

Challenges of Non-Special Education Teachers in Handling an Inclusive Learning Environment of Diverse Learners

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Abstract: This study explored the challenges of 15 non-special education (non-SPED) teachers in handling inclusive classrooms at Day-as Elementary School. Using a qualitative-phenomenological research design, the study aimed to understand how mainstream teachers perceive, navigate, and respond to the challenges of teaching students with diverse learning needs. Data were collected through interviews and classroom observations and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's Six-Phase Framework for Thematic Analysis. Findings revealed that teachers faced difficulties in implementing differentiated instruction due to limited training, preparation time, and confidence in addressing the needs of students with special educational needs (SEN). Limited collaboration with parents, administrators, and SPED professionals further hindered classroom management and progress monitoring. Despite these challenges, teachers employed adaptive strategies, including differentiated assessments, contextualized instruction, and collaborative learning activities, to support student engagement and learning outcomes. Access to teaching resources, mentorship, and administrative support emerged as critical factors in strengthening teacher competence and promoting inclusion. The study suggests the development of a structured capacity-building program emphasizing collaborative professional learning, technology integration, and reflective practice to enhance teacher effectiveness in inclusive settings. Implementing such a program can improve teacher confidence, foster a supportive school culture, and ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students.

Keywords: Inclusive education, non-SPED teachers, challenges, teaching strategies, support systems, diverse learners, qualitative, Cordova, Cebu, Philippine.

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SCOPE

INTRODUCTION

Rationale of the Study

All students in an inclusive classroom deserve equal attention, respect, and opportunities to learn. Ensuring that every learner, regardless of ability or background, receives appropriate instruction and support is a fundamental principle of inclusive education. However, many non-SPED (non-Special Education) teachers experience significant challenges in managing inclusive classes because their professional training and preparation often fall short in addressing the diverse needs of learners with disabilities. These inadequacies lead to classroom management difficulties, teacher frustration, and limited academic growth among students with special needs. Evaluating these challenges is crucial to determine how non-SPED teachers cope, the teaching methods they employ, and the areas that require professional reinforcement and institutional support.

In countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, inclusive education is a well-established and systematically implemented practice. Both countries have institutionalized clear policies ensuring that teachers in inclusive settings receive continuous professional training, mentoring, and evaluation. These programs enable teachers to adopt evidence-based strategies for differentiated instruction, classroom management, and student engagement. As a result, learners with and without disabilities are provided with equitable educational opportunities. Such examples demonstrate that when inclusive education is backed by sustained teacher support and structured professional development, both educators and learners thrive.

In the Southeast Asian region, countries demonstrate varying levels of success in implementing inclusive education. Singapore and Malaysia, for instance, have introduced comprehensive professional development initiatives that strengthen teachers' competencies in handling diverse learners. Their efforts include specialized workshops, mentoring programs, and curriculum adaptation strategies that make classrooms more responsive to individual needs. Conversely, countries such as Thailand and Indonesia continue to face persistent challenges brought about by limited funding, inadequate training, and lack of community awareness regarding inclusive practices. These inconsistencies among neighboring countries illustrate that the success of inclusion depends heavily on continuous government support and the availability of educational resources for both teachers and learners.

In the Philippine context, Republic Act No. 10533, known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, mandates the integration of inclusive education as a national educational commitment. Despite this legal foundation, the country continues to struggle in transforming inclusive education from policy into actual practice. Many public schools face recurring issues such as insufficient training for non-SPED teachers, shortage of instructional materials, and lack of appropriate facilities for learners with disabilities. The absence of regular follow-up programs and limited funding for inclusive initiatives further weaken the implementation process. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms remains inconsistent, creating a gap between the country's aspirations for inclusivity and the reality within the classroom setting.

In the Visayas region, the government and educational institutions have initiated several training programs designed to prepare non-SPED teachers for inclusive classrooms. However, these interventions are often limited to one-time seminars or short workshops without sustained monitoring and follow-up support. After training, teachers are often left to manage on their own, facing large class sizes, minimal resources, and diverse learning needs without adequate assistance. This lack of continuous professional development and material support has contributed to persistent instructional challenges, especially in rural schools. As a result, student outcomes remain low, and teachers experience professional burnout and feelings of inadequacy.

At Day-as Elementary School, non-SPED teachers are tasked with handling inclusive classrooms, but they primarily rely on the minimal training provided by the school. Although these trainings are conducted with good intentions, they are insufficient to fully equip teachers with the knowledge and skills required for effective inclusion. Teachers express uncertainty and frustration, feeling that their efforts fall short of meeting their students' individual needs. The absence of consistent technical guidance, adaptive learning materials, and institutional backing further aggravates the situation. This reveals a pressing need for comprehensive and ongoing support systems that would empower teachers to become more effective facilitators of inclusive learning.

While there is extensive research on inclusive education, few studies focus specifically on the lived experiences of non-SPED teachers who manage inclusive classes in Philippine public schools. Understanding these experiences is crucial in identifying the gaps between training and practice, the challenges teachers face daily, and the coping mechanisms they develop in the absence of sufficient support. This study seeks to explore these lived experiences to generate insights that can inform educational leaders, policymakers, and training providers. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute

to the development of responsive professional development programs and policies that will strengthen inclusive teaching practices and enhance learning outcomes for all students.

Theoretical Lenses

This study is anchored on multiple theoretical perspectives that collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of the lived experiences of non-SPED teachers handling inclusive classrooms. The integration of these theories; Behaviorism, Cognitivism, Social Learning Theory, Experiential Learning Theory, Ecological Systems Theory, and Transformative Learning Theory, offers an enriched view of how teachers' behaviors, cognition, environment, and reflection interact as they adapt to the demands of inclusive education.

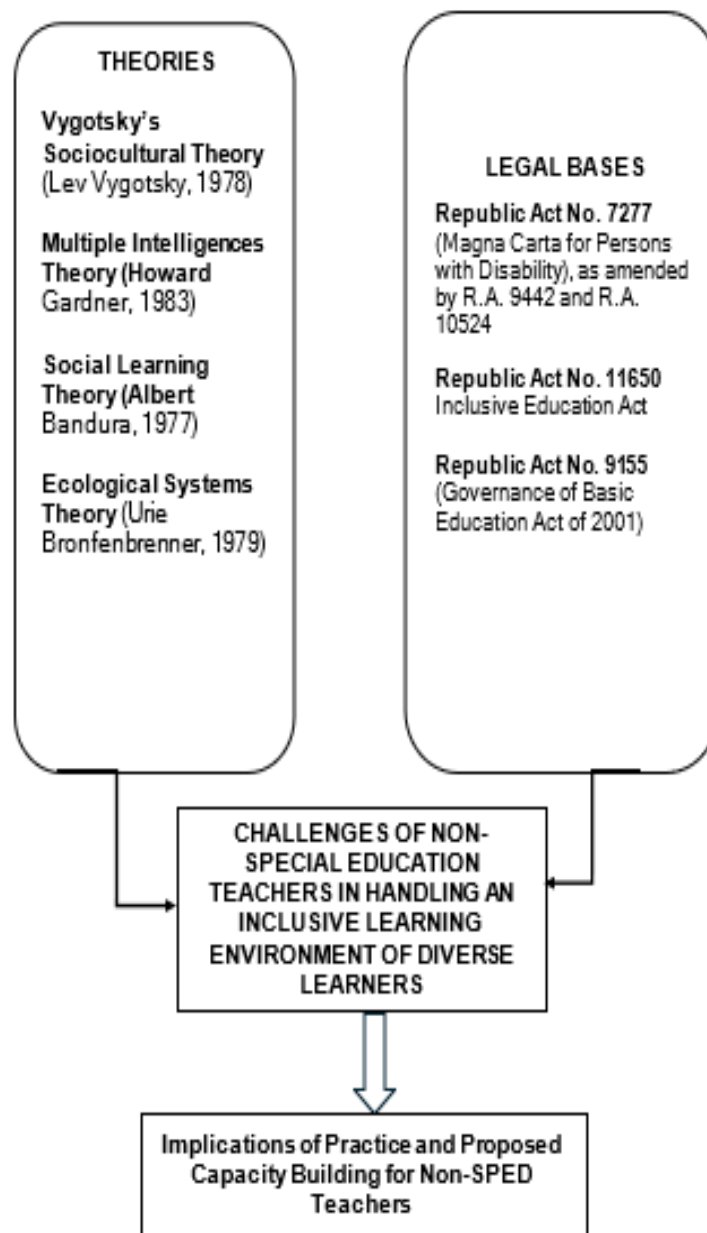


Figure 1 Theoretical and Conceptual Lenses of the Study

Behaviorism emphasizes that behavior is learned and maintained through reinforcement and conditioning. In inclusive classrooms, this theory relates to how teachers manage student behavior by using positive reinforcement and consistent routines. A study by Torregosa[1] found that SPED teachers could provide more effective positive reinforcement than general education teachers. The application of behaviorist principles allows teachers to use tailor-made strategies that can improve engagement and classroom management. However, this could not fully supplement cognitive and

emotional needs. This is the reason why there is always a backup plan after utilizing the behaviorist approach.

Cognitivism on the other hand, focuses on how individuals construct knowledge through mental processes such as perception, memory, and problem-solving. In inclusive settings, teachers engage learners through scaffolding and discovery learning, emphasizing understanding over memorization. Ramaila[2] emphasized that when a teaching approach is focused on the learner, there is a significant improvement in the critical thinking, motivation, and academic performance of the learner. This scenario supports the guideline of cognitivism.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory provides another key perspective by highlighting that people learn by observing and modeling others. Non-SPED teachers acquire inclusive teaching skills by observing SPED teachers, collaborating with colleagues, and imitating effective practices. The study by Wijarwadi[3] was anchored on Bandura's Social Learning Theory. It manifested how teachers can learn effectively by collaboration, observation, and interaction with colleagues. Through sharing effective interventions, teachers learn to adopt what they feel could be useful for their classroom. This collaborative expertise provides a better understanding of what teachers can effectively do in their classrooms.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory further explains how teachers learn from direct experiences through a four-stage cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. For non-SPED teachers, each classroom encounter with diverse learners becomes a source of learning and reflection. Ho and Lau[4] stated in their study that reflective practice and metacognitive awareness are two essential elements in experiential learning. When a learner reflects on their experiences and examines their way of thinking, they can make a more effective internalization. This situation is connected to Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, which emphasizes learning as a cyclical process of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) projects the impact of teachers' experiences. Non-SPED teachers' performance is also marked by how they establish communication among the parents of their learners, other teachers, and school leaders. Receiving support from the local education office and from the national government is also crucial. The Inclusive Education Act of 2022 brings the best possible outcome in the setting. It supports teachers and students in inclusive education. However, Jardinez and Natividad[5] narrated in their study the challenges in inclusive education that most teachers often encounter. Lack of inclusive training brings down teachers' confidence. There should be a constant professional development for teachers that will increase their professional growth.

Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory conveys how non-SPED teachers transform their thoughts about inclusive education. At first, they might think of it as a tedious process, but when they fully understand its meaning and how it can improve professional growth. During this time, they start to accept the concept of inclusive education and its mandate. Yang and Han[6] studied a native Chinese language teacher in Australia and how everything changes through reflective practice and self-assessment. This transformative learning experience impacts their perception and gives them a new perspective on the teaching and learning process.

These theories explain how behavioral, cognitive, environmental, and reflective dimensions of teachers' adaptation to inclusive education. The quantitative nature of the study brings a strong connection to how these theories could help navigate and prove the study's assumption. Most non-SPED teachers assigned to teach in an inclusive classroom might encounter difficulties and challenges while trying to discover their own capacity to handle an inclusive classroom.

On the other hand, there are several legal bases that promote and safeguard inclusive education in the Philippines. These include Republic Act No. 7277 or the Magna Carta for Persons with Disability, as amended by Republic Acts No. 9442 and No. 10524; Republic Act No. 9155 or the

Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001; DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009, which are helpful to help children with disabilities participate in a normal classroom. DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019, is one useful legal basis that also sets the policy guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program.

Republic Act No. 7277, also known as the *Magna Carta for Persons with Disability*, as amended by R.A. 9442 and R.A. 10524. This legal basis allows persons with disabilities to be with other students in a regular classroom without being discriminated against. With this law, they can be given opportunities to join and attend classes like a normal growing child. As the law applied, amendments were made to ensure it serves its purpose in inclusive education. The sole purpose of the law is to provide equal opportunities to learners with special needs. Moreover, the law mandates schools and teachers to acknowledge learners with disabilities and never let them feel left out. Schools must secure a safe learning environment for them.

On the other hand, **Republic Act No. 11650**, known as the *Inclusive Education Act of 2022*. It contains information on providing support to learners with disability when enrolling in school. The law mandates that private and public schools accept learners with disabilities regardless of their background. They are prohibited from discriminating and choosing who can enroll in their school; otherwise, they will face consequences if they do. Together with this law is a mandate that schools should require teachers, school staff, and the students' parents to create an Individualized Education Program (IEPs). This program contains the learner's needs and strengths, which is very useful in determining what kind of help the learner needs.

In support of these national mandates, **Republic Act No. 9155**, or the *Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001*, complements the inclusive education framework by strengthening school-based management and recognizing the crucial role of teachers in ensuring quality education for all. This law empowers schools to make context-based decisions that address the unique needs of their learners. Accordingly, it provides non-SPED teachers with both the authority and accountability to implement inclusive strategies and adapt their instruction for diverse learners. Hence, this act justifies the focus of the study on teachers' lived experiences, as it acknowledges them as key agents in translating inclusive policies into effective classroom practices.

Furthermore, **DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009**, titled *Inclusive Education as a Strategy for Increasing Participation Rate of Children*, ignites the interest of the educational sector, as this can increase school involvement in making their institution inclusive. It is the mandate of this law that inclusive teaching practices should give equal opportunity to every learner in the classroom. About this study, non-SPED teachers should strive to cope with the demand in inclusive education. They should manage their classes by giving equal opportunities to both typical learners and those with special needs.

Finally, **DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019**, or the *Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program*, is an overall framework that ensures inclusivity in the Philippine educational system. This policy prioritizes learner-centered and differentiated instruction to include everyone in the classroom. Teachers are trained to practice inclusivity through inclusive pedagogy that can harness 21st-century skills for different learners. In this study, non-SPED teachers in an inclusive classroom play a crucial role in establishing inclusive education. Their experiences are necessary to examine what else to improve, not only in the policy but also in teachers' training and professional growth. Helping teachers improve will allow them to be effective in an inclusive classroom.

All these legal basis strengthens the nature of the study and how this can help assess non-SPED teachers' endeavors in teaching and dealing with learners in an inclusive classroom. The legal basis gives them the mandate to do their best as teachers despite the struggles and the unfamiliar nature of inclusive education. On the other hand, the theories allow non-SPED teachers to look forward to how they can adjust in their situation and improve over time.

Several related studies give empirical evidence that could present better understanding on the experiences of non-SPED teachers in an inclusive classroom. Age is not only a number but also

pertains to several things that a person can do base on his age. It is relevant to the person's experiences. Teaching effectiveness is influenced by age. Age significantly contributes to the teacher's performance in the classroom. The adaptability and the application of different teaching strategies in an inclusive classroom are also connected to the teacher's age. Younger teachers possess fresh ideas and new perspectives on how to cater to students with learning needs. However, it is also observed that younger teachers are not disciplinarians[7]. On the other hand, traditional methods of teaching are still applicable in an inclusive classroom. There are still many situations in which traditional teaching is the best, especially for places where technology cannot thrive[8].

Hultgren and Owens[9] presented reasons why teachers are leaving the workforce and maintaining the intention to leave after several years of service. It is mainly because of too much workload, not being fully satisfied with the agency, and losing interest in the profession. And the majority of these teachers who would like to resign are males. Gender is crucial, and ensuring equal opportunities for both male and female in the workplace, like professional support and institutional policies, is essential for sustaining a stable and committed teaching workforce.

Research recommends that teachers should have a well-structured classroom management to minimize disruptive behavior. Teachers should assess the behavior of their learners to create an appropriate group for them. This approach makes their job easy if they can handle the behavior of their students[10]. There is also a great advantage if teachers use positive reinforcement. Praise and rewards are effective in catching the attention of the students. When students' effort receives recognition, they begin to feel important and stay engaged. Over time, when teachers give intrinsic motivation, their students will appreciate learning and put value on it[11]. Effective classroom management requires training on the nature of the job.

According to Sayman[12], schools offering inclusive education should allow their teachers to attend training. During training, they are taught how to address the behavioral issues of the learners and even how to keep their classroom safe. Classroom management strategies do not only include how to keep students' attention to the teacher, but also to keep everybody in the classroom safe. Proactive discipline is also necessary to keep order in the classroom. In managing the classroom, public school teachers face a challenging scenario. Large class size is one of the reasons why effective classroom management can be hard to implement. The ratio between teachers and students is not in proportion. Public school teachers need to equip themselves to be effective in handling inclusive classes amidst the challenging class size.

Engida[13] found that when teachers plan their lessons well, teach clearly, and manage their classrooms properly, students perform better in school. This shows that teachers who receive good training and education are more effective and help students achieve higher academic results.

Large class sizes, limited resources, and inadequate training in inclusive education mostly hinder teacher effectiveness in the classroom. Although teachers have already tried using different strategies to help learners with special needs, it has still been of no avail. This is the reason why teachers cannot provide all the necessary support for all learners in their inclusive classroom. The challenges are hard to manage, but ongoing training for these teachers could lead to progress[14].

Additionally, Benemerito[15] stated that training improves teachers' teaching skills. Teachers handling an inclusive classroom can best deliver their lessons if they have adequate training in special education. Learners with special needs require close attention from teachers who are familiar to their situation. The study suggests that schools should regularly train teachers and give them the right support so they can handle inclusive classrooms more effectively.

Foykas[16] found that teachers need more than just basic knowledge to work well in inclusive classrooms. Teachers do best when they take part in professional learning that changes how they think and teach. Their confidence in themselves, the training they get, and the experience they gain from working directly with students all matter. Confidence helps teachers feel capable, training gives them useful tools and strategies, and experience helps them handle problems and meet

students' needs. When these three things come together, teachers are better able to support all students in an inclusive classroom.

According Lawrence[17] knowing students' learning styles can help teachers teach better. When teachers understand these differences, they can change the way they teach so all students can learn better. This can help students stay interested, understand lessons more easily, and do better in school. The study also talks about how to use learning styles in lessons, classroom management, and testing. It warns that teachers should not put students into strict categories, but instead use flexible ways that fit each student. Using different teaching methods to match students' learning styles can make classrooms more inclusive and help students reach their potential.

Molina[18] found that teachers who have no training in Special Education face many challenges when teaching students with special needs. These challenges can be affected by things like the teacher's age, experience, and gender, with some teachers feeling less confident or prepared. The study shows that teaching students with different learning needs is not easy without the proper skills. It also points out that giving teachers training and support can help them teach better and create a classroom where all students can learn well.

Mate looked at how using assistive technology in inclusive classrooms can help students with disabilities learn better. Tools like text-to-speech software, special devices, and communication aids can make students more involved, independent, and able to participate in class. The study also found some problems, like teachers not having enough training, limited money, and little support from school leaders. Although, the research shows that while assistive technology cannot fix every learning problem, it can really help students with disabilities do better when schools support it.

According to the study of Compania[19] teachers can be ready to teach in inclusive classrooms if they know and use the right teaching strategies. When teachers organize their classrooms well, set clear rules, and plan lessons that fit the needs of all students, they can handle the challenges of inclusive education more effectively. Delivering lessons in a way that considers students with special needs helps all learners understand and participate better. So, being prepared means that teachers can support every student, make learning fair and engaging, and create a classroom where everyone has the chance to succeed.

Maqhubela[20] studied how working together with different people can help improve learning and make schools run better in the OR Tambo Inland District in South Africa. The study looked at teachers, principals, students, parents, community members, and outside partners. It found that schools where everyone works together and shares responsibilities are better at helping students succeed and growing as a school. Collaboration lets schools use different ideas, skills, and resources in a better way. The study also suggested that schools should make clear plans for working together and involve partners like local businesses, alumni, and the community. This means that teamwork among all stakeholders helps schools improve learning and become stronger institutions.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

This study examined the lived experiences of non-SPED teachers in handling an inclusive learning environment of learners with diverse needs in Day-as Elementary School, Cordova, Cebu, for the school year 2025-2026 a basis for implications of the study toward a proposed capacity-building program to strengthen non-SPED teachers' competence in inclusive education.

Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What challenges do non-SPED teachers encounter in managing classrooms with diverse learners under inclusive education?
2. How do non-SPED teachers adapt their teaching strategies to address the needs of students with special educational needs in an inclusive setting?

3. What support systems (e.g., training, collaboration, school policies) do non-SPED teachers find most helpful in facilitating inclusive education?
4. What program can be proposed to strengthen the capacity of Non-SPED teachers in effectively handling inclusive education?
5. Based on the findings, what implications can be drawn from the study?

Significance of the Study

The study on the lived experiences of teachers in handling an inclusive learning environment of diverse learners was significant as it sought to provide a deeper understanding of the realities faced by non-SPED teachers in inclusive settings. The findings of this study were beneficial to the following:

School Administrators. Results of this study guided administrators in formulating policies, programs, and support systems that aided non-SPED teachers in implementing inclusive education more effectively.

SPED Teachers. The study fostered collaboration between SPED and non- SPED teachers by highlighting the specific areas where non-SPED teachers needed assistance and mentoring.

Non-SPED Teachers. This study gave them a platform to voice their challenges and share their strategies in handling inclusive education. It also served as a reflection of their practices, encouraged professional growth, and inspired them to adapt more effective approaches in inclusive classrooms.

Students with Special Educational Needs. The study indirectly benefited learners by providing insights into how their learning experiences could be improved through better teaching strategies, supportive environments, and strengthened teacher capacity.

Policy Makers and Education Authorities. The findings provided valuable information that informed the Department of Education and other agencies in designing training programs, allocating resources, and creating policies that promoted inclusivity in schools.

The Researcher. This study deepened the researchers' knowledge and skills in the field of inclusive education. By exploring the lived experiences of non-SPED teachers, the researchers gained valuable insights into the challenges, strategies, and support systems in managing inclusive classrooms. Furthermore, the formulation of a proposed intervention program provided them with an understanding of best practices that could strengthen teacher capacity and improve learning outcomes for students in inclusive settings.

Future Researchers. This study contributed to the body of knowledge in inclusive education and served as a reference for future studies focusing on teacher experiences, classroom challenges, and inclusive teaching practices.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section presents the methodologies that will be utilized in the study, such as the research design, the research respondents, the research locale, the research instrument, the ethical considerations, the data gathering procedure, and the data analysis.

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative-phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of non-SPED or receiving teachers in handling inclusive education. Phenomenology was an appropriate approach because it sought to understand and interpret how individuals made sense of their personal and professional experiences within their specific contexts. This study

provided a framework for uncovering how non-SPED teachers perceived, responded to, and navigated the realities of teaching learners with diverse needs in inclusive classrooms.

Data gathered from interviews and classroom observations were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's Six-Phase Framework for Thematic Analysis (2006), which allowed for a systematic yet flexible interpretation of qualitative data. The six phases included: (1) Familiarization with the data, where the researcher read and re-read transcripts to gain a deep understanding of participants' narratives; (2) Generating initial codes, by identifying and labeling meaningful features of the data relevant to the research question; (3) Searching for themes, where similar codes were grouped together to form broader patterns of meaning; (4) Reviewing themes, by checking the coherence and consistency of the emerging themes against the data set; (5) Defining and naming themes, which involved refining each theme's scope and essence; and (6) Producing the report, where the themes were synthesized and interpreted to provide an in-depth account of the participants' lived experiences.

This analytical approach was particularly effective for capturing the subjective and context-specific experiences of non-SPED teachers because it recognized that meaning was constructed through individual experiences situated within real classroom settings. Unlike more rigid analytical methods, Braun and Clarke's framework emphasized flexibility and reflexivity, allowing the researcher to engage deeply with participants' emotions, perspectives, and professional realities. It also highlighted patterns of meaning that revealed both shared experiences and individual differences among teachers. By doing so, the analysis not only identified the challenges and coping strategies of non-SPED teachers but also illuminated how contextual factors, such as school resources, administrative support, and classroom diversity, shaped their experiences. Ultimately, this approach provided a rich, nuanced understanding of inclusive education as it was lived and practiced by mainstream teachers in real-world settings.

Flow of the Study

The Input–Process–Output (IPO) model was a conceptual framework that illustrated how a study or system transformed initial resources or information (inputs) through a series of actions or methods (processes) to produce meaningful results or outcomes (outputs). It helped organize and visualize the logical flow of research, showing how each stage contributed to achieving the study's objectives.

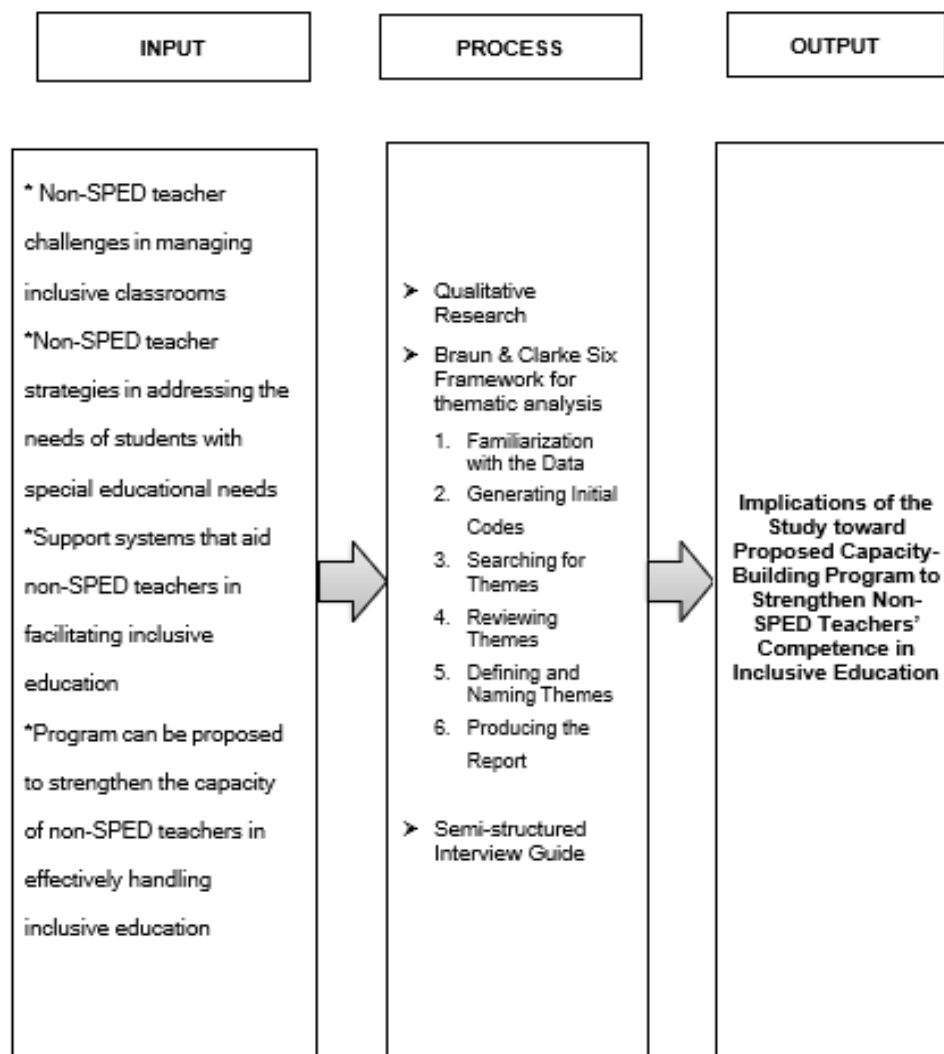


Figure 2. The Flow of the Study

The flow of the study was presented through three interconnected phases: Input, Process, and Output, which together illustrated how the research captured and utilized the lived experiences of non-SPED teachers in inclusive classrooms. In the Input Phase, the study focused on the key variables, specifically the challenges faced by non-SPED teachers in managing inclusive classrooms, the strategies they employed to address the needs of learners with special educational needs, and the support systems that facilitated inclusive education. The participants for the study consisted of fifteen (15) non-SPED teachers from Day-as Elementary School, and data were collected using qualitative methods, using a semi-structured interview guide.

During the Process Phase, the collected data were transcribed, organized, and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's Six-Phase Framework for Thematic Analysis, which allowed for a detailed and systematic examination of the participants' subjective experiences. This process involved six steps: (1) Familiarization with the data, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Searching for themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming themes, and (6) Producing the final report. Through this approach, patterns and themes emerged that reflected the teachers' challenges, strategies, and support systems in inclusive classrooms, providing a rich understanding of their lived experiences.

Finally, in the Output Phase, the analyzed data and identified themes informed the development of a proposed capacity-building training program for non-SPED teachers. This program aimed to strengthen their skills, knowledge, and strategies for managing inclusive classrooms effectively, thereby translating the research findings into actionable interventions that enhanced inclusive education practices.

Environment

The study was conducted at Day-as Elementary School, Day-as, Cordova, Cebu, a public school located in the municipality of Cordova, Cebu, under the supervision of the Schools Division of Cebu Province. The school catered to learners from the local community and nearby barangays, providing accessible basic education from kindergarten to the elementary levels. Over the years, Day-as Elementary School had continuously developed its programs, facilities, and teaching force to address the needs of its growing student population and to align with the Department of Education's vision of delivering quality, equitable, and inclusive education for all. In line with this commitment, the school actively practiced inclusive education. It welcomed learners with diverse backgrounds, abilities, and learning needs, ensuring that every child had equal access to learning opportunities.

Teachers implemented varied strategies such as differentiated instruction, peer collaboration, and remedial support to cater to individual differences. The school also maintained a learner-centered and child-friendly environment, promoting respect, cooperation, and acceptance among pupils. By fostering inclusivity, Day-as Elementary School demonstrated its dedication to creating a supportive educational environment where all learners could thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.



Figure 3 Location Map of the Research Environment

Participants

The participants of the study were fifteen (15) teachers from Day-as Elementary School who handled inclusive classrooms during the School Year 2025– 2026. These teachers represented

different subject areas and grade levels, each possessing unique professional backgrounds and experiences in implementing inclusive education. Their demographic profiles, teaching experiences, and academic qualifications provided valuable insights into the challenges and strategies involved in managing classrooms with diverse learners. The following were brief descriptions of each teacher participant:

Teacher 1 taught Grade 5 English in an inclusive classroom. She had been in the service for 5 years, was 29 years old, single, and had earned units in MAEd English.

Teacher 2 handled Mathematics for Grades 4 and 5. She had 8 years of teaching experience, was 32 years old, married, and had completed units in MAEd Educational Management.

Teacher 3 taught Science in an inclusive setup. She had been teaching for 10 years, was 35 years old, married, and had earned units in MAEd Science Education.

Teacher 4 was an Araling Panlipunan (Social Studies) teacher. He had 12 years of experience, was 37 years old, married, and had not yet enrolled in any graduate program.

Teacher 5 taught Filipino to Grades 5 and 6 learners. She had 6 years of teaching experience, was 31 years old, single, and had not yet enrolled in any graduate program.

Teacher 6 handled Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao (EsP) in an inclusive classroom. He had been in the service for 14 years, was 39 years old, married, and had not yet enrolled in any graduate program.

Teacher 7 taught MAPEH (Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health). She had 9 years of experience, was 33 years old, single, and had earned units in MAEd Physical Education.

Teacher 8 handled English and Reading Remediation for primary learners. She had been teaching for 15 years, was 41 years old, married, and held a Master's degree in Supervision.

Teacher 9 taught Mathematics and TLE (Technology and Livelihood Education). He had 10 years of teaching experience, was 35 years old, married, and had completed units in MAEd Mathematics.

Teacher 10 taught Science for Grades 3 and 4. She had 11 years of experience, was 38 years old, married, and had earned units in MAEd Science.

Teacher 11 taught Filipino to intermediate learners. She had 13 years of experience, was 40 years old, married, and had completed units in MAEd Filipino.

Teacher 12 handled Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao (EsP) for Grades 5 and 6. She had been teaching for 17 years, was 44 years old, married, and had not yet enrolled in any graduate program.

Teacher 13 taught English and served as a class adviser for Grade 6. She had 8 years of teaching experience, was 32 years old, single, and had earned units in MAEd English Language Teaching.

Teacher 14 taught Mathematics in an inclusive classroom. He had 7 years of experience, was 31 years old, single, and had not yet enrolled in any graduate program.

Teacher 15 taught Science and Research. She had 16 years of teaching experience, was 42 years old, married, and had not yet enrolled in any graduate program.

Instrument

The primary research instrument for this study was a semi-structured interview guide developed by the researcher. The participants consisted of fifteen (15) teachers who handled inclusive classrooms at Day-as Elementary School during the School Year 2025–2026. The interview guide contained open-ended questions designed to explore the lived experiences of these non-SPED teachers as they managed classrooms with diverse learners. Specifically, the questions aimed to elicit detailed responses about the challenges they encountered in managing inclusive classrooms, the strategies they employed to address the needs of learners with special educational needs, the types of support they considered essential in facilitating inclusive education, and their insights and recommendations

for enhancing teacher preparation and support programs in inclusive settings. Probing questions were also included to encourage teachers to elaborate on their experiences, reflections, and professional practices. To ensure that the instrument was clear, relevant, and aligned with the research objectives, it was validated by three experts, namely the researcher's adviser, school principal, and master teacher.

The data gathered from the interviews were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's Six-Phase Framework for Thematic Analysis. This approach guided the researcher in identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning within the participants' narratives. The six phases included familiarization with the data through repeated reading and transcription; generating initial codes by systematically highlighting significant ideas; searching for themes by grouping related codes; reviewing themes to ensure coherence and relevance; defining and naming themes to clearly capture their essence; and producing the final report by integrating the analysis with direct quotations from the participants. Through this process, the study generated rich and meaningful insights into the realities faced by non-SPED teachers in implementing inclusive education, serving as the foundation for the development of a proposed capacity building for non-SPED teachers.

Ethical Considerations

This study was reviewed and approved by the Research and Ethics Committee of the Graduate School, Cebu Technological University. All participants were fully informed about the purpose, objectives, and nature of the study before their participation. Informed consent was obtained through a signed consent form, which clearly outlined their voluntary participation. Participants were assured that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without facing any form of penalty or consequence.

The **confidentiality and privacy** of all participants were strictly maintained throughout the research process. Personal information and collected data were treated as highly confidential and were stored securely by the researcher. Only the researcher had access to the raw data, which was used solely for academic purposes. Identifying details were removed or coded to protect participant anonymity in all reports and publications.

Collaborative Study Terms of Reference. This study formed part of the academic requirements of the university and was conducted solely by the researcher. All expenses related to the study were personally shouldered by the researcher. Only the researcher had the right to publish the study; however, the thesis adviser could co-publish it, provided that the researcher's name appeared as a co-author to acknowledge their primary contribution.

Data Gathering Procedure

The process of data gathering for this study was divided into three major stages: Preliminary Stage, Data Gathering Stage, and Post Data Gathering Stage. Each stage outlined the systematic steps undertaken to ensure the credibility and rigor of the research process.

Preliminary Stage

At the outset, the researcher sought approval from the Office of the Cebu City Division Superintendent to conduct the study. Upon approval, formal communication was made with the school head of Day-as Elementary School and the identified non- SPED teachers handling inclusive classrooms. An informed consent form was then distributed to the participants, clearly explaining the purpose, scope, and procedures of the study, as well as their rights, including voluntary participation and withdrawal at any time.

To ensure the quality and validity of the research tool, the semi-structured interview guide underwent content validation by a panel of three experts in education and qualitative research. This process ensured that the instrument was clear, appropriate, and relevant to the study's objectives

and to the experiences of the 15 non-SPED teachers handling inclusive classes who served as the study participants.

Data Gathering Stage

After securing permission and completing the validation of the semi-structured interview guide, the researcher began the actual data collection process. This involved individual in-depth interviews with the 15 non-SPED teachers handling inclusive classes, who served as the study participants. The semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to gather rich, detailed narratives about the participants' lived experiences in managing inclusive classrooms. Each session was audio-recorded (with the participants' consent) and supplemented with field notes to capture non-verbal cues, emotions, and contextual details. The interviews were conducted in a comfortable and non-disruptive setting, strictly adhering to the Department of Education's Non-Disruption of Classes Policy.

Post Data Gathering Stage

After all interviews and discussions had been completed, the recorded data were transcribed verbatim and organized for analysis. The researcher then analyzed the data using Braun and Clarke's Six-Phase Framework for Thematic Analysis, which included: Familiarization with the Data, by reading and rereading transcripts; Generating Initial Codes, by identifying meaningful patterns; Searching for Themes, by grouping related codes; Reviewing Themes, to ensure coherence and relevance; Defining and Naming Themes, to clearly describe their essence; and Producing the Report, by synthesizing findings into a coherent narrative.

To ensure the trustworthiness and authenticity of the findings, the researcher conducted member checking, returning the analyzed themes to the participants for validation. The verified results then formed the basis for developing a proposed capacity-building program to strengthen non-SPED teachers' competence in inclusive education.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from the semi-structured interviews with the fifteen (15) non-SPED teachers were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's Six-Phase Framework for Thematic Analysis. This method was particularly suited for exploring the subjective and context-specific experiences of teachers, as it allowed for the identification of meaningful patterns within rich qualitative data. The process began with Phase 1: Familiarization, where the researcher read and reread the transcribed interviews to immerse in the data and gain a deep understanding of the participants' narratives. In Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes, significant statements and recurring ideas related to the teachers' experiences in managing inclusive classrooms were systematically coded.

Next, in Phase 3: Searching for Themes, the researcher organized related codes into potential themes that reflected the common challenges, strategies, and support systems experienced by non-SPED teachers. During Phase 4: Reviewing Themes, these themes were refined and validated to ensure they accurately represented the data and aligned with the research objectives. Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes involved clearly articulating each theme's essence and ensuring that it captured the depth and diversity of the participants' lived experiences. Finally, in Phase 6: Producing the Report, the researcher integrated the findings into a coherent narrative that highlighted key insights into inclusive teaching practices.

This systematic and flexible approach ensured a rigorous and transparent analysis, providing an authentic representation of the participants' voices while offering meaningful interpretations that contributed to a deeper understanding of inclusive education.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

To create a common frame of understanding for the readers and the users of this study, the following terms are defined operationally:

Challenges Encountered by Non-SPED Teachers in Managing Classrooms. Refers to the specific difficulties reported by the 15 participating non- SPED teachers in handling diverse learners, maintaining classroom discipline, and managing limited teaching resources, as captured through semi-structured interviews.

Diverse Learners. Refers to students in inclusive classrooms who exhibit varied learning needs, including academic, behavioral, social, or emotional requirements, as identified and described by the participating teachers.

Inclusive Setting. Refers to the classrooms in Tabor Hill College where students with and without special educational needs are taught together by non- SPED teachers.

Lived Experiences of Non-SPED Teachers – Refers to the personal accounts, reflections, and narratives shared by the 15 teachers regarding their challenges, strategies, and perspectives in managing inclusive classrooms, as collected through interviews and focus group discussions.

Non-SPED Teachers’ Practices in Inclusive Classrooms – Refers to the instructional methods, classroom management techniques, and assessment approaches actively applied by the participating teachers to teach and support diverse learners.

Non-SPED Teachers’ Teaching Strategies – Refers to the adaptive and innovative methods employed by the teachers to address the varying academic, social, and emotional needs of students in inclusive classrooms, as described in the collected narratives.

Support Systems – Refers to the professional and institutional resources, such as seminars, workshops, peer collaboration, administrative guidance, and school policies, that the 15 teachers report as helpful in facilitating inclusive education.

Proposed Intervention Program – Refers to the capacity-building training program that will be developed based on the thematic analysis of the teachers’ experiences, aimed at enhancing their skills, confidence, and preparedness in managing inclusive classrooms.

CHAPTER 2

PRESENTATION ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the qualitative data gathered from fifteen (15) teacher participants from Day-as Elementary School regarding the challenges of non-special education teachers in handling an inclusive learning environment of diverse learners. The participants were teachers assigned to handle inclusive classrooms during the School Year 2025–2026.

The data were collected through semi-structured interviews guided by open- ended questions designed to explore the lived experiences of non-special education teachers in implementing inclusive practices.

Thematic analysis was employed following Braun and Clarke’s (2006) Six- Phase Framework, which includes familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Through this process, recurring patterns, significant insights, and representative narratives from the respondents were identified and organized into key themes that reflect their shared and individual experiences.

The analysis aims to provide a deeper understanding of how non-SPED teachers perceive and implement inclusive education, how they address the needs of diverse learners, and what factors facilitate or hinder effective inclusion in the classroom. This chapter also pinpoints the teachers’

strategies for overcoming challenges and their recommendations for strengthening institutional and professional support to enhance inclusive education practices.

Each theme is supported by direct quotations from the respondents to preserve their authentic voices and strengthen the credibility of the findings. The discussion of results is structured according to Braun and Clarke’s six-phase framework, ensuring a systematic and comprehensive presentation of qualitative insights that address the central and sub-questions of the study

Challenges of Non-SPED Teachers Encounter in Managing Classrooms with Diverse Learners Under Inclusive Education

Table 1 Challenges of Non-SPED Teachers

Research Question	Theme
1: What challenges do non-SPED teachers face in managing inclusive classrooms?	<p>Theme 1: Difficulties in Implementing Differentiated Instruction</p> <p>Theme 2: Insufficient Knowledge and Confidence in Handling SEN Learners</p> <p>Theme 3: Limited Collaboration and Support from Stakeholders</p>

The data gathered from the interviews revealed three major challenges encountered by non-SPED teachers in managing inclusive classrooms with diverse learners. First, teachers encountered *Difficulties in Effectively Implementing Differentiated Instruction*, as they struggled to design and deliver lessons that catered to various learning styles, abilities, and paces within the same classroom. The lack of training and limited time for lesson preparation made it challenging to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students. Second, teachers experienced *Insufficient Knowledge and Confidence in Handling Learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN)*. Many expressed uncertainties in using appropriate interventions, accommodations, and teaching methods for students with disabilities due to limited exposure to special education principles and strategies. Third, teachers faced *Limited Collaboration and Support from Stakeholders*, including parents, administrators, and SPED professionals. The absence of consistent communication, guidance, and teamwork hindered their ability to address behavioral issues, track student progress, and create a truly inclusive learning environment. These challenges emphasize the urgent need for targeted professional development, collaborative school systems, and continuous administrative and parental support to ensure successful inclusive education practices.

Difficulties in Effectively Implementing Differentiated Instruction. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers struggled to implement differentiated instruction effectively in inclusive classrooms. Differentiated instruction requires teachers to modify lesson content, processes, and learning outcomes according to students’ readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles. However, many teachers found this approach demanding due to large class sizes, limited time, and a lack of proper training on inclusive teaching methods. Preparing multiple versions of activities and assessments also added to their workload, making it difficult to address every learner’s unique needs consistently. Despite their efforts to adjust teaching strategies, some teachers felt unsure whether their methods were effective for students with special educational needs (SEN). This challenge reflects the need for continuous professional development and adequate instructional support to help teachers implement differentiation with confidence and efficiency. This was evident in the following statements from the teachers:

Teachers described how managing large classes makes it hard to provide activities that meet the needs of every student. The pressure of too many students and limited time prevents them from creating varied learning tasks that could support individual learning styles. As one teacher explained:

“Lisod kaayo maghimo og lain-lain nga activity kay daghan kaayo ang estudyante ug kulang ang oras.” *[It’s very difficult to make different activities because there are too many students and not enough time.]* – Teacher 2

Teachers shared that adapting lessons for students with special needs can be confusing and challenging, especially when they have limited training or experience. This uncertainty affects their confidence in delivering lessons that meet all learners’ needs. As one teacher explained:

“Usahay maglibog ko unsaon pag-adjust sa lesson para sa bata nga naa’y special needs.” *[Sometimes I get confused about how to adjust the lesson for a student with special needs.]* – Teacher 7

Teachers emphasized that wanting to provide individualized tasks for students is often hindered by a lack of materials and support. This limitation prevents them from fully addressing the unique needs of each learner. One teacher shared:

“Gusto unta ko mag-prepare og individualized task, pero kulang ko og materials ug support.” *[I want to prepare individualized tasks, but I lack materials and support.]* – Teacher 11

Teachers noted that attending seminars on differentiation helps them improve their teaching and classroom management skills. These training opportunities give them new ideas and refresh their understanding of how to handle diverse learners effectively. One teacher explained:

“Kung usahay naay seminar about differentiation, makatabang gyud kay ma-refresh mi unsaon pag-manage sa inclusive class.” *[When there are seminars about differentiation, they really help because we get refreshed on how to manage an inclusive class.]* – Teacher 15

Teachers expressed that adapting lessons for students with special needs can be challenging and confusing, especially when they lack training or experience. This uncertainty can make it harder for them to meet the individual needs of learners. One teacher shared:

“Usahay maglibog ko unsaon pag-adjust sa lesson para sa bata nga naa’y special needs.” *[Sometimes I get confused about how to adjust the lesson for a student with special needs.]* – Teacher 7

Teachers pointed out that they want to prepare individualized tasks for their students, but not having enough materials or support makes it difficult. This lack of resources prevents them from fully meeting the unique needs of each learner. One teacher explained:

“Gusto unta ko mag-prepare og individualized task, pero kulang ko og materials ug support.” *[I want to prepare individualized tasks, but I lack materials and support.]* – Teacher 11

Teachers shared that attending seminars on differentiation is very helpful because it refreshes their knowledge and skills in managing an inclusive classroom. These opportunities give them practical strategies to better support diverse learners. One teacher explained:

“Kung usahay naay seminar about differentiation, makatabang gyud kay ma-refresh mi unsaon pag-manage sa inclusive class.” *[When there are seminars about differentiation, they really help because we get refreshed on how to manage an inclusive class.]* – Teacher 15

This challenge shows how non-SPED teachers often feel stressed and responsible in inclusive classrooms. They want to help every student learn, but big class sizes, limited time, and not enough resources make it very hard. This problem is more than just practical, as this affects their confidence, sense of professionalism, and feeling of duty. Teachers can feel frustrated and unsure because they know what students need but don’t always have the right tools, guidance, or support. Trying to create lessons that fit everyone’s needs can feel overwhelming, leaving them worried if they are doing enough. At the same time, teachers find that training and seminars give them new ideas and make them feel more capable, showing how important support and ongoing learning are for handling these challenges.

The findings imply the need for sustained capacity-building initiatives and administrative support that focus on developing teachers' competence in differentiation. Schools should organize regular professional development sessions, provide teaching aids, and promote collaborative lesson planning among teachers to ensure that differentiated instruction becomes a more achievable and effective practice in inclusive classrooms.

Foykas et al. (2025) emphasized that teachers work best when they have confidence in themselves, professional learning that reshapes how they teach, and practical classroom experience. These three elements together help teachers feel more capable in handling the diverse needs of learners. Similarly, Molina (2024) found that teachers without special education training often struggle to meet the learning needs of students with disabilities, which affects their confidence and sense of professionalism. The study emphasizes that training and ongoing support are essential to help teachers manage inclusive classrooms effectively. Compania et al. (2024) also support this view, showing that teachers who organize their classrooms well, plan lessons that consider all students, and use appropriate teaching strategies feel better prepared and more confident to support every learner.

Insufficient Knowledge and Confidence in Handling Learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers experienced difficulties due to their limited knowledge and confidence in handling students with special educational needs (SEN) in inclusive classrooms. Many teachers admitted that they were not adequately trained in special education strategies, making it challenging for them to understand and address the diverse learning and behavioral needs of SENlearners. This lack of expertise often led to uncertainty in managing classroom situations, choosing appropriate interventions, and evaluating students fairly. Some teachers also expressed hesitation or fear of making mistakes that might negatively affect the learning progress of students with special needs. As a result, they tended to rely on general teaching strategies rather than specialized approaches that could the importance of equipping non-SPED teachers with practical training, seminars, and mentoring programs focused on inclusive education to strengthen their competence and confidence in supporting all learners effectively.

Teachers expressed that managing students with special needs feels very challenging because they have not received formal training. This lack of preparation makes them unsure about the right methods to use and affects their confidence in supporting these learners. They feel a strong responsibility to help every student, but without guidance or proper skills, they often worry about making mistakes or not meeting the needs of all learners. This situation shows the importance of providing practical training, workshops, and mentoring programs so teachers can develop the knowledge and confidence needed to handle inclusive classrooms effectively. One teacher said:

“Lisod kaayo kay wala man mi formal training kung unsaon pag-handle sa bata nga naay special needs.” *[It's very difficult because we haven't received formal training on how to handle students with special needs.]* – Teacher 4

Teachers shared that they often feel anxious about working with students with special needs because they worry that using the wrong approach could make things worse. This fear affects their confidence and makes them hesitant to try new strategies, even when they want to support every learner. The experience emphasizes the emotional burden non-SPED teachers face in inclusive classrooms and shows why guidance, mentoring, and professional development are essential to help them feel more capable and confident in handling diverse student needs. Teacher said:

“Usahay mahadlok ko basin masayop ko sa akong approach sa mga bata nga special, kay basin maka-trigger og lain nga behavior.” *[Sometimes I'm afraid I might use the wrong approach with special children and cause unwanted behavior.]* – Teacher 8

Teachers expressed that they struggle to adjust lessons for students who learn more slowly because they lack the knowledge and strategies to support them effectively. This makes it difficult for them

to meet the needs of all learners and can affect their confidence and sense of professional ability. The situation underscores the need for practical training, mentoring, and continuous learning opportunities so teachers can better assist students with diverse learning abilities and feel more confident in their teaching. Teacher said:

“Maglisod ko mo-adjust kay kulang akong kahibalo unsaon pagtabang sa bata nga hinay og learning.” [*I find it hard to adjust because I lack knowledge on how to help slow learners.*] – Teacher 13

The essence of this challenge can be understood as a “State of Unpreparedness and Self-Doubt.” Non-SPED teachers feel a heavy responsibility to support every student in inclusive classrooms, but their limited training in special education leaves them unsure about how to handle students with diverse learning needs. This uncertainty affects not only their teaching strategies but also their confidence, professional identity, and emotional well-being. Teachers often hesitate to try new approaches, fearing that a wrong move could negatively impact a student’s learning or behavior.

The findings imply that there is a pressing need to strengthen teacher training and professional development programs focused on inclusive education. Schools and education authorities must provide regular workshops, mentoring, and collaboration opportunities with SPED specialists to build teachers’ confidence and competence in managing diverse learners. By enhancing their knowledge and practical skills, teachers will be better equipped to create supportive and effective learning environments for students with special educational needs.

Several studies provide empirical evidence on the experiences of non-SPED teachers in inclusive classrooms. Molina (2024) found that teachers with no training in Special Education face many challenges when teaching students with special needs, often feeling less confident or prepared, and highlighted that training and support can enhance teacher preparedness. Benemerito et al. (2025) emphasized that training improves teachers’ teaching skills and enables them to handle inclusive classrooms more effectively, as learners with special needs require close attention from trained teachers. Foykas et al. (2025) further noted that confidence, training, and practical experience together empower teachers to overcome self-doubt and meet the diverse needs of all students, showing that professional learning and experience are crucial for effective inclusive teaching.

Limited Collaboration and Support from Stakeholders. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers faced challenges due to limited collaboration and support from key stakeholders, including administrators, parents, and SPED specialists. Teachers expressed that inclusive education requires a strong support system where all stakeholders work together to meet the needs of students with special educational needs (SEN). However, many reported that communication with parents was inconsistent, administrative support was minimal, and opportunities for consultation with SPED professionals were scarce. This lack of coordinated effort often left teachers feeling isolated and solely responsible for addressing the complex learning and behavioral needs of SEN learners. Without sufficient guidance and shared responsibility, teachers struggled to implement inclusive practices effectively. This finding highlights the importance of establishing stronger collaboration among school administrators, parents, and SPED experts to provide teachers with the necessary assistance, shared decision-making, and consistent communication in promoting inclusive education.

Teachers shared that they often feel like they are handling everything on their own because there is no clear coordination with other teachers and administrators. This lack of teamwork and communication makes it harder for them to manage classrooms effectively and support all learners. It can lead to feelings of stress, frustration, and professional isolation. The situation highlights the need for better collaboration, shared responsibilities, and support systems among teachers, school leaders, and other stakeholders to help teachers feel more capable and less overwhelmed. Teacher said:

“Usahay murag ako ra’y nagdala tanan, kay walay klarong coordination sa uban teachers ug admin.” *[Sometimes it feels like I’m handling everything alone because there’s no clear coordination with other teachers and administrators.]* – Teacher 5

Teachers said it is sometimes hard to help students because parents don’t communicate well, especially about their child’s behavior. When parents don’t cooperate, it’s harder for teachers to support the student and keep things consistent in the classroom. This can make teachers feel frustrated and like they have less control. The situation shows that teachers need parents to work together so students can get the help they need. Teacher said:

“Lisod usahay kay ang mga ginikanan dili makig-coordinate, labi na kung istoryahan ang behavior sa ilang anak.” *[It’s difficult sometimes because parents don’t coordinate, especially when discussing their child’s behavior.]* – Teacher 9

Teachers said it is hard to manage students who need special help because they do not get regular support from SPED teachers. Without guidance, they often feel unsure about the best ways to teach or assist these students. This lack of support can make them feel stressed and less confident in handling diverse learning needs. The teacher said:

“Wala mi regular nga tabang gikan sa SPED teachers, mao nga maglisod mi kung naay bata nga kinahanglan og special approach.” *[We don’t get regular help from SPED teachers, so it’s hard when we have students who need special approaches.]* – Teacher 12

Teachers’ experiences show that they often feel alone and overwhelmed in inclusive classrooms. Non-SPED teachers try to support students with special needs, but they usually have little help from administrators, parents, or SPED specialists. This makes them feel like they are the only ones responsible for making sure every student learns and behaves well. Teachers shared that when parents don’t communicate, administrators give little guidance, and SPED support is rare, it becomes hard to manage the classroom and teach effectively. These situations cause stress, frustration, and self-doubt. The core of their experience is the struggle of wanting to help all students but not having enough support or teamwork. Teachers need better collaboration with school leaders, parents, and SPED experts so they don’t feel alone and can provide the help their students need.

The findings show that working together and talking regularly with everyone involved is very important for inclusive education to work well. School leaders should organize regular meetings with parents, teachers, and SPED specialists to give both practical help and emotional support to non-SPED teachers. Schools can also set up support systems, like inclusion teams or peer mentoring, to share responsibilities and make sure help is coordinated. By working together like this, teachers can feel more confident, get expert guidance, and create a learning environment that is supportive and inclusive for all students.

Molina (2024) found that teachers who have no training in Special Education face many challenges when teaching students with special needs, with some teachers feeling less confident or prepared. Benemerito et al. (2025) stated that training improves teachers’ teaching skills, and teachers handling an inclusive classroom can best deliver their lessons if they have adequate training in special education. Maqhubela (2025) studied how working together with different people can help improve learning and make schools run better, finding that schools where everyone works together and shares responsibilities are better at helping students succeed, showing that collaboration among teachers, administrators, parents, and community members is essential to reduce teacher stress and self-doubt in inclusive classrooms.

Non-SPED Teachers Adapted Teaching Strategies to Address the Needs of Students with Special Educational Needs in an Inclusive Setting

The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers developed new approaches to effectively meet the needs of students with special educational needs (SEN) in inclusive

classrooms. One emerging theme was the use of *Differentiated Assessment Methods*, where teachers provided alternative ways for students to demonstrate learning, such as oral recitations, visual projects, or performance-based tasks, instead of relying solely on written examinations. This allowed learners with varying abilities to showcase understanding according to their strengths. Another theme identified was *Contextualized Instruction*, in which teachers related lessons to real-life situations familiar to students. By connecting academic content to everyday experiences, teachers made learning more meaningful and easier to grasp for students with SEN, promoting better engagement and retention. A third theme was *Collaborative Learning Activities*, where teachers strategically grouped students to encourage peer assistance, teamwork, and social interaction. This strategy helped SEN learners build confidence, improve communication skills, and feel a sense of belonging within the class. These adaptive teaching practices demonstrated the creativity and dedication of non-SPED teachers in fostering inclusive and supportive learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of all students.

Table 2. Non-SPED Teachers Adapted Teaching Strategies

Research Question	Theme
2: How do non-SPED teachers adapt their teaching strategies to address the needs of students with SEN in an inclusive classroom?	<p>Theme 1: Differentiated Assessment Methods</p> <p>Theme 2: Contextualized Instruction</p> <p>Theme 3: Collaborative Learning Activities</p>

Differentiated Assessment Methods. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers implemented various differentiated assessment methods to accommodate the diverse abilities and learning styles of students with special educational needs (SEN) in inclusive classrooms. Teachers explained that traditional written tests often failed to capture the true understanding and potential of SEN learners, prompting them to use alternative forms of assessment. These included oral recitations, visual projects, performance tasks, and portfolio-based evaluations that allowed students to express learning in ways suited to their strengths. However, many teachers found it challenging to prepare multiple assessment formats due to time constraints and the absence of clear guidelines on how to evaluate SEN learners fairly. Some teachers expressed uncertainty about maintaining grading consistency and ensuring that all assessments aligned with learning objectives. Despite these challenges, they continued to explore flexible evaluation approaches to make assessment more equitable and inclusive. This finding highlights the need for ongoing professional training and the development of standardized assessment frameworks to help teachers effectively implement differentiated assessments in inclusive classrooms.

Teachers also shared that giving the same exam to all students in inclusive classrooms is hard and often unfair because learners have different abilities and ways of understanding. They explained that traditional tests do not always show what students with special needs can really do. Because of this, assessment becomes difficult and sometimes discouraging for both teachers and students. This shows the need for more flexible ways of assessing learners, where teachers can adjust tests and tasks based on each student’s level and needs. The teacher said:

“Lisod i-apply ang parehas nga exam sa tanan kay lahi-lahi man ug level sa pagsabot ang mga bata.” [*It’s difficult to give the same exam to everyone because students have different levels of understanding.*] – Teacher 1

The Teacher explained that it is easier to understand what students have learned when they are asked to explain their answers or make projects instead of just taking written tests. This shows that activities like projects and presentations help teachers see students’ real understanding, especially for those who find written exams hard. It also means that students should be given different ways to show what they know, not only through tests. The teacher said:

“Mas makit-an nako ang kat-on sa bata kung ipa-explain o ipabuhat og project kaysa written test lang.” *[I can better see the child’s learning if I let them explain or make a project instead of just a written test.]* – Teacher 6

The teacher shared that it can be hard to determine how to grade when students submit different kinds of work. This shows that teachers can feel unsure when there are no clear grading rules in inclusive classrooms. It also means that teachers need simple and clear guidelines to help them fairly assess students, even when their work is not the same. The teacher said:

“Usahay maglibog ko unsaon pag-grade kung lahi-lahi ang output sa mga bata.” *[Sometimes I get confused about how to grade students when their outputs are different.]* – Teacher 10

The teacher shared that some students cannot take the regular exam, so teachers sometimes need to make different tests for them. This shows that students have different abilities and learning needs. It also means that teachers need support and guidance in preparing special tests so they can assess students fairly and correctly. The teacher said:

“Usahay kinahanglan ko maghimo og lahi-lahi nga test para sa uban nga bata kay dili man nila makaya ang regular exam.” *[Sometimes I need to make different tests for some students because they can’t handle the regular exam.]* – Teacher 3

The Teacher explained that when a student cannot write, they allow the student to answer the exam orally. This shows that teachers try to adjust so every student can still take part in the test. It also means that flexible ways of testing help students show what they know even if they cannot write. The teacher said:

“Kung naa’y bata nga dili makasulat, akong ipa-oral ang iyang exam para makahatag gihapon siya og tubag.” *[If a student cannot write, I let them take the exam orally so they can still answer.]* – Teacher 7

Teacher 14 shared that they give extra time to students who answer slowly so they will not feel pressured. This shows that teachers understand that students learn at different speeds. It also means that giving more time helps students feel calmer and perform better during exams. The teacher said

“Maghatag ko og extra time sa mga bata nga hinay mo-answer aron dili sila ma-pressure.” *[I give extra time to students who answer slowly so they don’t feel pressured.]* – Teacher 14

The experiences of non-SPED teachers show that they work hard to help all students, including those with special educational needs (SEN), and show what they have learned. They explained that regular written tests often do not reflect what SEN students can do, so they use different ways to assess learning, such as oral exams, projects, and performance tasks. Teachers said these methods help them see students’ real understanding and strengths, especially for those who find written tests hard. At the same time, teachers feel unsure about how to grade different types of work, make special tests, allow oral answers, or give extra time, but they keep trying to adapt so every student can participate fairly. Their experiences show that teaching in inclusive classrooms is about being flexible, creative, and dedicated, and that teachers need support and clear guidance to make assessments fair and meaningful for all learners.

This finding implies that schools should give teachers regular support and training on different ways to assess students so these methods can work well and last longer. School leaders should provide time, resources, and chances to work with SPED specialists to help teachers create fair tests for all students. Making simple and flexible rules for assessing students can also help teachers stay consistent and avoid stress. Stronger support from schools will help all students learn better and feel included.

This shows that giving students different ways to learn and show what they know helps make classrooms fair and inclusive. Rajak[21] said that using different assessment methods helps teachers understand students’ strengths, interests, and learning needs, and lets them adjust lessons and tests

for each student. Ismailov and Chiu[22] found that courses designed with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) helped students of different genders and backgrounds take part equally and feel capable, even if it did not fully help them feel connected to others. Chad[23] said that combining Differentiated Instruction (DI) and UDL allows teachers to change lessons based on student needs while also planning flexible activities that everyone can join. These studies show that flexible teaching and assessment help all students learn better and feel included.

Contextualized Instruction. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers applied contextualized instruction to make learning more meaningful and relevant for students with special educational needs (SEN) in inclusive classrooms. Teachers shared that they connected lessons to students' real-life experiences, interests, and community settings to help them better grasp abstract concepts. This approach encouraged active participation, especially among SEN learners who often struggled with traditional, lecture-based teaching. By linking academic content to familiar situations, such as daily routines, local culture, or practical tasks, teachers found that students became more engaged and motivated to learn. However, many teachers admitted that implementing contextualized instruction required extra preparation time and creativity. They also faced challenges in balancing curriculum standards with students' individual needs. Some teachers expressed uncertainty about how deeply they could modify lessons without deviating from required competencies. Despite these difficulties, teachers consistently emphasized that contextualizing instruction made learning more accessible, enjoyable, and purposeful for all learners, particularly those with special needs. This was evident in the following statements from the teachers:

Teacher 2 shared that students understand lessons better when these are connected to real-life situations they see and experience every day. This shows that using real-life examples helps make learning more meaningful and easier for students to understand. It also means that lessons become more relatable, which can improve students' interest and comprehension. The teacher said:

“Mas sayon sa bata makasabot kung naa sa tinuod nga sitwasyon nga iyang makit-an sa adlaw-adlaw.” [*It's easier for students to understand when lessons are related to real-life situations they encounter every day.*] – Teacher 2

Teacher 5 shared that they use examples that are closely related to the students' daily lives to help them understand the lesson better. This shows that teachers make an effort to connect the lesson to the students' real experiences. It also means that familiar examples help students learn more easily and clearly. The teacher said:

“Ginagamit nako ang mga example nga duol sa ilang kinabuhi para mas makasabot sila.” [*I use examples that are close to their lives so they can understand better.*] – Teacher 5

Teacher 9 shared that they sometimes let students do role plays so they can connect the lesson to their own experiences. This shows that teachers use interactive activities to help students better understand the lesson. It also means that role playing allows students to actively participate and relate learning to real-life situations. The teacher said:

“Usahay ako silang ipa-role play aron ma-relate nila ang lesson sa ilang kaugalingong experience.” [*Sometimes I let them do role plays so they can relate the lesson to their own experiences.*] – Teacher 9

Teacher 12 shared that contextualizing lessons can be challenging because it requires a lot of preparation and creativity. This shows that teachers recognize the extra effort needed to make lessons more meaningful and relevant to students. It also means that while contextualized teaching is effective, it can be demanding for teachers in terms of time and planning. The teacher said:

“Lisod lang kay kinahanglan og daghang preparation ug creativity para ma-contextualize ang topic.” [*It's difficult because contextualizing the topic requires a lot of preparation and creativity.*] – Teacher 12

Teacher 8 shared that students participate more when lessons are connected to their own lives. This shows that relating lessons to students' real-life experiences encourages active participation. It also means that meaningful and relevant lessons can increase students' engagement in the classroom. The teacher said:

“Kung i-connect ang lesson sa ilang kinabuhi, mas mo-participate gyud sila.” [*When lessons are connected to their lives, they really participate more.*] – Teacher 8

Teacher 4 shared that they sometimes feel confused about how to adjust lessons while still following the curriculum. This shows that teachers face challenges in balancing lesson adjustments with curriculum requirements. It also means that teachers need guidance and support to effectively adapt lessons without going beyond what is required. The teacher said:

“Usahay maglibog ko unsaon pag-adjust sa lesson aron makasabay gihapon sa curriculum.” [*Sometimes I get confused about how to adjust the lesson while still following the curriculum.*] – Teacher 4

The findings indicate that non-SPED teachers recognize the value of contextualized instruction in promoting inclusivity and enhancing comprehension among diverse learners. By adapting lessons to students' real-world contexts, they help bridge the gap between theory and experience, making education more relevant and engaging. Teachers' efforts to use relatable examples, real-life applications, and interactive strategies demonstrate their responsiveness to the needs of SEN learners.

This finding implies that schools should provide ongoing professional development and resource support to help teachers effectively design and implement contextualized lessons. Administrators should encourage collaboration between general and SPED teachers to develop contextual materials suited to learners' diverse abilities and backgrounds. Moreover, institutionalizing contextualized teaching practices within the curriculum can ensure consistent and inclusive learning experiences for all students. Strengthening support for contextualized instruction will ultimately promote learner engagement, improve understanding, and foster a more inclusive educational environment.

The study by Rosario[24] showed that differentiating instruction in math classrooms helped teachers address students' different needs using pre-tests, varied activities, and personalized tasks. The impact of this study is that it helps us understand how teachers can support student engagement and learning in inclusive classrooms. Similarly, the study by Osae and Papadopoulos[25] found that English teachers had positive attitudes toward learner-centered strategies but needed more support to implement them. This study helps us understand that teacher attitudes and available support influence how well differentiated instruction works. Lastly, the study by Ramilo and Ting[26] reported that differentiated instruction increased student engagement, even if it did not always improve grades. The impact of this study is that it shows the value of differentiated instruction in encouraging active participation and involvement in learning.

Collaborative Learning Activities. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers utilized collaborative learning activities to promote peer interaction and mutual support among students, including those with special educational needs (SEN), in inclusive classrooms. Teachers shared that they organized students into small groups or pairs to work on tasks, projects, or problem-solving activities that required cooperation and shared responsibility. This approach encouraged active participation, communication, and social skills development, particularly among SEN learners who often benefited from peer guidance and modeling. By structuring lessons around joint activities, such as group discussions, role plays, or co-creating presentations, teachers observed increased engagement and motivation. However, many teachers noted challenges in managing group dynamics, ensuring equitable participation, and addressing differing ability levels within groups. Some expressed uncertainty about how to balance the curriculum goals with the need to scaffold collaborative interactions for all learners. Despite these challenges, teachers consistently emphasized that collaborative learning fostered a sense of belonging, teamwork, and shared

responsibility, making the classroom more inclusive and supportive. This was evident in the following statements from the teachers:

Teacher 3 shared that students learn more easily when they help each other. This shows that peer support and collaboration can make learning more effective. It also means that students can develop teamwork skills while understanding lessons better. The teacher said:

“Mas dali sa mga bata makakat-on kung magtabangay sila sa usag usa.” *[It’s easier for students to learn when they help each other.]* –

Teacher 3

Teacher 7 shared that they pair students to help each other during activities, especially supporting SEN learners. This shows that structured peer collaboration can improve understanding and learning for all students. It also means that pairing students helps build cooperation and inclusion in the classroom. The teacher said:

“Gina-pair nako ang mga estudyante aron magtinabangay sa activity, labi na ang SEN learners.” *[I pair students to help each other in activities, especially SEN learners.]* – Teacher 7

Teacher 11 shared that they sometimes use group discussions to gather everyone’s ideas. This shows that collaborative learning allows students to share thoughts and learn from each other. It also means that group discussions encourage participation and critical thinking among all students. The teacher said:

“Usahay mag-group discussion mi aron makuha ang ideas sa tanan.” *[Sometimes we do group discussions so we can get everyone’s ideas.]* – Teacher 11

Teacher 6 shared that it is sometimes difficult when not all students participate in group activities. This shows that unequal participation can affect the effectiveness of collaborative learning. It also means that teachers need to encourage all students to be involved to ensure that everyone benefits from group work. The teacher said:

“Lisod usahay kung dili tanan mo-participate sa group.” *[It’s sometimes difficult if not everyone participates in the group.]* – Teacher 6

Teacher 9 shared that students are more motivated when they have a partner or are in a group. This shows that working with peers can boost student motivation and engagement. It also means that teachers can use partnerships or group work to encourage active participation in learning. The teacher said:

“Makita nako nga mas motivated sila kung naa silay partner o grupo.” *[I notice they’re more motivated when they have a partner or group.]* – Teacher 9

Teacher 2 shared that guidance is needed to make sure everyone contributes in group activities. This shows that teacher support is important for effective collaboration. It also means that with proper guidance, students can participate equally and learn from each other. The teacher said:

“Kinahanglan og guidance para masiguro nga tanan maka-contribute sa group.” *[Guidance is needed to ensure everyone contributes to the group.]* – Teacher 2

The findings indicate that non-SPED teachers recognize the value of collaborative learning activities in fostering inclusion and enhancing comprehension among diverse learners. By promoting peer interaction and shared problem-solving, teachers help build social skills, empathy, and teamwork while supporting SEN learners in a meaningful way. Teachers’ efforts to structure group tasks, scaffold participation, and monitor interactions demonstrate their responsiveness to learners’ diverse needs.

This finding implies that schools should provide training and resources for teachers on effective collaborative strategies, including techniques for group management, differentiation, and

scaffolding. Administrators should encourage joint planning between general and SPED teachers to create group activities that accommodate varying abilities and learning styles. Institutionalizing collaborative learning practices can ensure consistent, inclusive, and engaging classroom experiences, ultimately enhancing student interaction, understanding, and overall participation.

Lin found that activities designed for students with and without special needs improved peer support, respect, and social skills. Similarly, Van[27] reported that cooperative learning strengthened peer relationships, engagement, and participation for students with disabilities. In addition, Lizardo[28] showed that collaborative discussion strategies increased learning motivation, student engagement, and cognitive growth, while teachers noted that support and guidance are important for success. Moreover, Labra[29] found that inclusive collaborative practices enhanced teamwork, sense of belonging, and social outcomes among students with disabilities.

Support Systems Non-SPED Teachers Find Most Helpful in Facilitating Inclusive Education

The data gathered by the researcher during the interviews revealed how non- SPED teachers depended on specific support systems to effectively facilitate inclusive education in their classrooms. From this perspective, teachers identified three key support systems that greatly assisted them: *access to teaching resources, mentorship from experienced educators, and administrative support*. Access to teaching resources, including instructional materials, assistive tools, and lesson planning guides, enabled teachers to design lessons that accommodate diverse learning needs. Mentorship from experienced educators provided practical advice, classroom strategies, and emotional encouragement, helping less experienced teachers navigate challenges in inclusive classrooms. Administrative support, such as clear policies, scheduling flexibility, and recognition of teachers' efforts, created an environment where educators felt valued and empowered to implement inclusive practices. These support systems strengthened teacher competence, promoted student inclusion, and enhanced the overall effectiveness of inclusive education in the classroom.

Access to Teaching Resources. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers relied on access to teaching resources to effectively facilitate inclusive education in their classrooms. Teachers shared that having instructional materials, assistive tools, lesson planning guides, and differentiated worksheets allowed them to design lessons that met the diverse learning needs of students, including those with special educational needs (SEN). This approach helped teachers provide multiple ways for students to engage with content, practice skills, and demonstrate understanding. By utilizing visual aids, manipulatives, technology-based resources, and customized handouts, teachers observed increased participation, comprehension, and motivation among learners. However, many teachers noted challenges in finding adequate resources that were both relevant and appropriate for all students. Some expressed concern about the additional time required to adapt or create materials to suit varying abilities. Despite these challenges, teachers consistently emphasized that access to quality teaching resources made lessons more inclusive, engaging, and effective.

Teacher 1 shared that they use many visual aids and manipulatives to help SEN learners. This shows that using teaching materials and hands-on tools can support understanding and learning for students with special needs. It also means that with these resources, students can engage more actively and learn better. The teacher said:

“Daghan kaayo mi gamit nga visual aids ug manipulatives nga makatabang sa SEN learners.” [*We have many visual aids and manipulatives that help SEN learners.*] – Teacher 1

Teacher 5 shared that they adapt worksheets to match the ability levels of all students. This shows that adjusting learning materials helps meet the diverse needs of learners. It also means that with these adaptations, all students can understand the lesson and participate more effectively. The teacher said:

“Gina-adapt nako ang worksheets para ma-suit sa ability level sa tanan.” [I adapt worksheets to suit the ability levels of all students.] – Teacher 5

Teacher 8 shared that using technology, such as tablets and videos, really helps in explaining the lesson. This shows that integrating technology in teaching can make lessons clearer and easier to understand. It also means that with these tools, students can engage more and grasp concepts better. The teacher said:

“Ang paggamit sa technology, sama sa tablets ug videos, nakatabang gyud sa pag-explain sa lesson.” [*Using technology, like tablets and videos, really helps in explaining the lesson.*] – Teacher 8

Teacher 3 shared that it is sometimes difficult when teaching materials are limited for diverse learners. This shows that having enough learning resources is important to meet the needs of all students. It also means that without sufficient materials, teachers may struggle to support understanding and engagement for every learner. The teacher said:

“Lisod usahay kung limited ra ang teaching materials para sa diverse learners.” [*It’s sometimes difficult when teaching materials are limited for diverse learners.*] – Teacher 3

Teacher 7 shared that having ready resources makes it easier to address the needs of SEN learners. This shows that prepared teaching materials help teachers support diverse learners more effectively. It also means that with ready resources, teachers can respond quickly to students’ needs and enhance learning outcomes. The teacher said:

“Kung naa koy resources nga ready, mas sayon nako ma-address ang needs sa SEN learners.” [*If I have ready resources, it’s easier for me to address the needs of SEN learners.*] – Teacher 7

Teacher 2 shared that sometimes they need extra time to modify materials for everyone. This shows that adapting teaching materials takes planning and effort to meet the needs of all students. It also means that with additional time, teachers can create resources that support learning for diverse learners effectively. The teacher said:

“Usahay magkinahanglan ko og extra time para i-modify ang materials para sa tanan.” [*Sometimes I need extra time to modify materials for everyone.*] – Teacher 2

The findings indicate that access to teaching resources is a crucial factor in supporting non-SPED teachers in inclusive classrooms. Teachers rely on a variety of instructional materials, assistive tools, and technology to accommodate diverse learning needs and facilitate meaningful participation, particularly for students with special educational needs (SEN). The data suggest that when resources are adequate, teachers are more confident in differentiating instruction and creating engaging, accessible lessons. Conversely, limited or inappropriate resources can hinder lesson delivery, increase teacher workload, and potentially reduce the inclusivity of the classroom.

This finding implies that schools should prioritize providing sufficient, high- quality, and adaptable teaching resources to support inclusive education.

Administrators should allocate budgets for instructional materials, assistive technologies, and resource libraries that teachers can easily access. Additionally, schools can encourage the sharing and co-creation of resources among teachers to reduce preparation time and ensure all students benefit from appropriately tailored learning materials. Strengthening access to teaching resources ultimately promotes teacher competence, enhances student engagement, and fosters a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all learners.

Studies show that having teaching resources is very important in inclusive classrooms. One review found that using educational technologies, like assistive devices and adaptive software, helps make learning easier for students with different needs and encourages them to join in[30]. Another review showed that special materials and assistive tools help teachers support students with disabilities and

make lessons easier to understand[31]. A third study found that training teachers to use materials like tactile books, audio aids, and assistive technology helps them teach better and makes learning more accessible for all students[32].

Mentorship from Experienced Educators. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers relied on mentorship from experienced educators as a vital support system to effectively facilitate inclusive education in their classrooms. Teachers shared that guidance, advice, and practical strategies from seasoned colleagues helped them navigate the challenges of addressing diverse learning needs, including those of students with special educational needs (SEN). This mentorship provided not only instructional support but also emotional encouragement, boosting teachers' confidence and competence in implementing inclusive practices. By observing experienced teachers, discussing lesson planning, and receiving feedback on teaching strategies, non-SPED teachers were able to develop more effective ways to differentiate instruction, manage classroom behavior, and engage all learners. However, some teachers noted challenges in accessing consistent mentorship due to time constraints or limited availability of experienced colleagues. Despite these challenges, teachers consistently emphasized that mentorship played a crucial role in their professional growth and in fostering inclusive, responsive learning environments.

Teacher 2 shared that guidance from a more experienced colleague really helps in lesson planning for SEN learners. This shows that support from experienced teachers can improve how lessons are prepared for diverse learners. It also means that with proper guidance, teachers can plan lessons that better meet the needs of all students. The teacher said:

“Ang guidance sa akong kauban nga mas eksperyensyado nakatabang gyud sa pagplano sa lesson para sa SEN learners.” [*Guidance from my more experienced colleague really helps in lesson planning for SEN learners.*] – Teacher 2

Teacher 5 shared that they learn strategies on how to manage the class from their mentor. This shows that mentorship helps teachers gain practical skills for classroom management. It also means that with guidance from a mentor, teachers can handle classes more effectively and support all learners better. The teacher said:

“Makakat-on ko og strategies kung unsaon pag-manage sa klase gikan sa mentor.” [*I learn strategies on how to manage the class from my mentor.*] – Teacher 5

Teacher 8 shared that mentorship gives them confidence to adjust lessons for diverse learners. This shows that having a mentor helps teachers feel more capable in adapting lessons for students with different needs. It also means that with mentorship, teachers can plan and deliver lessons more confidently and effectively. The teacher said:

“Ang mentorship nakahatag nako og confidence sa pag-adjust sa lessons para sa diverse learners.” [*Mentorship gives me confidence to adjust lessons for diverse learners.*] – Teacher 8

Teacher 1 shared that it is sometimes difficult when a mentor is not available to guide on specific challenges. This shows that mentorship is important for support in handling classroom difficulties. It also means that without a mentor, teachers may struggle to address specific challenges effectively. The teacher said:

“Lisod usahay kung dili available ang mentor para mag-guide sa specific challenges.” [*It's sometimes difficult when a mentor is not available to guide specific challenges.*] – Teacher 1

Teacher 7 shared that discussing lesson plans and receiving feedback from their mentor really helps improve their teaching. This shows that mentor feedback supports professional growth and helps teachers enhance their teaching skills. It also means that with guidance from a mentor, teachers can refine lessons and teach more effectively. The teacher said:

“Ang pag-discuss sa lesson plans ug feedback sa mentor nakatabang gyud sa pag-improve sa akong teaching.” [*Discussing lesson plans and receiving feedback from my mentor really helps improve my teaching.*] – Teacher 7

Teacher 3 shared that sometimes extra effort is needed to get guidance from a mentor, especially if they are busy. This shows that accessing mentorship can require initiative from teachers. It also means that even when mentors are not readily available, teachers need to take extra steps to seek support to improve their teaching. The teacher said:

“Usahay kinahanglan og extra effort para makakuha og guidance sa mentor labi na kung busy sila.” [*Sometimes extra effort is needed to get guidance from a mentor, especially if they are busy.*] – Teacher 3

The findings indicate that mentorship from experienced educators is a critical support system for non-SPED teachers in inclusive classrooms. By providing guidance, modeling effective teaching strategies, and offering feedback, mentors help teachers improve instructional practices, build confidence, and respond to the diverse needs of learners. The data suggest that consistent mentorship enables teachers to implement inclusive education more effectively, while the absence of guidance can hinder professional growth and classroom inclusivity.

This finding implies that schools should establish structured mentorship programs, pairing less experienced non-SPED teachers with seasoned educators who can provide regular support, feedback, and collaboration. Administrators should allocate time and resources for mentoring activities, encourage knowledge sharing among staff, and recognize the contributions of mentors. Strengthening mentorship systems ultimately enhances teacher competence, promotes the implementation of inclusive practices, and fosters supportive and effective learning environments for all students.

Studies show that mentorship is very helpful for teachers in inclusive classrooms. One study found that a mentoring program for inclusive education training improved teachers' competence, independence, and confidence in planning lessons for diverse learners, especially SEN students[33]. Similarly, another study reported that mentorship provides practical guidance and emotional support, helping teachers improve teaching strategies, adapt lessons for all learners, and build confidence[34]. In addition, a study showed that structured mentorship supports professional growth, improves classroom management, and strengthens teachers' ability to use inclusive practices, although limited mentor availability can reduce its effectiveness[35].

Administrative Support. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers relied on administrative support as a crucial system to effectively facilitate inclusive education in their classrooms. Teachers shared that clear policies, guidance, and encouragement from school administrators helped them navigate challenges in addressing the diverse learning needs of students, including those with special educational needs (SEN). Administrative support provided not only structural and procedural backing but also emotional reassurance, boosting teachers' confidence and motivation in implementing inclusive practices.

By offering scheduling flexibility, allocating resources, recognizing teacher efforts, and facilitating professional development, administrators enabled teachers to create more inclusive and responsive learning environments. However, some teachers noted challenges when administrative support was inconsistent or when policies and resources were insufficient to meet classroom needs. Despite these challenges, teachers consistently emphasized that administrative support played a vital role in sustaining inclusive practices and improving overall classroom effectiveness.

Teacher 4 shared that support from the school head and administration really helps in implementing inclusive strategies. This shows that administrative support is important for carrying out inclusive practices in the classroom. It also means that with backing from school leaders, teachers can implement strategies more effectively to meet the needs of all learners. The teacher said:

“Ang suporta sa school head ug sa administration nakatabang gyud sa pag-implement sa inclusive strategies.” [*Support from the school head and administration really helps in implementing inclusive strategies.*] – Teacher 4

Teacher 6 shared that if the schedule is flexible and they have resources, it’s easier to address the needs of SEN learners. This shows that having time flexibility and sufficient resources helps teachers support diverse learners better. It also means that with these conditions, teachers can plan and deliver lessons more effectively to meet the needs of all students. The teacher said:

“Kung flexible ang schedule ug naa mi resources, mas sayon ang pag- address sa needs sa SEN learners.” [*If the schedule is flexible and we have resources, it’s easier to address the needs of SEN learners.*] – Teacher 6

Teacher 9 shared that recognition from the administration motivates them to improve their teaching. This shows that administrative recognition boosts teacher motivation. It also means that with support and acknowledgment from school leaders, teachers are encouraged to enhance their teaching and implement strategies more effectively. The teacher said:

“Ang recognition sa administration nakahatag nako og motivation sa pag-improve sa akong teaching.” [*Recognition from the administration motivates me to improve my teaching.*] – Teacher 9

Teacher 2 shared that it is sometimes difficult when there are no clear policies or guidelines on inclusive education. This shows that having clear policies is important for implementing inclusive practices. It also means that without proper guidelines, teachers may struggle to apply inclusive strategies effectively in the classroom. The teacher said:

“Lisod usahay kung walay klaro nga policy o guidelines sa inclusive education.” [*It’s sometimes difficult when there are no clear policies or guidelines on inclusive education.*] – Teacher 2

Teacher 7 shared that resource allocation and administrative support make lesson planning easier. This shows that support from the administration and access to resources help teachers prepare lessons more effectively. It also means that with these supports, teachers can plan and deliver lessons that better meet the needs of all students. The teacher said:

“Ang pag-allocate sa resources ug suporta sa admin nakapadali sa pagplano sa lessons.” [*Resource allocation and administrative support make lesson planning easier.*] – Teacher 7

Teacher 1 shared that sometimes they struggle when support from the administration is limited. This shows that administrative support is crucial for implementing effective teaching strategies. It also means that without enough support, teachers may find it harder to meet the needs of all learners. The teacher said:

“Usahay maglisod mi kung limitado ang tabang gikan sa administration.” [*Sometimes we struggle when support from the administration is limited.*] – Teacher 1

The findings indicate that administrative support is a critical system for non- SPED teachers in inclusive classrooms. By providing guidance, resources, recognition, and policy clarity, administrators empower teachers to implement inclusive education more effectively, enhance teacher morale, and ensure that students’ diverse needs are met. The data suggest that consistent and structured administrative support enables teachers to focus on instructional quality while fostering a positive and inclusive school culture.

This finding implies that schools should strengthen administrative systems to support inclusive education, including clear policy formulation, resource allocation, professional development facilitation, and recognition of teacher efforts. Administrators should maintain open communication with teachers, provide consistent guidance, and create an environment where inclusive practices are prioritized and sustained. Strengthening administrative support ultimately enhances teacher

capacity, promotes equitable learning experiences, and contributes to a more inclusive and effective educational environment for all students.

Studies show that administrative support is very important for inclusive education. One study found that school principals help teachers implement inclusive practices by ensuring clear policies, allocating resources, and supporting professional development[36]. Similarly, another study showed that principals' leadership and supportive attitudes create a more inclusive environment for students with disabilities and encourage teachers to use inclusive strategies[37]. In addition, research also reported that teachers value support from building and district leaders because it improves their confidence and ability to teach all students in inclusive classrooms[38].

Proposed Program to Strengthen the Capacity of Non-SPED Teachers in Effectively Handling Inclusive Education

The data gathered from the interviews emphasized the need for a structured program aimed at enhancing the skills and confidence of non-SPED teachers in managing inclusive classrooms. From this perspective, three essential themes emerged as key elements for the program: *collaborative professional learning, technology integration for inclusive instruction, and ongoing reflective practice*. Collaborative professional learning would provide teachers opportunities to engage in team-based planning, peer observations, and joint problem-solving to address diverse learners' needs. Technology integration for inclusive instruction involves training teachers to effectively use digital tools, assistive technologies, and adaptive learning platforms to support students with special educational needs (SEN).

Ongoing reflective practice emphasizes self-assessment, peer feedback, and structured reflection sessions to help teachers evaluate their instructional strategies and make informed adjustments for inclusivity. Implementing these program components would strengthen teacher competence, foster a collaborative school culture, and ensure that students with SEN receive effective, meaningful, and inclusive learning experiences in general education classrooms.

Collaborative Professional Learning. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers viewed collaborative professional learning as a vital component of programs designed to strengthen their capacity in managing inclusive classrooms. Teachers shared that engaging in team-based planning, peer observations, and joint problem-solving sessions allowed them to address the diverse learning needs of students, including those with special educational needs (SEN), more effectively. Collaborative professional learning provided both instructional guidance and emotional support, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and collective growth among educators. By working together on lesson design, discussing strategies for differentiation, and reflecting on classroom practices, teachers were able to improve their teaching approaches and implement more inclusive strategies. However, some teachers noted challenges such as coordinating schedules for collaborative sessions and ensuring consistent participation among colleagues. Despite these challenges, teachers consistently emphasized that collaborative professional learning strengthened their instructional competence, enhanced teamwork, and promoted a more inclusive school culture.

Teacher 3 shared that they learn many strategies when they can share ideas with their colleagues. This shows that collaboration with peers is important for improving teaching practices. It also means that by exchanging ideas, teachers can discover new strategies and better support the learning needs of all students. The teacher said:

“Makakat-on ko og daghang strategies kung makashare ko og ideas sa akong mga kauban.” *[I learn many strategies when I can share ideas with my colleagues.]* – Teacher 3

Teacher 7 shared that group planning and peer observation really help in adjusting lessons for diverse learners. This shows that working with colleagues and observing peers supports teachers in

improving their lessons. It also means that through collaboration and observation, teachers can better adapt lessons to meet the needs of all students. The teacher said:

“Ang group planning ug peer observation nakatabang gyud sa pag- adjust sa lessons para sa diverse learners.” *[Group planning and peer observation really help in adjusting lessons for diverse learners.]* –Teacher 7

Teacher 5 shared that they feel more confident implementing inclusive activities when they have support from the team. This shows that team support boosts teacher confidence in using inclusive strategies. It also means that with encouragement and collaboration from colleagues, teachers can implement activities more effectively for all learners. The teacher said:

“Mas confident ko sa pag-implement sa inclusive activities kung naa koy support sa team.” *[I feel more confident implementing inclusive activities when I have support from the team.]* – Teacher 5

Teacher 1 shared that it is sometimes difficult when everyone is busy and collaboration is inconsistent. This shows that consistent teamwork is important for successful teaching practices. It also means that without regular collaboration, teachers may struggle to coordinate and effectively support all students. The teacher said:

“Lisod usahay kung busy ang tanan ug dili consistent ang collaboration.” *[It’s sometimes difficult when everyone is busy and collaboration is inconsistent.]* – Teacher 1

Teacher 9 shared that discussing classroom strategies and receiving feedback from peers helps improve their teaching. This shows that peer feedback supports professional growth and enhances teaching practices. It also means that through discussion and advice from colleagues, teachers can refine their strategies and better address the needs of all students. The teacher said:

“Ang pag-discuss sa classroom strategies ug feedback sa peers nakatabang sa pag-improve sa akong teaching.” *[Discussing classroom strategies and receiving feedback from peers helps improve my teaching.]* – Teacher 9

Teacher 2 shared that sometimes extra effort is needed to coordinate the schedule for collaborative sessions. This shows that planning and coordination are important for effective collaboration among teachers. It also means that even when scheduling is difficult, teachers need to make an effort to work together to improve teaching and support all learners. The teacher said:

“Usahay kinahanglan og extra effort para ma-coordinate ang schedule sa collaborative sessions.” *[Sometimes extra effort is needed to coordinate the schedule for collaborative sessions.]* – Teacher 2

The findings indicate that collaborative professional learning is a critical element for strengthening non-SPED teachers’ capacity in inclusive classrooms. By promoting teamwork, shared problem-solving, and reflective discussions, such programs enhance teacher competence, confidence, and instructional effectiveness. The data suggest that structured collaboration enables teachers to implement inclusive education more consistently, while the absence of collaborative opportunities can limit professional growth and reduce the quality of support provided to SEN learners.

This finding implies that schools should institutionalize collaborative professional learning programs, providing dedicated time, resources, and support for teachers to engage in joint planning, peer observations, and reflective practice. Administrators should encourage teamwork, recognize collaborative efforts, and facilitate structures that promote regular professional interaction. Strengthening collaborative professional learning ultimately fosters teacher growth, enhances inclusive practices, and contributes to a supportive, responsive, and equitable learning environment for all students.

Studies show that Collaborative Professional Learning (CPL) or Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) help teachers work together and improve inclusive education. Cole[39] found

that teachers who participate in PLCs can collaborate better and support inclusive teaching. Khasawneh[40] reported that working together in PLCs and shared teaching helps teachers grow professionally and improve their teaching for all learners. Wilshire showed that PLCs with both general and special education teachers help them share strategies and learn from each other. These studies suggest that CPL helps teachers work together, gain confidence, and use better strategies to meet the needs of all students.

Technology Integration for Inclusive Instruction. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers perceived technology integration as a promising approach to enhance their ability to manage inclusive classrooms. Teachers shared that incorporating digital tools, educational software, and online resources allowed them to better address the diverse learning needs of students, including those with special educational needs (SEN). Technology integration provided not only instructional support but also opportunities for individualized learning, immediate feedback, and interactive engagement. By using digital lesson plans, adaptive learning applications, and multimedia resources, teachers were able to differentiate instruction more effectively, monitor student progress, and create more engaging learning experiences. However, some teachers noted challenges such as limited access to devices, insufficient training on educational technology, and occasional technical difficulties during lessons. Despite these challenges, teachers consistently emphasized that integrating technology strengthened their teaching practices, enhanced student participation, and promoted a more inclusive classroom environment.

Teacher 4 shared that they can apply many interactive activities using apps for diverse learners. This shows that using technology can help make lessons more engaging and accessible. It also means that with interactive apps, teachers can better support the learning needs of all students, including those with diverse abilities. The teacher said:

“Daghan kog ma-apply nga interactive activities gamit ang mga apps para sa diverse learners.” *[I can apply many interactive activities using apps for diverse learners.]* – Teacher 4

Teacher 8 shared that it’s easier for them to monitor their students’ progress using online tools. This shows that technology helps teachers track learning more efficiently. It also means that with online tools, teachers can quickly see students’ progress and provide timely support to meet their needs. The teacher said:

“Mas dali nako ma-monitor ang progress sa akong students gamit ang online tools.” *[It’s easier for me to monitor my students’ progress using online tools.]* – Teacher 8

Teacher 6 shared that using technology helps personalize learning for students. This shows that technology allows teachers to meet individual learning needs. It also means that with digital tools, teachers can tailor lessons and activities so that each student can learn at their own pace and ability. The teacher said:

“Ang paggamit sa technology nakatabang sa pag-personalize sa learning sa mga students.” *[Using technology helps personalize learning for students.]* – Teacher 6

Teacher 1 shared that it is sometimes difficult when there are limited devices and internet access. This shows that access to technology is important for effective teaching. It also means that without enough devices or internet, teachers may struggle to implement digital or personalized learning for students. The teacher said:

“Lisod usahay kung limitado ang devices ug internet access sa classroom.” *[It’s sometimes difficult when there are limited devices and internet access.]* – Teacher 1

Teacher 2 shared that training is really needed to maximize the use of technology in teaching. This shows that teachers need proper training to use digital tools effectively. It also means that with the right training, teachers can apply technology in ways that better support student learning. The teacher said:

“Kinahanglan gyud og training para mas ma-maximize ang paggamit sa technology sa pagtudlo.” [Training is really needed to maximize the use of technology in teaching.] – Teacher 2

Teacher 5 shared that interactive and multimedia lessons are more engaging for all learners. This shows that using multimedia and interactive activities increases student engagement. It also means that with these teaching methods, teachers can capture students’ interest and support learning for diverse learners more effectively. The teacher said:

“Interactive ug multimedia lessons mas engaging para sa tanan nga learners.” [Interactive and multimedia lessons are more engaging for all learners.] – Teacher 5

The findings indicate that technology integration is a vital component for strengthening non-SPED teachers’ capacity in inclusive classrooms. By promoting innovative instructional strategies, personalized learning, and enhanced engagement, such programs improve teacher competence, confidence, and the overall effectiveness of inclusive education. The data suggest that providing structured access to technology, training, and ongoing support enables teachers to implement inclusive instruction more effectively, while the lack of technological resources and guidance may hinder professional growth and reduce learning opportunities for SEN students.

This finding implies that schools should institutionalize programs for technology integration in inclusive instruction, ensuring adequate devices, internet access, professional development, and technical support. Administrators should facilitate training, encourage experimentation with digital tools, and provide ongoing assistance to optimize technology use. Strengthening technology integration ultimately fosters teacher growth, enhances instructional inclusivity, and contributes to a supportive, engaging, and equitable learning environment for all students.

Studies show that technology helps teachers teach all students, including those with special needs. Campado[41] found that digital tools and apps make lessons easier for different kinds of learners. Campado[41] said that apps and assistive technology help students learn and stay motivated, but teachers still face problems like not enough devices or technical issues. Bešić[42] showed that technology helps teachers change lessons to fit different students’ needs. Overall, these studies show that using technology makes learning more interesting, easier to understand, and better for all students, but teachers need training and enough resources to use it well.

Ongoing Reflective Practice. The data gathered from the interviews revealed how non-SPED teachers viewed ongoing reflective practice as an essential strategy to enhance their capacity in managing inclusive classrooms. Teachers shared that regularly reflecting on their instructional methods, classroom interactions, and student outcomes allowed them to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and appropriate strategies to address the diverse learning needs of students, including those with special educational needs (SEN). Reflective practice provided both professional guidance and personal insight, fostering continuous growth and self-awareness in teaching. By maintaining journals, participating in peer discussions, and analyzing lesson outcomes, teachers were able to adjust their instructional approaches, implement differentiated strategies, and monitor the effectiveness of inclusive activities. However, some teachers noted challenges such as finding dedicated time for reflection, maintaining consistency in reflective habits, and integrating feedback into daily teaching practices. Despite these challenges, teachers consistently emphasized that ongoing reflective practice strengthened their instructional competence, improved problem-solving, and enhanced their confidence in supporting all learners.

Teacher 3 shared that reflecting every week really gives them clear ideas on how to improve their lessons. This shows that regular reflection helps teachers think about their teaching and find ways to improve. It also means that by reflecting often, teachers can make their lessons better and support the learning of all students. The teacher said:

“Makahatag gyud og klaro nga idea kung unsaon pag-improve sa akong lessons kung mag-reflect ko kada semana.” *[Reflecting every week really gives me clear ideas on how to improve my lessons.]* –

Teacher 3

Teacher 7 shared that peer discussion of their reflections helps them adapt strategies for diverse learners. This shows that talking with colleagues about teaching helps improve strategies. It also means that by sharing reflections with peers, teachers can better adjust lessons to meet the needs of all students. The teacher said:

“Ang peer discussion sa akong reflections nakatabang sa pag-adapt sa strategies para sa diverse learners.” *[Peer discussion of my reflections helps me adapt strategies for diverse learners.]* – Teacher 7

Teacher 5 shared that they feel more confident implementing inclusive activities because they are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. This shows that knowing your own strengths and weaknesses helps build confidence in teaching. It also means that when teachers understand themselves better, they can plan and deliver inclusive activities more effectively for all students. The teacher said:

“Mas confident ko sa pag-implement sa inclusive activities kay aware ko sa akong strengths ug weaknesses.” *[I feel more confident implementing inclusive activities because I am aware of my strengths and weaknesses.]* – Teacher 5

Teacher 1 shared that it’s sometimes difficult when there’s a lot of work and reflection is inconsistent. This shows that regular reflection is important for improving teaching. It also means that when teachers are busy and do not reflect consistently, it can be harder to adjust lessons and support all students effectively. The teacher said:

“Lisod usahay kung daghan ang trabaho ug dili consistent ang reflection.” *[It’s sometimes difficult when there’s a lot of work and reflection is inconsistent.]* – Teacher 1

Teacher 9 shared that analyzing lesson outcomes and peer feedback helps improve their teaching. This shows that looking at results and listening to feedback helps teachers identify what works and what needs improvement. It also means that by analyzing outcomes and discussing with peers, teachers can make lessons better and support all students more effectively. The teacher said:

“Ang pag-analyze sa lesson outcomes ug feedback sa peers nakatabang sa pag-improve sa akong teaching.” *[Analyzing lesson outcomes and peer feedback helps improve my teaching.]* – Teacher 9

Teacher 2 shared that sometimes extra effort is needed to document and review reflections. This shows that keeping track of reflections takes time and effort. It also means that when teachers document and review their reflections, they can better understand their teaching and improve lessons for all students. The teacher said:

“Usahay kinahanglan og extra effort para ma-document ug ma-review ang reflections.” *[Sometimes extra effort is needed to document and review reflections.]* – Teacher 2

The findings indicate that ongoing reflective practice is a critical element for strengthening non-SPED teachers’ capacity in inclusive classrooms. By promoting self-awareness, professional growth, and thoughtful problem-solving, such programs enhance teacher competence, instructional effectiveness, and confidence in supporting diverse learners. The data suggest that providing structured time, peer support, and tools for reflection enables teachers to engage in meaningful reflective practice, while the absence of reflection can limit professional growth and reduce the quality of inclusive instruction.

This finding implies that schools should institutionalize programs that encourage ongoing reflective practice, providing dedicated time, mentorship, and support mechanisms. Administrators should

foster a culture of reflection, recognize reflective efforts, and facilitate opportunities for collaborative analysis and feedback. Strengthening ongoing reflective practice ultimately enhances teacher growth, promotes continuous improvement, and contributes to a responsive, inclusive, and equitable learning environment for all students.

Studies show that reflecting on teaching helps teachers get better and support all students, including those with special needs. found that teachers who reflect alone and with colleagues can plan lessons better, solve problems in class, and improve their teaching. said that teachers who reflect often have students who are more motivated and take part more in class. showed that reflecting on lessons helps teachers understand what students need and make classrooms more inclusive.

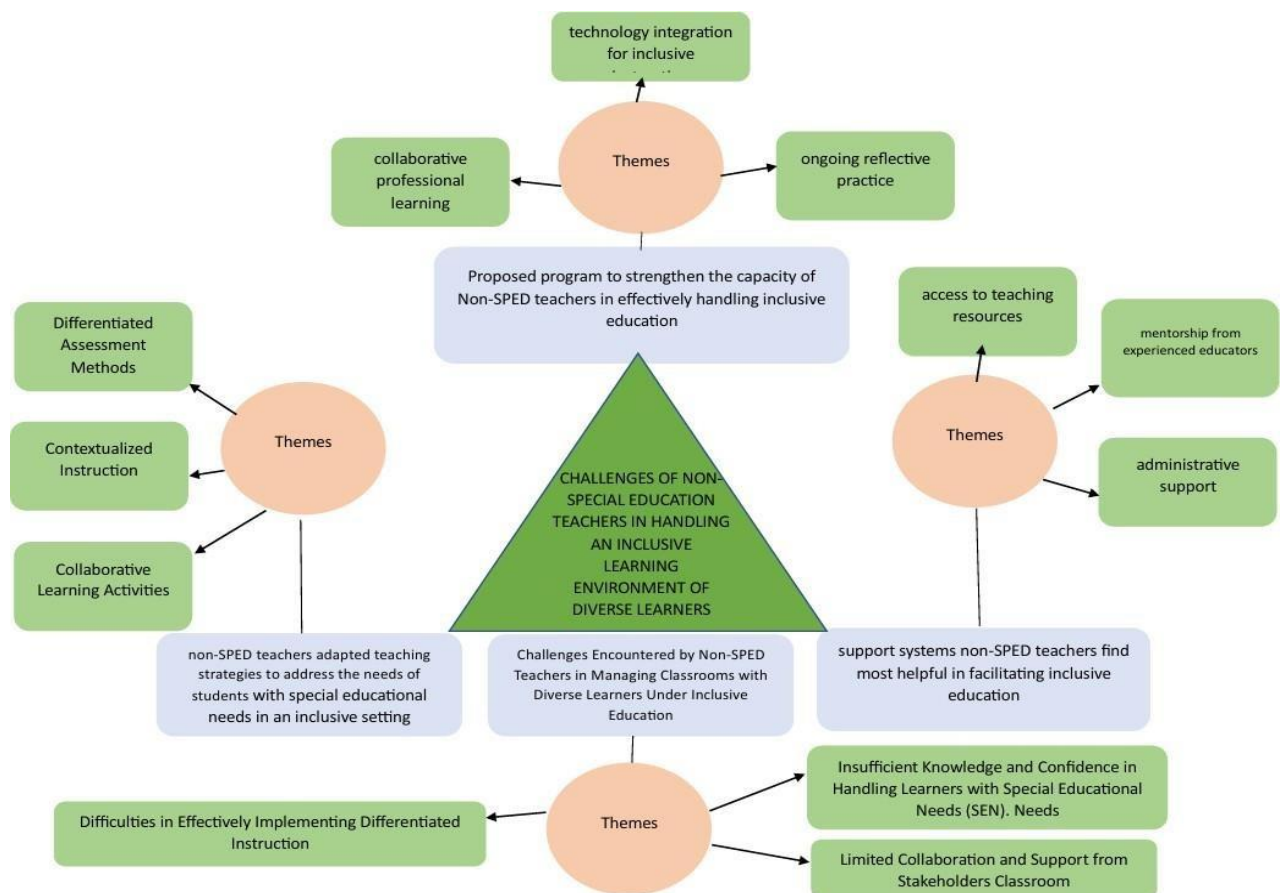


FIGURE 4. SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, and RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

This chapter presents the summary of the study, the major findings derived from the data gathered, and the conclusions drawn from the results. It revisits the purpose of the research, which is to explore the challenges of non-special education teachers handling an inclusive learning environment of diverse learners. The discussion emphasizes how the collected data addressed each research question, providing a better understanding of teachers' lived experiences in implementing inclusive practices. The findings and conclusions serve as the basis for recommendations aimed at improving inclusive education implementation in public schools.

FINDINGS

The study involving 15 non-SPED teachers handling inclusive classrooms at Day-as Elementary School revealed several key aspects of managing diverse learners. First, teachers experienced difficulties in implementing differentiated instruction, as designing lessons to accommodate varying

learning styles, abilities, and paces proved challenging due to limited training and preparation time. In addition, many teachers reported insufficient knowledge and confidence in addressing the needs of students with special educational needs (SEN), often feeling uncertain about using appropriate interventions and teaching strategies. Moreover, limited collaboration and support from stakeholders, including parents, administrators, and SPED professionals, hindered their ability to manage behavioral issues, monitor student progress, and foster a truly inclusive environment. Despite these challenges, teachers developed practical adaptive strategies, such as differentiated assessment methods that allowed students to demonstrate learning in alternative ways, contextualized instruction that connected lessons to real-life experiences, and collaborative learning activities that encouraged peer support and teamwork. Furthermore, teachers relied on critical support systems, including access to teaching resources, mentorship from experienced educators, and administrative support, all of which strengthened their competence and enhanced classroom inclusion. Consequently, the data suggest the need for a structured program to strengthen non-SPED teachers' capacity in inclusive education, consisting of collaborative professional learning for team-based planning and peer observations, technology integration for effective use of digital tools and assistive technologies, and ongoing reflective practice through self-assessment and structured feedback. Ultimately, implementing such a program would improve teacher confidence, foster a collaborative school culture, and ensure that students with SEN receive meaningful, equitable, and inclusive learning experiences.

CONCLUSION

The lived experiences of non-SPED teachers in handling inclusive classrooms can be seen as a journey of learning and adapting. The main challenges they face come from not having enough training, limited resources, and inconsistent support from the school. Even with these difficulties, teachers use creative strategies like differentiated lessons, real-life examples, group activities, and regular reflection to help all students, especially those with special educational needs (SEN). Mentorship, support from school leaders, and access to teaching materials are very important for improving teachers' skills and making classrooms more inclusive. This study shows that a program with teamwork among teachers, use of technology, and regular reflection can help teachers become more confident, skilled, and effective. It would also create a supportive school environment and ensure that all students have fair and meaningful learning opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study shows the challenges and strategies of non-SPED teachers in inclusive classrooms. Teachers face problems like not enough training, limited resources, and lack of support, but they use smart ways like different teaching methods, group activities, and reflection to help all students, especially those with special educational needs (SEN). Based on these findings, the following recommendations are given for key stakeholders. These actions aim to help teachers improve their skills, gain confidence, and make classrooms more supportive and inclusive for all students.

For School Administrators. Implement the Capacity-Building Program as a regular activity to help non-SPED teachers improve their skills in inclusive classrooms. Provide enough time, resources, and mentorship opportunities so teachers can plan lessons and use strategies that support all students, especially those with special educational needs (SEN).

For Policy Makers/DepEd. Include training on inclusive education in pre-service and in-service programs to help teachers gain confidence and knowledge. Provide clear guidelines for teaching, assessing, and using resources for diverse learners. Support schools by providing funds, technology, and materials that teachers need to make lessons inclusive.

For SPED Teachers. Work together with non-SPED teachers through co-teaching or joint planning to share strategies and help adapt lessons for students with different needs. Give feedback and guidance on lesson plans, assessments, and teaching methods to improve learning outcomes.

For Non-SPED Teachers. Join the Capacity-Building Program to learn new strategies and build confidence in teaching diverse learners. Reflect regularly on lessons to see what works and what can be improved. Use group activities, collaborative learning, and technology to engage students and meet their learning needs.

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