

**Teachers' perceived barriers to effective inclusion: A study on the mainstreaming
of special needs learners in general education classes**

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive study determined the barriers encountered in the implementation of inclusive education at Marigondon Elementary School during the School Year 2025-2026, as a basis for developing a strategic action plan. Utilizing a validated questionnaire, data were gathered from 60 teachers selected via purposive sampling. The research assessed teachers' perceptions across five barrier dimensions: attitudinal, physical and environmental, policy, resource, and family and community. Findings revealed significant challenges across all domains. Resource barriers were perceived as most critical highlighting severe shortages in specialized learning materials, assistive technologies, and direct teacher support. Physical and environmental barriers particularly inadequate classroom space and inaccessible facilities, were also highly evident. While attitudinal barriers were moderate, issues like limited peer acceptance and lack of external support persisted. Policy barriers centered on inadequate training provisions and weak monitoring, whereas family and community barriers stemmed from low awareness and stigma. Statistical analysis further indicated that teachers' perceptions of these barriers significantly differed based on their highest educational attainment and years of teaching experience. The study concludes that inclusive education implementation is impeded by a complex interplay of systemic, resource-based, and socio-cultural barriers. To address these multifaceted challenges, the study outputs a comprehensive, multi-component action plan titled "PROJECT MESA" (Mainstreaming through Enhanced Support and Accessibility). This strategic plan provides targeted, measurable interventions designed to systematically overcome the identified obstacles, thereby fostering a truly equitable and effective inclusive learning environment for all students at Marigondon Elementary School.

Keywords: Special Education, barriers to inclusion, inclusive education, descriptive-correlation, action plan, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu, Philippines.

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INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is a globally endorsed approach that aims to provide equitable access to education for all learners, including those with special needs, within mainstream classrooms. It fosters the participation, acceptance, and learning of learners with special needs alongside their peers in general education settings, emphasizing equity, diversity, and the right to education without discrimination (UNESCO, 2021).

In the international context, numerous studies reveal persistent gaps that challenge inclusive education's effective implementation. These include infrastructure limitations, inadequate teacher training, limited resource availability, and societal attitudes that hinder full participation of learners with special needs (Sebastian, 2024; World Bank, 2025). Additionally, there is a significant gap in comprehensive legal frameworks and integrated policy implementation to support inclusive education across many countries, with only a small percentage mandating education in mainstream settings and insufficient government monitoring to ensure compliance (UNESCO, 2021; World Bank, 2025). The lack of coordinated support across government tiers and gaps in data collection on marginalized students further complicate efforts toward inclusion.

The Philippine context exhibits parallel challenges despite progressive policies like the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons (RA 7277) and the Enhanced Basic Education Act (RA 10533). Recent studies highlight ongoing barriers such as insufficient special education resources, inadequate teacher preparedness, societal stigma, and limited parental and community involvement (Sumayang, 2022; RISE Journals, 2025). These factors contribute to the slow pace of inclusive education integration, with physical infrastructure deficits and overcrowded classrooms further limiting the effectiveness of mainstreaming learners with special needs. The gap between policy and practice remains wide, necessitating targeted interventions to bridge this divide.

Locally, Marigondon Elementary School faces specific contextual barriers that mirror broader national and international trends. Physical and environmental challenges include the lack of accessible facilities such as ramps and appropriate classroom space for assistive devices. Attitudinal barriers are evident in limited teacher willingness and community stigma toward learners with special needs. Resource constraints, including the scarcity of trained special education teachers and assistive technology, exacerbate these issues. Moreover, policy awareness and enforcement at the school level remain weak, affecting the coordinated implementation of inclusive education programs.

Given these multifaceted barriers, there is a pressing need to conduct a focused study at Marigondon Elementary School to identify and analyze the specific obstacles to inclusive education. This research will provide vital data to inform an actionable plan that can improve educational access and quality for learners with special needs in the local context, ensuring that inclusive education policies translate into effective classroom practices.

The main problem addressed by this study is to determine the barriers encountered in the implementation of inclusive education in Marigondon Elementary School during the 2025–2026 school year. The study seeks to understand these barriers across various dimensions (attitudinal, physical/environmental, policy, resource, family/community) and how they relate to the demographic profile of the respondents. The findings aim to guide the development of an action plan to enhance the inclusion of learners with special needs in mainstream classes.

Statement of the problem

This study determined the barriers encountered in the implementation of inclusive education in Marigondon Elementary School during the school year 2025–2026 as a basis for developing an action plan.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, highest educational attainment, years in teaching experience, and grade level taught?
2. As perceived by the respondents, what is the extent of the barriers encountered in the implementation of inclusive education in terms of attitudinal barriers, physical and environmental barriers, policy barriers, resource barriers, and family and community barriers?
3. Is there a significant difference between the demographic profile of the respondents and the extent of barriers encountered in inclusive education?
4. Based on the findings, what action plan can be proposed to address the barriers and improve the implementation of inclusive education in the school?

METHODOLOGY

Research design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design, which was appropriate for obtaining an in-depth understanding of the barriers encountered in the implementation of inclusive education in Marigondon Elementary School during the school year 2025–2026. A descriptive design was suitable for this study because it allowed the researcher to systematically describe the demographic profile of the respondents and the extent of attitudinal, physical, policy, resource, and family/community barriers as perceived by teachers (Creswell, 2012).

Respondents and locale of the study

The study was conducted at Marigondon Elementary School in Lapu-Lapu City, Philippines, a large public institution serving 5,885 learners across Kindergarten, Elementary, and Special Needs Education (SNED) programs, staffed by 171 teachers and 2 school heads. While the school has 82 general education classrooms designated for mainstreaming learners with special needs out of 105 total rooms, it faces significant environmental barriers including physical obstacles (limited ramps, narrow doorways, inadequate restrooms, non-adjustable furniture), overcrowding (45–50 students per class exceeding ideal ratios), resource shortages (insufficient assistive devices, adaptive technology, and accessible materials like Braille), policy inconsistencies (uneven IEP implementation, limited teacher training, high caseloads), and attitudinal challenges (peer rejection, bullying, and low teacher self-efficacy). To examine these barriers, the study employed purposive sampling to select 60 teachers from the 171 total faculty, ensuring participants had direct experience handling mainstreamed learners in the designated inclusive classrooms, as their firsthand knowledge was essential for accurately assessing challenges across physical, resource, policy, and attitudinal dimensions using a 5-point Likert scale and for developing an effective action plan to strengthen inclusive education practices at the school.

Research instrument

The questionnaire used in this study presented in Appendix C was adapted from the study of Factor and Saenz (2025), a previously validated instrument with a high Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of .979, indicating excellent internal consistency. The instrument was designed to assess the extent of barriers encountered in the implementation of inclusive education, particularly focusing on attitudinal, physical and environmental, policy, resource, and family/community barriers. It consisted of two major parts: Part I, which gathered the demographic profile of the respondents, including age, gender, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, and grade level taught; and Part II, which measured the perceived extent of various barriers using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Data analyses procedure

The data analysis procedure for this study followed a structured three-stage process—preliminary, data gathering, and post-data gathering—beginning with securing institutional approval and informed consent from 60 purposively selected teachers at Marigondon Elementary School, then distributing validated questionnaires either in person or electronically with clear instructions and adequate response time, and finally organizing, encoding, and checking completed responses for completeness before subjecting them to statistical analysis using software. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency and percentage to summarize demographic profiles (age, gender, educational attainment, teaching experience, grade level), mean to determine average barrier scores, and standard deviation to assess response variability, while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to examine significant differences between demographic variables and reported barriers. Throughout this process, strict ethical protocols were observed in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173), including removal of personal identifiers, coding of responses, password-protected data storage, confidentiality assurance, and proper disposal procedures, ensuring that all collected information was used solely for academic research purposes while safeguarding participants' anonymity and rights to voluntary participation and withdrawal.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1
Age and Gender

Age	Gender		f	%
	Male	Female		
26-30		8	8	13.33
31-35	3	14	17	28.33
36-40		17	17	28.33
41-45		8	8	13.33
46-50		6	6	10.00
above 50		4	4	6.67
Total	3	57	60	100.00

The demographic profile of the 60 teacher-respondents at Marigondon Elementary School revealed a predominance of female educators, reflecting the common gender distribution in elementary education, alongside a mostly mid-career age range with substantial teaching experience, though the presence of both younger and older teachers introduced variability in experience levels that could affect the consistency of inclusive practice implementation. Research supports that teacher demographics such as age, gender, and length of service significantly influence inclusive education effectiveness, with younger female educators showing slightly more positive attitudes toward inclusion and teaching experience linked to readiness for adopting innovative strategies (Olayvar, 2022; Wray et al., 2022). These findings suggest that professional development programs should be tailored to address the varying needs of different age groups and experience levels—leveraging the strengths of mid-career teachers while supporting less experienced educators—and should also consider gender dynamics to address potential biases and optimize collaborative teaching approaches for learners with special needs.

Table 2
Highest Educational Attainment

Highest Educational Attainment	f	%
Doctoral Degree Units	4	6.67
Master's degree holder	13	21.67
Master's degree units	40	66.67
Bachelor's graduate	3	5.00
Total	60	100.00

The data indicated that respondents were academically inclined and committed to professional growth, as most held Master's degree units while fewer had only Bachelor's degrees, suggesting a trend toward higher qualification requirements and ongoing development of inclusive competencies. Research supports that teachers' educational qualifications significantly impact instructional effectiveness, confidence, and responsiveness in inclusive classrooms, with highly qualified teachers implementing proactive strategies that lead to better student outcomes and engagement (Shareefa, 2022; Al-Salmi & Al-Qaryouti, 2024; Astiwi et al., 2024; Torregosa et al., 2024). This implies that professional development programs can focus on specialized inclusive education training rather than foundational knowledge, while the school can leverage the advanced research skills of teachers pursuing graduate studies to enhance curriculum adaptation and integrate evidence-based strategies for learners with special needs.

Table 3
Years in Teaching Experience

Years in Teaching Experience	f	%
11 years and above	29	48.33
7-10 years	19	31.67
4-6 years	10	16.67
1-3 years	2	3.33
Total	60	100.00

The findings revealed that Marigondon Elementary School's teaching staff was predominantly composed of highly experienced professionals, which likely contributed to a more stable and informed approach to mainstreaming learners with special needs, while the small proportion of less experienced teachers would require additional support and mentoring to develop confidence in implementing inclusive strategies. Research supports that teaching experience significantly impacts inclusive education effectiveness, as teachers with substantial professional practice demonstrate more positive attitudes (Bethere, 2021), enhanced by explicit training that increases confidence and self-efficacy (Boyle et al., 2023), with studies showing that advanced experience correlates with significantly higher mean scores across physical, academic, and social dimensions of inclusive attitudes (Agai et al., 2025), and those with over 12 years of experience exhibit marked attitudinal differences compared to those with fewer than 5 years (Azizi, 2022). This implies that professional development programs could focus on refining specialized skills and advanced inclusive techniques rather than general training, while experienced teachers could serve as mentors to foster a collaborative culture that strengthens inclusive education implementation.

Table 4

Grade Level Taught		
Grade Level Taught	f	%
Kinder	11	18.33
Grade 1	16	26.67
Grade 2	4	6.67
Grade 3	3	5.00
Grade 4	6	10.00
Grade 5	7	11.67
Grade 6	13	21.67
Total	60	100.00

The distribution of teacher-respondents across grade levels revealed that inclusive education efforts were primarily concentrated in foundational stages (Kinder and Grade 1) and preparatory stages (Grade 6), likely due to critical developmental needs, while middle grades (Grades 2–5) had fewer teachers, potentially reflecting limited staffing or class availability that could affect support for learners with special needs in those levels. Research emphasizes that strategic allocation of learners across grade levels is paramount for fostering inclusive environments given diverse cognitive profiles (Vistar et al., 2024), and historical age-based assignments may not always align with students' academic readiness (Mistretta, 2023). These findings imply that professional development and resource allocation should address the uneven distribution by providing targeted support and inclusive strategies for underrepresented middle grades, while leveraging experienced teachers in Kinder, Grade 1, and Grade 6 to mentor colleagues and model effective practices across all grade levels.

Teachers' Perceived Extent of the Barriers Encountered in the Implementation of Inclusive Education

Table 5
Attitudinal Barriers

Attitudinal Barriers	Mean	SD	VD
Lack of teachers' willingness to accommodate learners with special needs.	3.38	0.88	Neutral
Limited peer acceptance of learners with special needs in classrooms.	3.43	0.93	Agree
Presence of negative stereotypes or bias towards learners with special needs from school staff, including the School Head, teaching and non-teaching personnel.	3.18	1.00	Neutral
Doubts or negative beliefs about the academic potential of learners with special needs	3.37	0.92	Agree
Lack of parental and community support towards the inclusion of learners with special needs in mainstream schools.	3.42	1.05	Agree
Aggregate Mean	3.36	0.96	Agree
Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral; 1.81-2.60=Disagree; 1.00-1.80=Strong Disagree			

The findings indicated that teachers perceived attitudinal barriers to a moderate extent (aggregate mean of 3.36, interpreted as "Agree"), with significant barriers including limited peer acceptance (3.43), doubts about learners' academic potential (3.37), and lack of parental and community support (3.42), while items like teachers' willingness and negative stereotypes from staff were rated as neutral, suggesting variability in perceptions across the school. This moderate perception implied that interventions should focus on fostering positive attitudes through programs promoting inclusive values, peer sensitization, parental and staff training to address biases and build confidence, as research underscores that teachers' attitudes critically influence successful inclusion implementation, with negative perceptions leading to less endorsement of inclusive procedures (Desombre et al., 2021), necessitating comprehensive teacher preparation that builds skills and transforms mindsets toward inclusive pedagogical approaches (Calumpang, 2025). The mixed responses highlighted that teacher readiness, peer interactions, and community engagement played pivotal roles in shaping classroom inclusivity, indicating areas where targeted awareness and professional development could improve support for learners with special needs.

Table 6
Physical and Environmental Barriers

Physical and Environmental Barriers	Mean	SD	VD
Absence of ramps and wheelchair-accessible facilities in school buildings.	3.65	1.12	Agree
Inaccessibility of toilets and other essential facilities for children with mobility impairments.	3.72	1.06	Agree
Inadequate classroom space for learners using assistive devices like wheelchairs.	3.82	0.91	Agree

Difficulty in transportation for learners with special needs reaching the school.	3.55	1.06	Agree
Poor lighting or noisy environments affect learners with visual or hearing impairments.	3.73	0.88	Agree
Aggregate Mean	3.69	1.01	Agree
Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral;1.81-2.60=Disagree;1.00-1.80=Strong Disagree			

The findings revealed that all physical and environmental barrier items were rated "Agree" with an aggregate mean of 3.69, with the highest perceived barrier being inadequate classroom space for assistive device users (3.82), followed by poor lighting/noisy environments (3.73), inaccessible toilets and facilities (3.72), and significant barriers related to absent ramps and transportation difficulties, indicating that school infrastructure and logistical arrangements insufficiently support learners with mobility, visual, and hearing impairments. The consistent agreement across all items suggested that physical barriers were among the most pressing challenges in implementing inclusive education, implying an urgent need for infrastructural improvements including ramps, accessible toilets, adequate classroom space, proper lighting, noise reduction, and transportation support to facilitate equal access, participation, safety, and learning outcomes. Research supports these findings, emphasizing that inaccessible architectural design—lacking ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms—profoundly impedes mobility and participation of students with physical disabilities (Ajani & Ntombela, 2025; Méndez-Ulrich et al., 2023), while broader environmental factors from building design to transportation critically shape educational experiences for diverse learners (Harutyunyan, 2024; Hermanto & Pamungkas, 2023).

Table 7
Policy Barriers

Policy Barriers	Mean	SD	VD
Lack of awareness of the DepEd policies promoting inclusive education.	3.02	1.11	Neutral
Absence of school-based programs that address the needs of learners with special needs.	3.05	1.14	Neutral
Poor implementation of anti-discrimination policies in schools.	3.15	1.02	Neutral
Inadequate teacher training policies on inclusive education practices.	3.73	0.99	Agree
Weak government monitoring of schools' compliance with inclusive education mandates.	3.57	0.93	Agree
Aggregate Mean	3.30	1.04	Neutral
Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral;1.81-2.60=Disagree;1.00-1.80=Strong Disagree			

The findings indicated that teachers perceived policy barriers at a neutral level overall (aggregate mean of 3.30), with items on lack of DepEd policy awareness, absence of school-based programs, and poor anti-discrimination policy implementation rated as neutral (3.02–3.15), while inadequate teacher training policies (3.73) and weak government monitoring (3.57) were rated as "Agree," highlighting these as more significant systemic barriers to effective inclusion. This suggested that while teachers viewed the overall policy framework as moderately supportive, critical gaps in training policies and monitoring limited their capacity to fully implement inclusive practices despite existing mandates. The neutral

perceptions of most policy barriers imply the need for awareness campaigns and policy orientation programs, alongside strengthening teacher training policies and government monitoring to increase compliance and effectiveness, as research emphasizes that policies provide a foundational framework but require active social actor involvement for successful implementation (Charitaki et al., 2022; Supriyanto et al., 2025), while educators' perceptions significantly influence pedagogical approaches (Miranda & Dewanti, 2024), and lack of policy clarity with inadequate enforcement mechanisms impedes effectiveness (Yang et al., 2025).

Table 8
Resource Barriers

Resource Barriers	Mean	SD	VD
Unavailability of trained special education teachers in schools.	3.67	1.10	Agree
Lack of access to learning materials and resources for learners with different disabilities.	3.80	0.94	Agree
Insufficient funding to support inclusive education initiatives.	3.73	0.95	Agree
Lack of access to assistive technologies and devices for learners with special needs.	3.75	0.93	Agree
Inadequate teacher support in handling learners with diverse needs in the classroom.	3.78	0.99	Agree
Aggregate Mean	3.75	0.98	Agree
Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral; 1.81-2.60=Disagree; 1.00-1.80=Strong Disagree			

The findings revealed that all resource barriers were perceived as significant, with an aggregate mean of 3.75 ("Agree"), where the highest-rated barrier was lack of access to learning materials for learners with different disabilities (3.80), followed by inadequate teacher support (3.78), lack of assistive technologies (3.75), insufficient funding, and unavailability of trained special education teachers, indicating that resource constraints were a major challenge in implementing inclusive education. This consistent agreement across all items reflected a critical gap in specialized materials, personnel, and technologies necessary to support diverse learners, implying that schools must prioritize investment in SPED teacher training, learning materials, program funding, and assistive technologies to enhance inclusive implementation and learning outcomes. Research supports these findings, emphasizing that sufficient funding and materials directly influence educators' capacity for differentiated instruction, while assistive technologies and specialized personnel enhance student engagement and outcomes (Goldan et al., 2022), but scarcity of equipment, inadequate facilities, and insufficient financial backing significantly impede successful inclusion (Mbon et al., 2023), particularly in developing nations where policies often fail due to poor budgetary allocations, inadequate monitoring, and lack of political will (Atika, 2024; Mbon et al., 2023).

Table 9
Family and Community Barriers

Family and Community Barriers	Mean	SD	VD
Lack of family support for sending learners with special needs to mainstream schools.	3.62	1.03	Agree
Low community awareness about inclusive education and its benefits.	3.78	0.87	Agree

Presence of stigma in the community towards learners with special needs attending regular schools.	3.73	0.84	Agree
Limited parental involvement in school activities that promote inclusion.	3.53	1.00	Agree
Inadequate support from local leaders in advocating for inclusive education in the community.	3.70	0.83	Agree
Aggregate Mean	3.67	0.91	Agree
Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral;1.81-2.60=Disagree;1.00-1.80=Strong Disagree			

The findings revealed that all family and community barrier items were rated as "Agree" with an aggregate mean of 3.67, with the highest-rated barrier being low community awareness about inclusive education (3.78), followed by community stigma (3.73), inadequate support from local leaders (3.70), lack of family support (3.62), and limited parental involvement (3.53), indicating that social and cultural factors from external stakeholders significantly challenged inclusive education implementation. This consistent agreement suggested that inclusive education initiatives must extend beyond the school to engage parents, community members, and local leaders through awareness campaigns, community workshops, and parent involvement programs to build a supportive environment. Research underscores that parental involvement and community awareness significantly affect learner engagement (Wanbin et al., 2023), as family members provide invaluable insights into children's behavior and learning preferences for efficacious instructional methodologies (Mokhtar et al., 2023), while synergistic parent-educator collaboration fosters conducive learning environments (Muhammad et al., 2024), and active family participation in decision-making and goal-setting enhances academic progress, social-emotional development, and self-advocacy skills (Kunwar & Adhikari, 2023).

Significant Difference Between the Demographic Profile of the Respondents and the Extent of Barriers Encountered in Inclusive Education

Table 10
Significant Difference Between the Demographic Profile of the Respondents and the Extent of Barriers Encountered in Inclusive Education

Demographic Profile	Stat	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	1.782	0.127	Fail to Reject H_0	Not significant
Gender	0.456	0.650	Fail to Reject H_0	Not significant
Highest Educational Attainment	3.245	0.027*	Reject H_0	Significant
Years in Teaching Experience	4.673	0.006**	Reject H_0	Significant
Grade Level	2.184	0.058	Fail to Reject H_0	Not significant

Note: $p < 0.05$ = Significant

The analysis revealed that educational attainment ($p=0.027$) and years of teaching experience ($p=0.006$) significantly influenced teachers' perceptions of barriers to inclusive education, with more academically qualified and experienced teachers better able to identify and manage challenges, while age ($p=0.127$), gender ($p=0.65$), and grade level taught ($p=0.058$) showed no significant differences, indicating that certain barriers were systemic

across all teacher groups. These findings imply that professional development programs should be differentiated based on teachers' educational background and experience, providing targeted training and support for less experienced or lower-qualified teachers, while system-wide interventions should address common challenges affecting all teachers regardless of demographics to promote equitable inclusive practices. Research supports these results, showing that teachers with advanced degrees implement evidence-based practices more effectively (Torregosa et al., 2024), specific inclusive training enhances understanding and positive attitudes (Kurteshi & Zymberi, 2025), and educational attainment and training consistently link to heightened teacher knowledge and skills (Sabanal et al., 2025), though some studies note that excessive exposure to inclusive settings may paradoxically lead to less positive attitudes (Bethere, 2021), emphasizing that the quality and nature of professional development are more crucial than mere exposure (Masongsong et al., 2023; Olayvar, 2022).

Findings

The analysis of the gathered data yielded the following findings pertaining to the specific sub-problems of the study. Firstly, regarding the demographic profile of the teacher-respondents, the majority were female and fell within the mid-career age brackets of 31-40 years old. A high level of academic engagement was evident, as most respondents were either pursuing or had completed postgraduate studies. Furthermore, nearly half of the teaching staff possessed substantial experience with 11 years or more in service, and they were primarily distributed across the foundational and culminating grade levels of elementary education.

Secondly, concerning the extent of barriers encountered, teachers perceived significant challenges across multiple domains. Attitudinal barriers, such as limited peer acceptance and lack of external support, were acknowledged to a moderate degree. However, more pronounced barriers were identified in the physical and environmental domain, particularly inadequate classroom space and inaccessible facilities. Resource limitations emerged as the most critical challenge, with severe shortages in specialized learning materials, assistive technologies, and direct teacher support. Family and community barriers, including low awareness and prevailing stigma, were also seen as considerable impediments. Policy barriers were generally viewed neutrally, except for specific, critical gaps in teacher training provisions and governmental monitoring.

Finally, the statistical analysis revealed that significant differences in the perception of these barriers existed based on the teachers' highest educational attainment and their years of teaching experience. In contrast, no significant differences were found when the barriers were analyzed in relation to the respondents' age, gender, or the specific grade level they taught.

CONCLUSION

In light of the findings, it is concluded that the implementation of inclusive education at Marigondon Elementary School is confronted by multifaceted barriers perceived by teachers as significant. While attitudinal barriers are present, the most pronounced challenges lie in the physical environment, critical shortages in resources (human, material, and technological), and insufficient family and community engagement. Policy-related barriers, particularly concerning teacher training and government monitoring, further exacerbate these challenges. The influence of teachers' educational attainment and years of experience on their perception of these barriers underscores the need for differentiated professional support. Therefore, a

comprehensive and systemic intervention is imperative to address these interconnected obstacles and enhance the effective mainstreaming of learners with special needs.

Based on the conclusion, it is recommended that the Action Plan developed from this study's findings be adopted and implemented. This plan is designed to systematically address the identified barriers across all dimensions, attitudinal, physical/environmental, policy, resource, and family/community—through targeted strategies, assigned responsibilities, resource allocation, and a defined timeline. Its implementation will provide a structured pathway for Marigondon Elementary School to overcome the challenges to inclusive education, thereby fostering a more supportive, accessible, and effective learning environment for all learners, including those with special needs.

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