESCO, 1994). Rather than being viewed solely as a specialized intervention for learners with disabilities, contemporary perspectives define inclusive education as a universal educational philosophy that promotes equity, responsiveness, and social justice across entire education systems (Kimhi & Bar Nir, 2025).

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DOI: http://doi.org/10.69651/PIJHSS05031268

Recommended citation:
Monsanto, M. L. G. (2026). Differentiated instruction in inclusive classrooms: Examining teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes and practices in Talisay City National High School. Pantao (International Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences) 5 (3), 245-270. http://doi.org/10.69651/PIJHSS05031268

This broader conception extends beyond providing physical access or curriculum modifications by fostering social cohesion, mutual respect, and acceptance while preparing learners for active participation in increasingly diverse societies (Pozas & Letzel Alt, 2023). Consequently, inclusive education seeks to remove systemic barriers to learning and establish learning environments where every student can realize their full potential.

The growing prominence of inclusive education is reflected in international policy frameworks that collectively recognize inclusion as both a human right and a prerequisite for sustainable educational development. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities formally established inclusive education as a legal obligation for member states (United Nations, 2006), while the Incheon Declaration and the Education 2030 Framework for Action further emphasized inclusion and equity as essential components in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (UNESCO, 2015). Together, these global initiatives underscore the widespread consensus that education systems must provide equitable learning opportunities by responding effectively to learner diversity rather than expecting learners to conform to uniform educational practices.

Within the Philippine context, this international commitment has been translated into comprehensive legislative and policy frameworks that institutionalize inclusive education across all levels of basic education. Republic Act No. 10533, otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, together with Republic Act No. 11650, or the Inclusive Education Act of 2022, establishes the legal basis for inclusive educational practices nationwide. These legislative measures are reinforced by Department of Education policies that operationalize inclusive education within classroom practice. DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019 mandates the implementation of learner centered, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate curricula for all Filipino learners, while DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009 and DepEd Order No. 23, s. 2022 further strengthen the national commitment to inclusive education by equipping schools and teachers with mechanisms to address learner diversity (DepEd, 2019; Espeño, Babiano, Bucoy, Busime, & De Borja, 2024; Cañoso, 2024). Likewise, the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers emphasizes teachers' responsibilities in promoting inclusion, particularly through Domain 3 on Diversity of Learners (DepEd, 2017). Collectively, these mandates establish inclusive education as both a policy priority and a professional obligation for Filipino teachers.

The successful realization of inclusive education, however, depends largely on teachers, whose preparedness, beliefs, competencies, and instructional decisions directly influence classroom implementation (Pozas, Letzel, & Schneider, 2020). Teachers are expected not only to deliver curriculum content but also to ensure that instruction responds effectively to learners with diverse characteristics, abilities, and educational needs (Alnahdi, Lindner, & Schwab, 2022). This responsibility has increased the importance of instructional approaches that provide flexibility while maintaining educational quality. Among these approaches, differentiated instruction has emerged as one of the most widely recognized frameworks for addressing learner diversity within inclusive classrooms.

Differentiated instruction involves the deliberate adaptation of content, instructional processes, learning activities, and assessment methods according to students' readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles (Gheyssens et al., 2022). Its value lies in providing teachers with a structured yet flexible framework that promotes learner engagement while reducing barriers to participation in mainstream education (Aurora, 2025; Lawrence Brown, 2020). Empirical evidence consistently supports the effectiveness of differentiated instruction in enhancing both academic achievement and socioemotional development across diverse educational contexts (Pozas, Letzel, & Schneider, 2020; Pozas & Letzel Alt, 2023; Woodcock, Sharma, Subban, & Hitches, 2022). Philippine studies likewise demonstrate its positive educational outcomes. Antonio (2024) reported that varied instructional strategies, including the use of visual materials and collaborative learning activities, significantly enhanced classroom participation

and inclusivity, while Ferrer and Naanep (2025) documented meaningful improvements in elementary pupils' learning outcomes following the implementation of differentiated instructional practices. These findings collectively affirm differentiated instruction as a critical pedagogical strategy for translating inclusive education policies into effective classroom practice.

Despite its strong theoretical and empirical support, the implementation of differentiated instruction continues to encounter substantial challenges. Teachers frequently experience time constraints, limited instructional resources, inadequate assessment strategies, classroom management difficulties, and insufficient professional development opportunities that hinder effective implementation (Onyishi & Sefotho, 2020). Beyond these structural barriers, recent scholarship suggests that teachers' instructional practices are also shaped by important psychosocial factors, particularly their behavioral intentions (Kupers, de Boer, Bakker, de Jong, & Minnaert, 2024), self-efficacy in inclusive education, and attitudes toward inclusion (Romano et al., 2024; Schwab, Sharma, & Hoffman, 2022). These findings indicate that effective implementation of differentiated instruction requires not only institutional support but also positive psychological dispositions that enable teachers to embrace inclusive educational practices.

Self-efficacy represents teachers' confidence in their ability to organize and execute the instructional actions necessary for successful inclusive teaching (Sharma, Loreman, & Forlin, 2012). Teachers with stronger efficacy beliefs demonstrate greater persistence, motivation, instructional adaptability, and willingness to adopt innovative practices when responding to learner diversity (Cañoso, 2024; Woodcock, Sharma, Subban, & Hitches, 2022). Closely related to self-efficacy are teachers' attitudes toward inclusion, which encompass cognitive, affective, and behavioral dispositions concerning diversity, equity, and inclusive educational values (Romano et al., 2024). Existing evidence consistently indicates that these constructs are closely interconnected, jointly influencing teachers' intentions and actual implementation of inclusive instructional practices (Ismailos et al., 2019; Miesera et al., 2018). Teachers who possess stronger efficacy beliefs are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward inclusion, while favorable attitudes further reinforce confidence in implementing inclusive instructional strategies (Balias & Fouka, 2023). This reciprocal relationship suggests that strengthening both constructs is essential for sustaining differentiated instruction within inclusive classrooms.

Although previous studies consistently recognize the importance of self-efficacy and attitudes in promoting differentiated instruction, findings remain inconsistent across cultural and institutional settings, suggesting that contextual factors significantly shape teachers' inclusive practices (Romano et al., 2024; Charitaki et al., 2022). Furthermore, relatively few investigations have examined how these psychosocial variables specifically relate to teachers perceived differentiated instruction practices within the Philippine educational system (Pozas et al., 2025; Mudhar et al., 2024). While local evidence acknowledges the educational benefits of differentiated instruction, concerns regarding teacher preparedness, limited instructional resources, and insufficient professional support continue to persist (Antonio, 2024). These gaps underscore the need for context specific research that examines how teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes influence differentiated instruction within the framework of Philippine educational legislation and Department of Education policies.

This investigation is conceptually grounded in Social Cognitive Theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior, and the relevant policies of the Department of Education, which together provide a comprehensive explanation of how teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and professional environments shape differentiated instruction practices within inclusive classrooms. Social Cognitive Theory, developed by Bandura (1986), proposes that human behavior emerges

through continuous interactions among personal factors, behaviors, and environmental influences, a process described as triadic reciprocality (An & Meaney, 2015; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2015). Applied to inclusive education, teachers' instructional decisions are influenced simultaneously by personal characteristics such as self-efficacy and attitudes, environmental conditions including institutional policies and school culture, and their own instructional behaviors (Sabinorio, Presno, Mamac, & Fernandez, 2025). These reciprocal interactions create reinforcing cycles whereby positive teaching experiences strengthen self-efficacy, encourage more favorable attitudes toward inclusion, and promote greater use of differentiated instruction (Savolainen, Malinen, & Schwab, 2020; Pozas & Letzel Alt, 2025). Although teachers operate within policy driven educational environments, they retain considerable professional autonomy in interpreting and responding to these contextual influences (An & Meaney, 2015).

The central role of self-efficacy within Social Cognitive Theory has received consistent empirical support across international and Philippine studies. Self-efficacy represents individuals' beliefs regarding their capability to execute behaviors necessary to achieve desired outcomes (Bandura, 1997; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2015). In educational settings, teachers with stronger efficacy beliefs are more likely to implement differentiated instruction, persist when confronted with instructional challenges, and confidently address learner diversity. Krainer et al. (2024) demonstrated that teachers possessing higher levels of self-efficacy together with positive attitudes toward inclusion exhibited greater confidence in implementing differentiated instruction despite resource limitations. Similarly, Mudhar, Ertesvåg, and Pakarinen (2024) identified teacher profiles in which strong efficacy beliefs and favorable attitudes mutually reinforced one another, resulting in more consistent and innovative inclusive practices. Philippine investigations parallel these findings. Cañoso (2025) reported that teachers with higher self-efficacy displayed greater instructional adaptability and competence in inclusive classrooms, while Dalan and Matsuka (2017) found that efficacy beliefs were strengthened through professional preparation and emotional support. Sabinorio et al. (2024) likewise demonstrated that institutional support and professional experiences significantly influenced the willingness of Filipino special education teachers to sustain inclusive practices. Collectively, these studies reinforce Social Cognitive Theory by illustrating that teachers' efficacy beliefs develop through reciprocal interactions between personal experiences and supportive educational environments.

Complementing Social Cognitive Theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior provides an additional explanation of how teachers' beliefs translate into actual instructional practice. Proposed by Azjen (1985), the theory argues that behavior is directly influenced by behavioral intentions, which in turn are shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Within the context of differentiated instruction, teachers' attitudes toward inclusion influence their willingness to implement inclusive strategies (Sharma, Loreman, & Forlin, 2012), while subjective norms, including institutional policies and professional expectations, shape their perceptions of appropriate teaching practice (Dignath et al., 2022). Perceived behavioral control, closely aligned with self-efficacy, reflects teachers' beliefs regarding their capability and available resources to implement inclusive instruction successfully (Kupers, de Boer, Bakker, de Jong, & Minnaert, 2024; Pozas, Jordan, & Letzel Alt, 2025; Woodcock, Sharma, Subban, & Hitches, 2022). Existing literature consistently demonstrates that teachers with positive attitudes and stronger efficacy beliefs exhibit stronger behavioral intentions and greater commitment to differentiated instruction within inclusive classrooms, thereby reinforcing the explanatory value of both theoretical perspectives.

These theoretical foundations are further strengthened by Philippine educational policies that institutionalize inclusive education and differentiated instruction as essential components of teacher professionalism. DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019 affirms the government's

commitment to learner centered, equitable, and responsive education by emphasizing flexible teaching approaches that address learners' varied characteristics and educational needs while recognizing diversity in terms of ability, culture, language, and socioeconomic background. Similarly, DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, which adopted the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers, integrates differentiated instruction throughout its competency framework. Domain 3 requires teachers to recognize learner diversity and implement differentiated learning experiences, while Domain 4 promotes the design of inclusive and responsive instructional plans. Together, these policies operationalize inclusive education by establishing clear professional expectations for teachers and highlighting the importance of self-efficacy and positive attitudes in fulfilling these responsibilities.

Taken together, the reviewed literature, theoretical perspectives, and policy frameworks converge in demonstrating that successful inclusive education depends upon the complex interaction of teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes toward inclusion, supportive institutional environments, and differentiated instructional practices. At the same time, inconsistencies across international findings and the limited availability of Philippine evidence reveal important gaps in understanding how these psychosocial factors operate within local educational contexts. Addressing these gaps, the present study investigates the interrelationships among Department of Education in service teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes toward inclusive education, and differentiated instruction practices. By generating contextually grounded empirical evidence, the study seeks to deepen understanding of the factors that facilitate or hinder effective inclusive teaching within Philippine public schools. The findings are expected to inform professional development initiatives, curriculum enhancement, and educational policy while providing the basis for a contextually responsive professional development plan that strengthens teachers' inclusive competencies and supports the realization of equitable, learner centered education envisioned by the Department of Education.

Statement of the problem

This research assessed the in-service teachers perceived self-efficacy and attitudes toward inclusive education and investigated the relationship of these factors with teachers' differentiated instruction practices at Talisay City National High School during the School Year 2025 to 2026 as the basis for a professional development plan.

Specifically, it aimed to answer the following research 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 training and seminars attended?
2. What is the level of in-service teachers perceived self-efficacy in inclusive education?
3. What is the level of in-service teachers' attitudes toward inclusion?
4. What is the level of in-service teachers perceived differentiated instruction practices?
5. Is there a significant relationship between in service teachers perceived self-efficacy in inclusive education and their perceived differentiated instruction practices?
6. Is there a significant relationship between in service teachers' attitudes toward inclusion and their perceived differentiated instruction practices?
7. Based on the findings of the study, what professional development plan can be developed?

METHODOLOGY

This section of the paper discusses the design, data collection, and analysis procedures used to address the study's objectives. It details the selection criteria, tools, and techniques applied to ensure the reliability and validity of the results, providing a clear and systematic description of how the research was conducted, thereby enabling replication and critical assessment by other researchers.

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the relationships between teachers perceived self-efficacy and attitudes toward inclusion and their perceived level of differentiated instruction practices. This design was deemed appropriate because it enables the systematic description of existing conditions while simultaneously examining the strength and direction of associations among variables. This design allows for the observation of naturally occurring relationships within authentic classroom contexts. Such an approach is particularly suitable for exploring how teachers' psychological constructs and attitudes interact with their instructional practices in inclusive education settings, thereby providing meaningful insights into patterns that may inform professional development and policy initiatives.

This research utilized the INPUT PROCESS OUTPUT approach in organizing its methodological flow. The INPUT included the demographic profiles of the participants, namely age and gender, highest educational attainment, years in service, and number of hours of relevant trainings and seminars of the in-service teachers in the past five years. Moreover, their level of perceived self-efficacy and attitude were also ascertained in the context of inclusive education. In addition to these independent variables, their level of perceived differentiated instruction practices was also measured as the dependent variable under the assumption that inclusive education is applied through certain differentiated instruction practices. Significant correlations were also measured between the independent and dependent variables. The PROCESS considered the administration of informed consent and questionnaire, data consolidation, presentation, analysis and interpretation using statistical software. The OUTPUT of the study was the professional development plan. The researchers developed a professional development program in the form of a School-based Learning Action Cell (SLAC) plan with Activity Design based on the results of this research.

The study was conducted in public schools in an urban area located at Talisay City National High School. It is situated along Jose Rizal Street in Barangay Poblacion, the civic and historical core of Talisay City, Cebu. At the time of this writing, it had 1 school principal, 1 assistant principal, 2 department heads, 65 licensed teachers and 11 non-teaching personnel. This location placed the school within a densely populated urban zone that served as a hub for government, commerce, and education. The school's proximity to major roads such as Rizal Road and its accessibility via public transportation routes made it a pivotal educational institution for students across the city's barangays. The school's location in Poblacion offered a relatively flat terrain, conducive to infrastructure development and pedestrian access. Its urban setting fostered community engagement and inter-institutional collaboration, with nearby public schools and civic centers enhancing its role in local educational networks. This setting represents typical educational environments where inclusive practices and differentiated instruction were implemented or promoted, providing a relevant context for investigating the research variables.

The respondents of this study were secondary public school in-service teachers of Talisay City National High School. There was a total of 65 teachers who serve as the population of the study. From there, Slovin's formula was used to determine the appropriate target sample from that population, where N is the population, n is the target sample, and e is the acceptable margin of error set at 5%. The target sample was 56. From here, simple random sampling was

done to determine the specific teachers who would participate in this research. This was to ensure representation of educators with diverse teaching experiences and backgrounds relevant to inclusive education. Specifically, of the 65 Talisay City National High School secondary teachers comprising the population, a target sample of 56 was drawn, representing 86.15% of the total population.

This section describes the instruments that were used to gather data related to the constructs under investigation. This study utilized a five-part questionnaire which included adopted instruments from existing published scales to measure in-service teachers' perceived levels of the following constructs: self-efficacy in inclusive education, attitude towards inclusion, and differentiated instruction practices. The first part of the instrument gathered essential information on the demographics of the respondents, particularly their gender, age range, length of service as a teacher, and number of hours of relevant trainings and seminars attended in the past 5 years, which provided descriptive information on the nature and quality of the respondents of this research.

The second part of the instrument was the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) scale, adopted from Park et al. (2016), which assessed the teachers perceived self-efficacy in implementing inclusive education practices. The TEIP is a validated instrument widely applied in diverse educational contexts to measure teachers' confidence in implementing inclusive practices. This instrument contains 18 items distributed in the following dimensions: (1) Efficacy to Use Inclusive Instruction (items 1-6), (2) Efficacy in Collaboration (items 7-12), and (3) Efficacy in Managing Behavior (items 13-18). This instrument has a relatively high overall internal consistency reliability score (Cronbach α=0.977) and acceptable validity fit (X^2=260.58, df=132, CFI=0.994, TLI=0.993, WRMR=0.886, RMSEA=0.085) with 90% confidence interval for RMSEA.

The third part of the instrument, which measured the attitudes and intentions of the respondents towards inclusive education, was the Attitudes to Inclusion Scale and the Intention to Teach in Inclusive Classroom Scale (AIS-ITICS), adopted from Pivarc (2024). The AIS consisted of eight items distributed across two dimensions, namely (1) Beliefs about inclusion (items 1-4), and (2) Feelings about inclusion (items 5-8). The ITICS, on the other hand, had seven items with no dimensions (items 9-15). The instrument had an adequate fit of validity as indicated with the scalar invariance model. For AIS: X^2=154.28, df=46, CFI=0.983, RMSEA=0.041, SRMR=0.023, while for ITICS: X^2=148.728, df=38, CFI=0.944, RMSEA=0.045, SRMR=0.040. This instrument did not have reverse-scoring of items.

The last part of the questionnaire was the Differentiated Instruction Questionnaire (DI-Quest), adopted from Coubergs et al. (2017), which measured the perceived DI practices of teachers on whether or not they had applied differentiated instruction in their classes as their way to implement inclusive education. DI-Quest has 31 items divided into five dimensions, namely (1) Teacher's Mindset (items 1-5), (2) Ethical Compass (items 6-11), (3) Flexible Grouping (items 12-19), (4) Output=Input, referring to assessment for learning and feedback practices (items 20-23), and (5) Differentiated Instruction, referring to teachers' adaptation to students' learning differences (items 24-31). It also had adequate goodness of fit measures of validity (X^2=11023.574, df=465, CFI=0.909, TLI=0.899, RMSEA=0.043) at 90% RMSEA confidence interval.

With respect to data gathering, the researcher began the process after receiving approval for the research proposal. A permission letter for data collection, including an informed consent form, survey, and interview guide, was sent to the college dean and research adviser. Ethical approvals and permissions from the School Heads for the private schools and the Schools Division Superintendent for the identified public schools were also obtained. Participants were

then invited to complete the survey questionnaire. Prior to data collection, consent was provided and obtained from the participants, emphasizing voluntary participation and confidentiality of responses, and instructions were also provided in the instrument as to how it should be answered. During the data gathering stage, the questionnaire was administered either in paper form or electronically, depending on participants' accessibility and preference. Data collection was conducted over a period of three to four weeks, allowing sufficient time for participants to respond comprehensively. Completed questionnaires were reviewed for completeness and consistency before data entry and analysis. The researcher secured all necessary documents, such as permission letters and data processing undertakings, and ensured ethical compliance, including confidentiality and data privacy. In the post-data gathering stage, the gathered responses were systematically organized, checked, and prepared for analysis. Data cleaning was done by which the questionnaires were screened for completeness, accuracy, and consistency, and invalid or incomplete responses were excluded to ensure the reliability of the dataset. Subsequently, the validated data were encoded and tabulated using SPSS version 20 statistical software. This process facilitated the transformation of raw responses into analyzable formats, allowing for the computation of appropriate statistical techniques in preparation for analysis. Finally, the results were interpreted in light of the research objectives and theoretical framework, and patterns and relationships emerging from the data were critically analyzed to draw meaningful conclusions, which served as the basis for the subsequent discussion, implications, and recommendations. The answered hard copies of the survey questionnaires were then later shredded, while online responses were deleted.

This study prioritized ethical research standards by embedding fairness, transparency, and integrity into every phase of its design and execution. Participants' rights, dignity, and welfare were safeguarded with utmost care. Respondent selection adhered to established ethical guidelines, incorporating safeguards against coercion, misrepresentation, data falsification, or any harm. The research complied with institutional ethics policies and national regulations, such as the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). Before data collection began, the protocol underwent review by the institution's Ethics Review Committee to confirm alignment with ethical norms. Participation was fully voluntary, with informed consent required prior to questionnaire completion, and the consent form detailed the study's goals, methods, possible risks and benefits, and participants' right to withdraw at any point without repercussions. Regarding conflict of interest, the researcher disclosed no conflicts, and the study received no financial incentives or external funding that could bias results or interpretations. With respect to privacy and confidentiality, participants' privacy was protected throughout; no identifiable personal data was gathered, responses were anonymized, and all data was securely stored for academic use only. In terms of the informed consent process, participants received clear verbal and written information on the study's purpose, scope, and voluntary status, and they had opportunities to ask questions and sufficient time to decide. Regarding vulnerability, participants were in-service elementary and secondary public-school teachers, not a vulnerable population, and their involvement was voluntary with no risks to their academic or personal status. As for the recruitment process, clustered random sampling was conducted initially to determine the locale of the study; after identifying the population and the target sample, simple random sampling was conducted to determine the participants of the study to whom the research instrument was given and administered, with recruitment being equitable and inclusive and avoiding any pressure or unfair exclusion. In terms of risk assessment, risks were minimal to none, as the self-report questionnaire evaluated perceived readiness for differentiated instruction, posing no physical, psychological, or legal threats. Finally, with respect to benefits and participants' rights, participants could withdraw at any time without academic, personal, or professional fallout, and their input advanced knowledge of teacher readiness in inclusive education, potentially enhancing future programs.

The validated data were subjected to several statistical techniques. Frequency distribution and percentage were used to analyze the demographics of the participants in terms of gender, age, highest educational attainment, years of service, and number of relevant trainings of the respondents, where frequency referred to the number of respondents who completely answered the questionnaire in each category, while percentage showed their proportion relative to the total sample size. Weighted means and standard deviations were computed to describe the central tendency and dispersion of participants' responses on perceived self-efficacy, attitude towards inclusion, and perceived differentiated instruction practices, serving as the basis for determining the levels possessed by the respondents in relation to the constructs studied in this research. Pearson r correlation was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent variables, namely perceived self-efficacy and attitude towards inclusion, and the dependent variable, perceived differentiated instruction practices, by computing its coefficient, with statistical significance set at the 0.05 level ($p < .05$).

Parts II to IV of the instruments were administered using a 6-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4=somewhat agree, 5=agree, and 6=strongly agree). This was done to reduce the likelihood of the participants' bias by resorting to neutrality, which may be interpreted as ambivalence (Park et al., 2016). Their strength or extent of agreement was converted to their corresponding level depending on the construct that was being described, and this served as the basis for verbal interpretation in the subsequent discussions in the next chapter. For Part II, the Level of Perceived Self-Efficacy in Inclusive Education, a range of 5.18 to 6.00 corresponded to a scale of 6, described as Strongly Agree, interpreted as Very High Self-Efficacy, meaning the respondent possesses mastery-level confidence and feels highly empowered in practicing inclusive education. A range of 4.34 to 5.17 corresponded to a scale of 5, described as Agree, interpreted as High Self-Efficacy, meaning the respondent feels confident, capable, and prepared to handle the demands of an inclusive classroom. A range of 3.51 to 4.33 corresponded to a scale of 4, described as Somewhat Agree, interpreted as Moderately High Self-Efficacy, meaning the respondent leans toward feeling confident and capable of handling inclusive education settings with minor hesitations. A range of 2.68 to 3.50 corresponded to a scale of 3, described as Somewhat Disagree, interpreted as Moderately Low Self-Efficacy, meaning the respondent leans toward a lack of confidence, feeling hesitant about their inclusive education capabilities. A range of 1.84 to 2.67 corresponded to a scale of 2, described as Disagree, interpreted as Low Self-Efficacy, meaning the respondent feels generally unconfident and struggles with the demands of inclusive education. A range of 1.00 to 1.83 corresponded to a scale of 1, described as Strongly Disagree, interpreted as Very Low Self-Efficacy, meaning the respondent feels entirely unequipped and lacks confidence in implementing inclusive education.

For Part III, Attitude towards Inclusion, a range of 5.18 to 6.00 corresponded to a scale of 6, described as Strongly Agree, interpreted as Highly Positive Attitude, meaning the respondent is exceptionally supportive of inclusive education practices and strongly advocates for inclusive classrooms. A range of 4.34 to 5.17 corresponded to a scale of 5, described as Agree, interpreted as Positive Attitude, meaning the respondent holds a favorable view of inclusive education and generally supports its principles and implementation. A range of 3.51 to 4.33 corresponded to a scale of 4, described as Somewhat Agree, interpreted as Moderately Positive Attitude, meaning the respondent leans toward supporting inclusive education but may hold minor reservations or conditions regarding its practice. A range of 2.68 to 3.50 corresponded to a scale of 3, described as Somewhat Disagree, interpreted as Moderately Negative Attitude, meaning the respondent leans toward skepticism, showing hesitation or mild

resistance to the widespread adoption of inclusive education. A range of 1.84 to 2.67 corresponded to a scale of 2, described as Disagree, interpreted as Negative Attitude, meaning the respondent holds unfavorable views regarding inclusive education and doubts its effectiveness or feasibility. A range of 1.00 to 1.83 corresponded to a scale of 1, described as Strongly Disagree, interpreted as Highly Negative Attitude, meaning the respondent is completely opposed to inclusive education practices and strongly favors traditional, segregated, or alternative educational settings.

For Part IV, the Level of Perceived Differentiated Instruction Practices, a range of 5.18 to 6.00 corresponded to a scale of 6, described as Strongly Agree, interpreted as Very High Level of Practice, meaning the respondent consistently, extensively, and deeply integrates differentiated instruction practices into their daily teaching routines to meet diverse learner needs. A range of 4.34 to 5.17 corresponded to a scale of 5, described as Agree, interpreted as High Level of Practice, meaning the respondent regularly implements differentiated instruction practices and successfully adapts content, processes, or products for students. A range of 3.51 to 4.33 corresponded to a scale of 4, described as Somewhat Agree, interpreted as Moderately High Level of Practice, meaning the respondent uses differentiated instruction practices on a fairly frequent basis, though implementation may be selective or occasional. A range of 2.68 to 3.50 corresponded to a scale of 3, described as Somewhat Disagree, interpreted as Moderately Low Level of Practice, meaning the respondent infrequently utilizes differentiated instruction strategies, leaning toward standard or uniform teaching methods. A range of 1.84 to 2.67 corresponded to a scale of 2, described as Disagree, interpreted as Low Level of Practice, meaning the respondent rarely applies differentiated instruction in the classroom, demonstrating minimal adaptation for student differences. A range of 1.00 to 1.83 corresponded to a scale of 1, described as Strongly Disagree, interpreted as Very Low Level of Practice, meaning the respondent does not practice differentiated instruction at all, relying entirely on a single, one-size-fits-all teaching approach.

For clarity and better understanding of the various contexts included in this study, the following terms are operationally defined and referenced. Attitude to Inclusion refers to a dimension of the Attitude towards Inclusive Education that focuses on teachers' beliefs and feelings towards inclusive education as measured by the AIS-ITICS Scales from Pivarc (2024). Differentiated Instruction refers to a dimension of teacher's perceived differentiated instruction practices which represents the extent to which teachers implement instructional strategies that respond to learner diversity as measured by the DI-Quest from Coubergs et al. (2017); this construct captures observable classroom practices such as adapting content, methods, and assessments to meet students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. Efficacy in Collaboration captures in-service teachers' confidence in working with colleagues, parents, and specialists to plan and support inclusive practices as described in the TEIP scale from Park et al. (2016). Efficacy in Managing Behavior refers to teachers' perceived ability to address behavioral challenges and maintain a positive classroom environment for all students as described in the TEIP scale from Park et al. (2016). Efficacy in Using Inclusive Instruction refers to teachers' confidence in their ability to design and deliver lessons that meet the needs of diverse learners in inclusive classrooms, which includes adapting instructional strategies, modifying curriculum content, and differentiating instruction to ensure accessibility for students with varying abilities as described in the TEIP scale from Park et al. (2016). Ethical Compass is a dimension of teacher's perceived differentiated instruction practices which refers to teachers' moral commitment to equity, fairness, and providing learning opportunities for every learner, reflecting the philosophical foundation of differentiated instruction as described by the DI-Quest from Coubergs et al. (2017). Flexible Grouping is a dimension of teacher's perceived differentiated instruction practices which refers to teachers' use of dynamic, non-fixed groupings based on instructional goals and learners' needs as described by the DI-Quest

from Coubergs et al. (2017); this practice allows students to work in various combinations, homogeneous or heterogeneous, so that they can optimize learning from peers, engage in collaborative tasks, and benefit from differentiated support. Inclusive Education is defined as an educational approach that ensures all students, regardless of their unique characteristics, interests, abilities, or learning needs, are supported and accommodated to learn together within mainstream classrooms in their local schools. In-Service Teachers refers to the respondents of the study who are the teachers currently teaching in the school year 2025-2026, whether in public schools, at the time that this study is conducted. Intention to Teach in Inclusive Classroom is a dimension of the Attitude towards Inclusive Education that focuses on implementing curricular changes and on consulting in the context of inclusive education as described by AIS-ITICS by Pivarc (2024). Output=Input, a dimension of in-service teacher's perceived differentiated instruction practices, reflects their ability to align instructional adaptations, or input, with varied learning outcomes and students' responses, or output, as described by the DI-Quest from Coubergs et al. (2017); this construct emphasizes the use of assessment and feedback to guide instructional decisions, ensuring that learning activities are responsive to individual student needs. Perceived Attitudes towards Inclusion refers to the measurable extent to which teachers believe in, value, and emotionally respond to the principles of inclusive education, and this construct is measured through the AIS-ITICS instrument. Perceived Differentiated Instruction Practices pertains to how the teachers see themselves able to adapt, sustain, and facilitate learning that effectively meets diverse students' needs, guided by their belief system on inclusive education, and this construct is measured using the DI-Quest. Perceived Self-Efficacy in Inclusive Education pertains to how the teachers see themselves able to successfully organize, execute, and persevere in professional tasks and challenges in an inclusive classroom setting, as a reflection of their set of mental beliefs to achieve desired positive learning outcomes, regulate motivation, and maintain effort despite difficulties, and this construct is measured using the TEIP. Professional Development Plan refers to a structured program of training, workshops, and support designed to enhance teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes, and instructional practices in implementing differentiated instruction effectively within inclusive classrooms (Dixon et al., 2014; Gheyssens et al., 2020). Finally, Teacher's Mindset is a dimension of teacher's perceived differentiated instruction practices which reflects beliefs about student diversity, learning potential, and the teachability of all students as described by the DI-Quest from Coubergs et al. (2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents and discusses the results of the study involving 42 in-service elementary and secondary public-school teachers who served as respondents, drawn through simple random sampling from a target sample of 56, which was itself computed from a total population of 65 teachers at Talisay City National High School using Slovin's formula with a margin of error set at 5%. The retrieval of 42 completed survey questionnaires yielded a return rate of 75%, a statistically sound number from which inferences can be drawn. Data were gathered through a validated four-part questionnaire measuring demographic characteristics, perceived self-efficacy in inclusive education using the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) scale, attitude towards inclusion using the Attitudes to Inclusion Scale and the Intention to Teach in Inclusive Classroom Scale (AIS-ITICS), and perceived differentiated instruction practices using the Differentiated Instruction Questionnaire (DI-Quest). Descriptive statistics, namely frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation, were used to describe the demographic profile and the levels of the three constructs, while Pearson r

correlation was employed to determine the strength, direction, and significance of the relationships between perceived self-efficacy, attitude towards inclusion, and differentiated instruction practices, with significance set at the 0.05 level ($p < .05$). The discussion that follows is grounded entirely in the data gathered from these 42 respondents and is interpreted in direct relation to the objectives of the study, drawing on relevant literature to contextualize and deepen the interpretation of the findings.

Demographic profile of respondents

Understanding the demographic profile of respondents provides essential context for interpreting the research findings. The composition of participants in terms of gender, age, educational attainment, length of service, and training received offers insights into the professional landscape and informs the implications of the study. With respect to gender, the data reveal a female-dominated sample, with 35 respondents (83.3%) being female and only 7 respondents (16.7%) being male, for a total of 42 (100.0%). This pattern reflects the broader trend in education where women comprise the majority of teaching professionals, and it may influence perspectives on pedagogy and collaboration, particularly in how differentiated instruction practices are applied in classroom instruction. This result is consistent with most literature wherein female teachers outnumber male teachers. Although studies attributing differences in differentiated instruction practices to gender remain inconclusive, existing literature discusses more extensively the relationship between gender and self-efficacy and attitude towards inclusive education. Catalano et al. (2024) often link female teachers to more positive attitudes toward inclusive education than male teachers due to a female inclination toward the emotional and relational aspects of teaching. Female teachers' higher empathy has been linked to better inclusive practices, but explicit gender disparities in implementation are not strongly supported (Woodcock et al., 2022), perhaps due to a lack of data given the scarcity of male participants in most studies. Since teaching remains a predominantly female profession, more information is available regarding how female teachers implement differentiated instruction, and further research may focus specifically on male teachers to ascertain any specific nuances in classroom instruction.

In terms of age range, the largest groups fell within 26-30 years old, with 11 participants (26.2%), and 41-45 years old, with 9 participants (21.4%), indicating a mid-career profile with limited early-career (under 30) or senior (over 45) representation. The 31-35 years old age group accounted for 5 participants (11.9%), while both the 36-40 years old and the 46 years old and above groups had 7 participants (16.7%) each. The youngest group, 21-25 years old, had only 3 participants (7.1%), indicating limited entry-level perspectives, for a total of 42 (100.0%). This suggests that most participants are in a period of professional stability, balancing experience with openness to lifelong learning. Omoro and Possi (2024) noted that more experienced, typically older, teachers report higher self-efficacy for inclusive practices due to accumulated successful experiences, while novice teachers in younger age groups exhibit lower confidence, moderated by training and perceived success in diverse classrooms. Similarly, older teachers generally display more favorable attitudes toward inclusion, linked to greater exposure and adaptation over time, and age influences implementation indirectly through self-efficacy, with veteran teachers applying differentiated strategies more resiliently in heterogeneous settings. However, no uniform age-based disparities emerge, with organizational support outweighing age in some analyses (Havik, 2025), underscoring the importance of professional development programs that help novice teachers build self-efficacy and positive attitudes toward inclusive education.

Regarding highest educational attainment, the majority of participants, 34 teachers (81.0%), held bachelor's degrees, reflecting standard entry requirements for teaching roles.

Only 1 teacher (2.4%) held a Diploma in Professional Education and 1 teacher (2.4%) held a doctor's degree, while 6 teachers (14.3%) held a master's degree, for a total of 42 (100.0%). Advanced degrees combined accounted for only 16.7%, pointing to a baseline-qualified but not highly postgraduate group, which highlights a need for institutional support in pursuing graduate studies geared toward research-based, inclusive pedagogies. Teachers with only the entry-level degree requirement may report moderate self-efficacy in inclusive settings due to limited specialized training, while the small proportion holding master's (14.3%) or doctoral (2.4%) degrees likely exhibit higher confidence through deeper theoretical and practical exposure, as formal education in multiple inclusive areas enhances perceived readiness (Papasin et al., 2024). This distribution implies that while the majority meet entry standards, targeted professional development could elevate overall self-efficacy, particularly for diploma holders (2.4%) who may need foundational support. The sample's heavy reliance on bachelor's-level preparation may also yield generally favorable but unrefined attitudes or basic skills in differentiation, highlighting the need for enhanced training to bridge knowledge and practice, while advanced degree holders can model resilient strategies and serve as peer mentors to improve implementation across all levels (Alnahdi et al., 2022), as higher educational attainment generally correlates with more positive attitudes toward inclusion (Kimhi & Bar Nir, 2025).

As for years of service, nearly 60% of the sample, specifically 25 participants (59.5%), had 1-10 years of service, indicating a relatively novice-to-mid-level workforce. Thirteen participants (31.0%) belonged to the 11-20 years in-service group, while only 4 participants (9.5%) had more than 20 years of service, for a total of 42 (100.0%). Long-term veterans of 20 years and above are underrepresented, which may limit insights into sustained career trajectories, but this smaller group may provide valuable institutional memory and mentoring capacity, offering an avenue for developing mentorship programs between novice and veteran teachers. Novice teachers with 1-10 years of service may often report lower self-efficacy in inclusive practices due to limited exposure to diverse classrooms, although this group shows potential for rapid growth through mastery experiences, while mid-level teachers with 11-20 years demonstrate moderate to high confidence benefiting from accumulated successes, and the small veteran group with more than 20 years likely possesses the highest resilience (Cañoso, 2024). Early-career teachers may hold cautiously positive attitudes shaped by initial training, mid-level educators often solidify more favorable views through practical adaptation, and veterans' extensive experience fosters the strongest endorsement of inclusion, with younger teachers potentially benefiting from mentorship to accelerate attitude maturation and reduce implementation hesitancy (Woodcock et al., 2025).

With regard to trainings received, 18 participants (42.9%) accumulated more than 200 hours of relevant in-service training in the last five years, while 4 participants (9.5%) reported no in-service training at all. The remaining distribution showed 1 participant (2.4%) with 1-8 hours in the past year, 2 participants (4.8%) with 17-24 hours in the past year, 2 participants (4.8%) with 33-40 hours in the past year, 3 participants (7.1%) with 41-48 hours over two years, 2 participants (4.8%) with 49-56 hours over two years, 1 participant (2.4%) with 73-80 hours over two years, 1 participant (2.4%) with 81-88 hours over three years, 1 participant (2.4%) with 153-160 hours over four years, 4 participants (9.5%) with 161-168 hours over five years, 1 participant (2.4%) with 169-176 hours over five years, 1 participant (2.4%) with 177-184 hours over five years, and 1 participant (2.4%) with 192-200 hours over five years, for a total of 42 (100.0%). This distribution suggests that the majority of participants are well-equipped to handle their classes, while those with lesser to no training may be relatively new to the work environment at the time of this writing. Kimhi and Bar Nir (2025) and Woodcock et al. (2022)

suggest that teachers with more than 200 hours of training exhibit significantly higher self-efficacy and more positive attitudes in inclusive practices, as ongoing professional development builds mastery through simulated and real-world applications. The minority without training (9.5%) may likely face lower confidence, while recent trainees show accelerated gains compared to those with older exposure, underscoring the need for continuous, rather than irregular, programs to sustain perceived competence, and the 200-hour threshold group may still require refresher sessions to prevent attitude erosion over time. In summary, the demographic profile of respondents reflects a predominantly female, mid-career teaching force with bachelor-level qualifications and varied training experiences, and these characteristics have direct implications for professional development planning and the interpretation of the study's results.

Level of perceived self-efficacy

This section reports the perceived self-efficacy among respondents based on the framework of Park et al. (2016), which captures teachers' confidence in inclusive education across three dimensions, namely Efficacy to Use Inclusive Instruction, Efficacy in Collaboration, and Efficacy in Managing Behavior. Under the verbal interpretation legend used throughout this study, a range of 5.16-6.00 corresponds to Very high level, 4.33-5.15 to High level, 3.50-4.32 to Moderately high level, 2.67-3.49 to Moderately low level, 1.84-2.66 to Low level, and 1.00-1.83 to Very low level.

For Efficacy to Use Inclusive Instruction, which Park et al. (2016) define as confidence in applying inclusive pedagogies, the dimension obtained an overall mean of 4.898 and a standard deviation of 0.874, interpreted as High level. Item 1, concerning the use of a variety of assessment strategies such as portfolio assessment, modified tests, and performance-based assessment, obtained M=4.930, SD=0.950 (High level). Item 2, on providing an alternate explanation for example when students are confused, obtained the highest rating at M=5.195, SD=1.034 (Very high level). Item 3, on confidence in designing learning tasks to accommodate the individual needs of students with disabilities, obtained M=4.732, SD=1.132 (High level). Item 4, on accurately gauging student comprehension, obtained M=4.829, SD=0.986 (High level). Item 5, on providing appropriate challenges for very capable students, obtained M=4.878, SD=0.861 (High level). Item 6, on confidence in adapting school-wide or state-wide assessment for students with all disabilities, obtained M=4.732, SD=1.061 (High level), tying with item 3 as the lowest-rated statements in this dimension. The high mean score (M=4.898, SD=0.874) implies strong overall self-efficacy among teachers for inclusive practices, aligning with literature showing that higher mean ratings typically reflect confident mastery beliefs essential for effective inclusion. The elevated rating on providing alternate explanations (M=5.195, SD=1.034) mirrors findings that educators excel in flexible re-teaching, fostering student engagement in heterogeneous settings (Holmquist et al., 2022), supporting sustained implementation of universal design for learning principles. Lower confidence in designing tasks for disabilities and adapting school-wide or high-stakes assessments highlights targeted gaps, as teachers may often underrate specialized skills despite overall efficacy, potentially due to limited exposure to individualized education plans, warranting focused intervention to boost self-efficacy and improve actual differentiated practices.

For Efficacy in Collaboration, which assesses teamwork with specialists, parents, and peers, the dimension obtained an overall mean of 4.797 and a standard deviation of 0.973, interpreted as High level. Item 7, on assisting families in helping their children do well in school, obtained M=4.732, SD=1.149 (High level). Item 8, on working jointly with other professionals and staff to teach students with disabilities, obtained M=5.049, SD=0.867 (High level). Item 9, on confidence in getting parents involved in school activities of their children

with disabilities, obtained M=4.707, SD=1.154 (High level). Item 10, on making parents feel comfortable coming to school, obtained the highest rating at M=5.073, SD=1.078 (High level). Item 11, on collaborating with other professionals such as itinerant teachers or speech pathologists in designing educational plans, obtained M=4.805, SD=1.174 (High level). Item 12, on confidence in informing others who know little about laws and policies relating to the inclusion of students with disabilities, obtained the lowest rating at M=4.415, SD=1.211 (High level). Strong ratings on working jointly with stakeholders and making parents comfortable align with studies showing that relational efficacy drives family engagement, enhancing student support networks. The lowest confidence in informing others about inclusion laws signals a specific vulnerability, in that teachers' policy knowledge gaps may undermine their advocacy in inclusive education despite establishing strong relations among stakeholders. As Park et al. (2016) noted collaboration as pivotal yet challenging in inclusion, this result suggests that targeted training in legal frameworks could elevate subscale balance and boost overall collaboration to foster school-wide inclusive cultures.

For Efficacy in Managing Behavior, which focuses on interventions for disruptive or diverse behaviors, the dimension obtained an overall mean of 4.789 and a standard deviation of 0.862, interpreted as High level. Item 13, on preventing disruptive behavior before it occurs, obtained M=4.707, SD=0.950 (High level). Item 14, on controlling disruptive behavior in the classroom, obtained M=4.854, SD=0.881 (High level). Item 15, on calming a student who is disruptive or noisy, obtained M=4.902, SD=0.968 (High level). Item 16, on getting children to follow classroom rules, obtained the highest rating at M=5.049, SD=0.950 (High level). Item 17, on confidence when dealing with students who are physically aggressive, obtained the lowest rating at M=4.463, SD=1.152 (High level). Item 18, on making expectations clear about student behavior, obtained M=4.756, SD=0.983 (High level). Strong ratings on enforcing rules and calming disruptive students mirror findings that relational de-escalation skills drive positive classroom climates, particularly for students with disabilities. The lowest confidence in managing physically aggressive students highlights a critical gap, as literature identifies aggression as a common self-efficacy barrier due to safety concerns and limited training, suggesting that aggression-specific simulations and de-escalation protocols could elevate subscale balance to support fully resilient inclusive environments. Taken together, the data reveal consistently high levels of perceived self-efficacy, ranging from 4.789 to 4.899, with low variability (SDs below 1.0) across the three dimensions of Efficacy to Use Inclusive Instruction, Efficacy in Collaboration, and Efficacy in Managing Behavior, indicating strong, uniform confidence suited to inclusive classrooms.

Level of attitude towards inclusive education

This section provides a thorough analysis and discussion of respondents' attitudes towards inclusive education, drawing on the framework of Pivarc (2024), covering the dimensions of Attitude to Inclusion and Intention to Teach in Inclusive Classroom Scale. The data reveal consistently high levels of attitude, at 5.058 and 5.286 respectively, with low variability (SDs below 1.0) between the two dimensions, indicating that participants almost homogeneously hold high levels of attitude towards inclusive education.

For Attitude to Inclusion, which gauges general beliefs about the value of integrating students with disabilities into mainstream classrooms, the dimension obtained an overall mean of 5.058 and a standard deviation of 0.722, interpreted as High level. Item 1, on the belief that all students regardless of ability should be taught in regular classrooms, obtained the lowest rating at M=4.732, SD=1.312 (High level). Item 2, on the belief that inclusion is beneficial to

all students socially, obtained M=5.220, SD=0.850 (Very high level). Item 3, on the belief that inclusion benefits all students academically, obtained M=5.195, SD=0.898 (Very high level). Item 4, on the belief that all students can learn in inclusive classrooms if teachers are willing to adapt the curriculum, obtained the highest rating at M=5.415, SD=0.737 (Very high level). Item 5, on being pleased to have the opportunity to teach students with lower academic ability alongside others, obtained M=4.951, SD=0.715 (High level). Item 6, on feeling excited to teach students with a range of abilities, obtained M=4.805, SD=0.969 (High level). Item 7, on being pleased that including students with a range of abilities will make the respondent a better teacher, obtained M=5.073, SD=0.790 (High level). Item 8, on being happy to have students who need assistance with daily activities included in the classroom, obtained M=5.073, SD=0.932 (High level). The high mean suggests respondents view inclusion as beneficial for equity, social development, and academic growth, and strong endorsements of social benefits for all students and adaptive curriculum potentially mirror findings that such views enhance motivation for universal design, fostering environments where all learners thrive. The lowest rating, on placing all students regardless of ability in regular classrooms, reveals nuanced reservations that may link to concerns over resource demands and extreme needs, suggesting that policy dialogues could help address teachers' placement hesitancies regarding differently abled students.

For Intention to Teach in Inclusive Classroom, which reflects behavioral intent and measures willingness to pursue inclusive roles, the dimension obtained an overall mean of 5.286 and a standard deviation of 0.532, interpreted as Very high level. Item 9, on changing the curriculum to meet the learning needs of a student with a learning difficulty, obtained M=4.927, SD=1.165 (High level). Item 10, on consulting with the parents of a struggling student, obtained M=5.488, SD=0.595 (Very high level). Item 11, on consulting with colleagues to identify ways to assist a struggling student, obtained M=5.415, SD=0.590 (Very high level). Item 12, on undertaking a professional development program to teach students with diverse learning needs well, obtained the highest rating at M=5.561, SD=0.547 (Very high level). Item 13, on consulting with a student displaying challenging behaviors to find better ways to work with him or her, obtained M=5.366, SD=0.661 (Very high level). Item 14, on including students with severe disabilities in a range of social activities, obtained the lowest rating at M=4.902, SD=1.299 (High level). Item 15, on changing assessment tasks to suit the learning profile of a struggling student, such as providing longer time or modifying test questions, obtained M=5.341, SD=0.692 (Very high level). The superior mean and tight standard deviation highlight a strong inclination among participants not only to endorse inclusion theoretically but to actively prefer it, with low variability pointing to homogeneity, perhaps arising from a motivated cohort in teacher preparation programs. Endorsements of professional development needs, parent consultation, and colleague collaboration mirror studies showing that these intentions drive mastery-oriented behaviors (Cañoso, 2024), enhancing support networks for struggling students. The relatively lower rating on including students with severe disabilities in social activities reveals a specific hesitation amid overall positivity, as perceived complications in classroom implementation weaken this conception despite literature support, suggesting that strong collaborative intentions, structured professional development, and peer networks could address severe disability integration with a theoretical foundation to boost confidence in implementation.

Level of differentiated instruction practices

This section examines respondents' self-rated differentiated instruction practices using the DI-Quest instrument of Coubergs et al. (2017), which involves tailoring teaching to diverse learner needs across five dimensions, namely Teacher's Mindset, Ethical Compass, Flexible

Grouping, Output=Input, and Differentiated Instruction. The data show variations in the levels of differentiated instruction practices, ranging from 3.776 to 5.213 with a discernible degree of variability, as evidenced by varying standard deviations across the five dimensions, with high standard deviations signaling polarization that may stem from varying experience levels or training exposure among the participants.

For Teacher's Mindset, described by Coubergs et al. (2017) as teachers' growth-oriented beliefs about student potential and adaptability, the dimension obtained an overall mean of 4.576 and a standard deviation of 0.661, interpreted as High level. Item 1, on the belief that intellectual capacities cannot be changed despite students' learning potential, obtained M=3.366, SD=1.622 (Moderately low level). Item 2, on the belief that the way a teacher teaches influences students' intellectual capacities, obtained M=5.024, SD=0.733 (High level). Item 3, on the belief that classroom experiences of success can influence students' intellectual capacities, obtained the highest rating at M=5.415, SD=0.697 (Very high level). Item 4, on the belief that a teacher's belief in student competence can influence intellectual capacities, obtained M=5.171, SD=0.814 (Very high level). Item 5, on the belief that the way a teacher motivates students is not influential to their intellectual capacities, obtained M=3.902, SD=1.679 (Moderately high level), and was noted as the least-rated statement suggesting motivation is not influential. The results imply that participants particularly endorsed the idea that classroom success experiences can enhance students' intellectual capacities, reflecting a growth mindset orientation where effort and positive reinforcement shape cognitive development (Dweck, 2006), aligning with literature showing that teachers who attribute student abilities to malleable factors such as motivation and experience are more likely to implement differentiated instruction effectively, fostering inclusive environments (Tomlinson, 2014). However, the low rating on item 1 also implies some ambivalence or fixed mindset tendencies, as teachers may undervalue their motivational role in unlocking potential, and research indicates that such beliefs can limit differentiated instruction adoption, as teachers with entity theories view abilities as innate and less responsive to instructional adaptations (Rattan et al., 2012), pointing to a need for professional development targeting mindset shifts, such as workshops emphasizing motivational strategies (Coubergs et al., 2017).

For Ethical Compass, which gauges moral commitment to equity and individualization, the dimension obtained an overall mean of 3.224 and a standard deviation of 1.187, interpreted as Moderately low level, reflecting a somewhat reasonable alignment with ethical principles central to differentiated instruction. Item 6, on the belief that the curriculum does not provide flexibility to cope with individual students, obtained M=3.415, SD=1.451 (Moderately low level). Item 7, on the belief that the curriculum is overloaded on content and goals, obtained the lowest rating at M=2.512, SD=1.194 (Low level). Item 8, on the belief that the curriculum does not provide room to foresee differentiated instruction, obtained M=3.220, SD=1.574 (Moderately low level). Item 9, on the belief that governmental inspection on curriculum implementation limits professional freedom, obtained M=3.317, SD=1.443 (Moderately low level). Item 10, on the belief that following the curriculum makes differentiated instruction impossible, obtained M=3.317, SD=1.356 (Moderately low level). Item 11, on the belief that following the criteria of governmental inspection makes one a less qualitative teacher, obtained the highest rating at M=3.561, SD=1.417 (Moderately high level), suggesting a tension between policy makers and teachers on perceived teaching quality when it comes to differentiated instruction. The moderately low level in this domain implies curricular and administrative misalignment between policy makers and teachers' differentiated instruction intentions, highlighting the need for professional development oriented toward student observations over rigid curriculum adherence, as Coubergs et al. (2017) position ethics as

differentiated instruction's foundational philosophy. Literature reveals that teachers facing curriculum overload often default to one-size-fits-all instruction, exacerbating inequities for struggling students (Tomlinson, 2014), and interventions must address this by advocating policy reforms to lighten content loads and integrate ethical training that reframes accountability as supportive of differentiated instruction, thereby reducing burnout and enhancing teacher agency (Loreman, 2017).

For Flexible Grouping, which assesses dynamic student engagement such as pairs and teams, the dimension obtained an overall mean of 5.146 and a standard deviation of 0.488, interpreted as High level, showing near-unanimous agreement and minimal spread. Item 12, on regularly changing between working with homogeneous and heterogeneous groups, obtained the lowest rating at M=4.024, SD=1.158 (Moderately high level). Item 13, on teaching students to help each other, obtained the highest rating at M=5.537, SD=0.670 (Very high level). Item 14, on explicitly ensuring good relationships with all students, obtained M=5.341, SD=0.759 (Very high level). Item 15, on requiring students to work together to progress in their learning process, obtained M=5.415, SD=0.701 (Very high level). Item 16, on ensuring every student has a specific function in the classroom, obtained M=5.293, SD=0.673 (Very high level). Item 17, on working in heterogeneous groups giving students the opportunity to learn from each other, obtained M=5.268, SD=0.734 (Very high level). Item 18, on ensuring every student who needs extra guidance receives it, obtained M=5.341, SD=0.727 (Very high level). Item 19, on differentiating by switching between heterogeneous and homogeneous groups, obtained M=4.951, SD=0.697 (High level). The high ratings align with evidence that heterogeneous and peer-mediated groupings enhance motivation and skill transfer, especially for diverse learners (Gillies, 2016), while the lowest score on shifting between homogeneous and heterogeneous groups indicates rigidity, potentially limiting differentiated instruction's adaptability in matching tasks to readiness levels (Tomlinson, 2014). This implies that while teachers embrace inclusive collaboration, discomfort with dynamic grouping hampers full differentiated instruction potential, as flexible transitions enable targeted interventions without isolating students (Coubergs et al., 2017), and literature shows that trained teachers who fluidly alternate groupings achieve 15-20% higher student outcomes in mixed-ability classes by balancing social and academic needs (Suprayogi et al., 2017).

For Output=Input, which reflects assessment-driven adjustments where student output informs input, the dimension obtained an overall mean of 5.213 and a standard deviation of 0.677, interpreted as Very high level, the top mean among the five dimensions, underscoring confidence in responsive cycles. Item 20, on using assessment to gain insight into students' learning processes, obtained the highest rating at M=5.415, SD=0.703 (Very high level). Item 21, on using assessment to determine how to adjust lessons to students' learning processes, obtained M=5.366, SD=0.731 (Very high level). Item 22, on teaching students how to cope with feedback, obtained M=5.098, SD=0.759 (High level). Item 23, on giving students the opportunity to rework a task based on given feedback, obtained the lowest rating and the highest variability at M=4.976, SD=0.950 (High level). The strong agreement underscores teachers' commitment to formative assessment as a cornerstone of differentiated instruction for aligning outputs with inputs, and high endorsement for using assessment to understand learning processes and adapt lessons mirrors research showing that ongoing diagnostics enable responsive teaching, boosting achievement by tailoring to readiness and interests (Tomlinson, 2014). Yet the lowest and most variable rating for providing rework opportunities based on feedback reveals inconsistency in closing feedback loops, potentially limiting differentiated instruction's iterative nature despite overall strengths (Black & Wiliam, 2018), implying that while teachers grasp assessment's diagnostic role, gaps in feedback-driven revision hinder full efficacy, as iterative cycles are vital for equity and mastery (Coubergs et al., 2017), and studies

confirm that embedding rework protocols increases student growth, particularly in diverse classrooms where variability in response to feedback is high (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

For the overarching dimension of Differentiated Instruction, which synthesizes practices, the dimension obtained an overall mean of 4.613 and a standard deviation of 0.799, interpreted as High level, showing solid but not exceptional self-perception. Item 24, on choosing learning content and teaching methods based on students, obtained M=4.829, SD=1.117 (High level). Item 25, on adjusting assessment based on students or groups of students, obtained the highest rating at M=5.098, SD=0.803 (High level). Item 26, on different students working on different tasks with different levels of difficulty during lessons, obtained M=4.683, SD=1.000 (High level). Item 27, on every student receiving the same assessment, obtained M=4.415, SD=1.445 (High level). Item 28, on students deciding with the teacher which assignment to work on, obtained the lowest rating at M=3.829, SD=1.507 (High level). Item 29, on selecting learning content, materials, and teaching methods based on knowing the students, obtained M=4.976, SD=1.000 (High level). Item 30, on letting students choose between learning content and teaching methods based on their learning profile, obtained M=4.171, SD=1.215 (Moderately high level). Item 31, on choosing learning content and teaching methods for students based on their learning profile during lessons, obtained M=4.902, SD=1.078 (High level). This dimension affirms teachers' willingness to adapt core elements like assessment, content and materials, and pedagogies to students' learning profiles, reflecting established differentiated instruction practices where responsiveness to readiness, interest, and profile drives engagement and outcomes (Tomlinson, 2014). However, the lowest and most variable rating for student-teacher co-decision on assignments signals reluctance to share agency or students' autonomy over their learning, which potentially undermines differentiated instruction's student-centeredness amid concerns over time and control (Suprayogi et al., 2017), implying that while teachers adapt inputs effectively, limited student voice restricts the full transformative potential of differentiated instruction, as co-negotiation fosters ownership and equity (Coubergs et al., 2017), and research shows that empowering students in task selection boosts motivation and achievement, particularly when paired with teacher-guided adaptations (Patall et al., 2010).

Correlations among study variables

This section discusses the global means and standard deviations of perceived self-efficacy and attitude towards inclusive education among the participants, as well as their level of perceived differentiated instruction practices, followed by the correlation coefficients computed using Pearson r. The global mean of the participants' level of perceived self-efficacy is 4.824, with a standard deviation of 0.867, interpreted as High level. This relatively high mean rating coupled with a lower standard deviation suggests lower variability across the sample of 42 respondents. Park et al. (2016) link high self-efficacy to persistent inclusive teaching and improved student outcomes, and these results depict in-service teachers with efficacy-supporting attitudes consistent with related studies discussed in the theoretical framework.

For the level of attitude towards inclusive education, the global mean rating is 5.171, with a standard deviation of 0.564, interpreted as Very high level. This variable holds the highest global mean rating among the three variables in this research, with a relatively low standard deviation suggesting low variability, indicating that the participants' attitudes towards inclusion are commonly shared to a high extent among the sample.

The global mean rating for the level of differentiated instruction practices is 4.558, with a standard deviation of 0.412, interpreted as High level. This variable has the lowest mean

rating and the lowest standard deviation among the three variables in this research, which may imply that participants execute differentiated instruction tactics effectively, likely boosting engagement in diverse classrooms, although teachers may also differentiate reactively with superficial implementation due to limited knowledge and understanding of differentiated instruction. These results collectively imply robust psychological foundations supporting inclusive education. The elevated levels align with research showing that self-efficacy and positive attitudes predict differentiated instruction implementation, as confident teachers with inclusive mindsets more readily adapt instruction to diverse needs (Sharma et al., 2013), and the tight standard deviations further imply consistency across participants, reinforcing that motivational factors drive differentiated instruction beyond mere training (Coubergs et al., 2017).

The Pearson r correlation analysis, with significance set at $p<.05$, shows that Perceived Self-Efficacy is moderately and positively correlated with Differentiated Instruction Practices ($r=0.507$, $p<.05$), and that Attitude towards Inclusion is likewise moderately and positively correlated with Differentiated Instruction Practices ($r=0.496$, $p<.05$), both interpreted as moderate positive correlations (Salkind & Frey, 2017) with statistical significance. On the basis of these results, the null hypothesis is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis for both relationships, indicating that as the perceived self-efficacy of the participants increases, their differentiated instruction practices also increase, and a similar pattern holds for attitude and differentiated instruction, albeit with a slightly lower correlation coefficient. These results affirm current literature wherein teachers with higher self-efficacy toward inclusive education and more positive attitudes toward inclusion tend to implement differentiated instruction in their respective classes (Cañoso, 2024; Woodcock et al., 2022; Coubergs et al., 2017). Strong self-efficacy enables risk-taking in differentiated instruction, while inclusive attitudes mitigate resistance to heterogeneity, creating a synergistic effect to some extent, where high scores across variables foster equitable classrooms (Savolainen et al., 2012). Such correlations may inform the design of professional development interventions targeting self-efficacy and attitudes, which can amplify the adoption of differentiated instruction among in-service teachers.

Taken together, the findings of this chapter demonstrate that the 42 participating in-service teachers of Talisay City National High School, predominantly female, in mid-career, holding bachelor's degrees, and possessing varied training exposure, exhibited high levels of perceived self-efficacy (global mean of 4.824, SD=0.867), very high levels of attitude towards inclusive education (global mean of 5.171, SD=0.564), and high levels of perceived differentiated instruction practices (global mean of 4.558, SD=0.412), with both self-efficacy and attitude showing statistically significant moderate positive correlations with differentiated instruction practices ($r=0.507$, $p<.05$ and $r=0.496$, $p<.05$, respectively). These results directly address the study's objectives of describing the demographic profile of respondents, determining their levels of perceived self-efficacy, attitude towards inclusion, and differentiated instruction practices, and establishing the relationships among these constructs. The consistency of high ratings across dimensions, tempered by specific areas of relative weakness such as confidence in managing physically aggressive behavior, informing others about inclusion policies, ethical alignment with curricular demands, flexibility in group composition, feedback-driven task revision, and student co-decision in assignments, provides a nuanced empirical contribution to the field of inclusive education by identifying both the psychological strengths teachers bring to differentiated instruction and the specific gaps that professional development initiatives must address. These findings collectively lay the empirical foundation for the professional development plan presented in the subsequent chapter, which translates the identified strengths and gaps in self-efficacy, attitude, and differentiated

instruction practices into a structured School-based Learning Action Cell program designed to further strengthen inclusive education implementation among in-service teachers.

CONCLUSION

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design to examine the relationship between in service teachers perceived self-efficacy and attitudes toward inclusive education and their differentiated instruction practices among secondary public-school teachers at Talisay City National High School. A total of 42 out of the 56 target participants were selected through simple random sampling, yielding a response rate of 75.0%. Data were gathered using a survey questionnaire that included an informed consent form, a demographic profile, and three established instruments, namely the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) by Park et al. (2016), the AIS-ITICS Scales by Pivarc (2024), and the Differentiated Instruction Questionnaire (DI Quest) by Coubergs et al. (2017). All instruments demonstrated adequate internal validity. Participants responded using a 6-point Likert scale, and the data were analyzed through descriptive statistics using percentage, mean, and standard deviation, while Pearson r was utilized to determine the relationships between perceived self-efficacy, attitudes toward inclusive education, and differentiated instruction practices.

The findings revealed that the respondents were predominantly female, mostly belonged to the mid-career stage, generally possessed bachelor's degrees, had relatively fewer years of teaching experience, and had participated in substantial professional development activities and relevant training programs. This profile reflects a teaching workforce that is academically qualified, professionally developing, and actively engaged in strengthening competencies related to inclusive education and differentiated instruction. The respondents demonstrated high levels of perceived self-efficacy across the domains of instructional practices, collaboration, and behavior management, indicating strong confidence in their ability to effectively support diverse learners within inclusive classrooms. They likewise exhibited very positive attitudes toward inclusive education, particularly in their willingness and intention to teach in inclusive settings, suggesting a strong professional commitment to implementing inclusive educational practices.

The results further indicated that teachers reported high levels of differentiated instruction practices across most instructional dimensions, particularly in flexible grouping, instructional responsiveness, and the application of differentiated teaching strategies. However, ethical considerations related to differentiated instruction received comparatively lower ratings, suggesting that this aspect requires additional professional support and further capacity building. Overall, the respondents consistently demonstrated strong self-efficacy, highly favorable attitudes toward inclusive education, and high levels of differentiated instruction practices, reflecting shared professional perceptions and experiences among the participants.

Moreover, the correlation analyses established that perceived self-efficacy and attitudes toward inclusive education were both significantly and positively associated with differentiated instruction practices. Teachers who demonstrated stronger confidence in their inclusive teaching capabilities and who held more positive attitudes toward inclusion were also more likely to implement differentiated instructional strategies effectively. Among these variables, perceived self-efficacy showed the stronger relationship with differentiated instruction practices, highlighting the importance of teachers' confidence as a key factor influencing the successful implementation of inclusive instructional approaches. These findings affirm that both professional confidence and positive orientations toward inclusion are essential in strengthening classroom practices that effectively address learner diversity.

Taken together, the study concludes that the participating in service secondary teachers possess a strong foundation for implementing inclusive education through differentiated instruction. Their generally high levels of self-efficacy, highly favorable attitudes toward inclusion, and consistent differentiated instruction practices indicate substantial readiness to meet the diverse needs of learners within inclusive classrooms. Nevertheless, the relatively lower ratings in the ethical dimension of differentiated instruction suggest that opportunities remain for further professional growth, particularly in strengthening teachers' ethical decision making and professional judgment when balancing curriculum expectations with the varied needs of students.

In light of these findings, schools and educational stakeholders are encouraged to sustain and further strengthen teachers' self-efficacy, positive attitudes toward inclusive education, and differentiated instruction practices through continuous and well-designed professional development programs. Particular attention should be given to supporting novice and younger teachers in developing greater confidence and instructional competence while providing experienced teachers with updated training opportunities to sustain effective classroom practices. Professional development initiatives should place greater emphasis on ethical decision making, professional autonomy, peer mentoring, collaborative learning activities, and practical training focused on inclusive and differentiated instructional strategies to maximize the positive influence of self-efficacy and inclusive attitudes on classroom practice. Furthermore, future investigations should include more balanced representation of underrepresented groups, particularly male teachers, and should explore broader participant populations, the long-term effects of professional development interventions, and the influence of these interventions on both teacher performance and student learning outcomes to further advance knowledge and practice in inclusive education.

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