

Implementing Inclusive Education for Learners with Special Needs: Exploring Non-SpEd Teachers' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices in Nangka National High School

Maria Regil E. Vasquez¹, Lilibeth C. Pinili², Raymond C. Espina³, Janine Joy L. Tenerife-Cañete⁴,
Reylan G. Capuno⁵, Randy C. Mangubat⁶, Anabelle T. Pantaleon⁷, Veronica O. Calasang⁸

Cebu Technological University – Main Campus, Cebu City, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education, mandated by the Philippine Republic Act 11650, remains unevenly implemented, particularly in mainstream public school settings where non-Special Education (non-SpEd) teachers often serve as the first line of support for learners with special needs. This study assessed the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAPs) of non-SpEd teachers at Nangka National High School regarding the implementation of inclusive education and examined the correlation among these variables. Utilizing a quantitative, descriptive-correlational design, the research gathered data from 30 purposively selected non-SpEd teachers using a validated survey questionnaire. Statistical analysis included the Weighted Mean to determine the level of KAPs and Pearson's r correlation to test the relationships. The overall results showed that the teachers demonstrated a moderate level of knowledge (mean = 2.81), a positive attitude (mean = 2.70), and inclusive practices (mean = 3.24) toward inclusive education. A strong positive correlation was found between knowledge and attitude ($r = 0.628$, $p < .001$), suggesting that increased knowledge leads to more favorable perspectives. Moreover, the study revealed a very weak and statistically insignificant negative relationship between attitude and practices ($r = -0.116$, $p = 0.542$). This indicates a gap where positive intentions do not consistently translate into the effective and observable application of inclusive classroom strategies. Finally, the study also showed a weak and statistically insignificant negative correlation between knowledge and practices ($r = -0.167$, $p = 0.379$). This means that a teacher's level of knowledge about inclusive education does not necessarily correspond to the frequency or quality of their inclusive practices. The findings emphasize that while teachers are willing, external or structural factors may hinder consistent implementation. Based on these results, a School-Based Action Plan is proposed to strengthen inclusive education through targeted capacity-building, peer mentoring, and policy integration.

Keywords: Special Education, Learners with Special Needs, Inclusive Education, Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices, Non-SpEd Teachers

INTRODUCTION

The act of teaching is a multifaceted process that extends far beyond the mere transmission of knowledge. Teaching today demands responsiveness to the diversity of learners—differences in background, learning preferences, ability, motivation, and culture. Classrooms are no longer filled with a homogeneous group of students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). The “one-size-fits-all” approach, where uniformity is assumed to meet the diverse needs of all learners, is no longer adaptable (Pagaduan & Natividad, 2025). This diversity, while presenting a challenge, also offers an immense opportunity to foster a richer, more comprehensive educational experience for all (Greco, 2018).

Globally, children with disabilities face heightened barriers to education. The World Bank Group (2025) reported that at least half of the 291.2 million children and adolescents with disabilities are excluded from education, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where exclusion rates can reach as high as 90 percent. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd, 2022) acknowledged that despite the passage of Republic Act 11650 or the “Inclusive Education Act,” the implementation of inclusive practices remains

uneven, with many public schools struggling to provide sufficient resources, teacher training, and accessible facilities. Similarly, CHED (2023) underscored the urgency of capacitating teachers in higher education institutions to ensure equity and access for learners with disabilities.

To address these realities, inclusive education has emerged as a central educational paradigm. Synthesizing the definitions of UNESCO (2021), UNICEF (2017), and RA 11650, inclusive education can be understood as a system-wide process of adapting curriculum, pedagogy, and school environments to eliminate barriers, ensuring that all learners—regardless of ability, background, or needs—learn together in welcoming and supportive settings. In the Philippine context, this means that inclusive education is not simply about policy compliance but about transforming classroom practices to uphold the right of every learner to quality education.

Despite these mandates, many teachers remain underprepared. Baek et al. (2024) revealed that teachers often demonstrate limited preparedness and self-efficacy in implementing inclusive practices, particularly for learners with autism, leading to inconsistent classroom support. In the Philippines, Abantas (2022) found that while teachers generally hold positive attitudes toward inclusive education, gaps persist in their pedagogical skills and knowledge of inclusive strategies. Likewise, Araña (2022) emphasized that limited training opportunities and insufficient technical assistance for teachers hinder the consistent application of inclusive practices in mainstream classrooms. These studies highlight the pressing need to strengthen teacher competence through capacity-building and sustained professional development.

The Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) framework offers a useful lens to examine this issue. Knowledge influences teachers' awareness of inclusive strategies; attitudes shape their willingness and openness to accommodate diverse learners; and practices determine the actual application of strategies in classrooms. These three dimensions are interconnected—knowledge without supportive attitudes may not translate into effective practice, while positive attitudes without adequate knowledge may result in inconsistent implementation. Thus, studying KAP together provides a holistic understanding of teacher readiness and the barriers to inclusive education.

This study addresses a critical research gap by focusing on the KAPs of non-SpEd teachers in implementing inclusive education in Philippine public schools. While most research emphasizes SpEd teachers or administrators, the overlooked experiences of non-SpEd teachers—who often serve as the first line of support for unassessed or undiagnosed learners—remain underexplored. By generating baseline data on their competence and perspectives, this study aims to inform targeted professional development, strengthen classroom practices, and provide evidence-based recommendations for policy implementation. Ultimately, the study's significance lies in its potential to advance inclusive education in provincial settings, ensure equitable delivery of quality education, and contribute to the effective realization of RA 11650.

Theories and Legal Bases

This study is anchored on two complementary theories and two key legal foundations that collectively provide the framework for promoting inclusive education. The theoretical underpinnings are drawn from Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, particularly the construct of self-efficacy, and the Social Model of Disability, while the legal basis is grounded in Republic Act 11650, also known as the Inclusive Education Act, and Republic Act 7277, the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, particularly the construct of self-efficacy, which highlights the role of confidence and belief in one's ability to influence teaching practices, and the Social Model of Disability, which shifts the focus from individual impairments to systemic barriers that hinder participation and learning.

These frameworks underscore the interplay between teacher readiness and structural inclusivity. In addition, this study draws from significant legal mandates that institutionalize inclusive education in the Philippines. Republic Act 11650, or the Inclusive Education Act, ensures the provision of appropriate support and services for learners with disabilities, while Republic Act 7277, the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons, upholds the rights and equal opportunities of persons with disabilities across various sectors, including education. Together, these laws provide the policy backbone for fostering inclusive practices in schools.

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory posits that human functioning is grounded in a triadic reciprocal causation among three interacting elements: personal factors (cognitions, emotions, beliefs), behavior, and environmental influences (Bandura, 1986; 1997). A central construct in this theory is self-efficacy, defined as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Self-efficacy affects what challenges people choose to take on, how much effort they exert, how persistent they are when faced with obstacles, and how resilient they remain in the face of setbacks. In this study, Social Cognitive Theory links directly to the knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) of non-SpEd teachers. Teachers’ knowledge of inclusive strategies influences their confidence in applying them; their attitudes are shaped by their self-belief and past experiences; and their practices reflect how these internal factors are translated into actual classroom actions. If teachers possess strong self-efficacy, they are more likely to adopt inclusive practices and persist despite challenges, aligning directly with the KAP framework.

The Social Model of Disability (SMD), popularized by Mike Oliver (1990), shifts the focus from individual impairments to societal, structural, and attitudinal barriers that hinder participation and learning. It distinguishes between impairment (the physical, mental, or sensory condition) and disability (the disadvantage created by social and environmental barriers). Within this study, the SMD links with attitudes and practices: teachers who perceive disability as a social issue, rather than an individual problem, are more likely to adopt inclusive attitudes and implement practices that dismantle barriers. Conversely, limited training or negative perceptions among teachers may reinforce disabling conditions in classrooms. Thus, SMD complements Social Cognitive Theory by situating teachers’ self-efficacy within a broader system that either enables or constrains inclusive practice.

Beyond theoretical grounding, this study is also supported by significant legal mandates that institutionalize inclusive education in the Philippines. **Republic Act 11650, or the Inclusive Education Act of 2022**, establishes a comprehensive national policy to ensure that learners with disabilities are included in the general education system. It calls for the creation of Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs) in every city and municipality, which would provide early assessment, psychological services, speech and occupational therapy, and instructional materials. The law emphasizes the role of classroom teachers, both SpEd and non-SpEd, in providing accommodations and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of learners with disabilities. By requiring DepEd to strengthen teacher training and professional development, RA 11650 connects directly to the knowledge and practices dimensions of this study. For non-SpEd teachers, this means that their competence in inclusive education is not just desirable but mandated, as they are often the first to respond to the needs of undiagnosed or unassessed learners in mainstream classrooms.

Republic Act 7277, the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons (1992), also provides a strong policy foundation for inclusive education. It guarantees the rights of persons with disabilities (PWDs) to education, employment, health, and social services, and mandates that schools adopt measures that promote accessibility and equal opportunity. Specifically, the law requires educational institutions to provide auxiliary services such as assistive devices, access to information, and reasonable accommodations. It obliges teachers and schools to adopt inclusive approaches, ensuring that learners with disabilities are not discriminated against or excluded from the educational process. RA 7277 links to the attitudes and practices of teachers by reinforcing that inclusivity is a matter of rights and equality, not mere charity or optional effort. For non-SpEd teachers, this law underscores their responsibility to treat learners with disabilities as equal members of the classroom, thereby challenging negative perceptions and motivating inclusive practice.

Together, these theories and laws form an integrated foundation for the study. Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory highlights how teachers’ knowledge and beliefs shape their attitudes and classroom behaviors.

The Social Model of Disability emphasizes that the real challenge lies in removing barriers within the school system, which is directly influenced by teacher practices and mindsets. RA 11650 and RA 7277 then provide the legal scaffolding, ensuring that these theoretical insights are not only desirable but mandated by law. In this way, the study’s focus on the KAP of non-SpEd teachers is both theoretically and legally grounded: teachers’ self-efficacy (SCT) and their perceptions of disability (SMD) directly influence their KAP, while RA 11650 and RA 7277 mandate and support these inclusive practices at the systemic and policy level.

Significance of the Study

This study holds significant value for different individuals involved in the education of learners with special needs in an inclusive setting. By exploring the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of non-SpEd teachers, this research would contribute to a more effective and supportive educational environment for all learners. The results of this research could be beneficial for teachers, learners with special needs, school administration, policymakers, the Department of Education (DepEd), researcher, and future researchers.

Objectives of the Study

This research assessed the knowledge, attitude and practices of non-SpEd teachers on the implementation of the Inclusive Education for Learners with Special Needs at Nangka National High School for school year 2025-2026 as a basis for an action plan. Moreover, the variables were also tested to determine whether significant relationships exist between and among them. Specifically, it answered the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 Age and gender;
 - 1.2 Educational Attainment;
 - 1.3 Grade level taught;
 - 1.4 Training received in inclusive education; and
 - 1.5 Years of Teaching Experience?
2. What are the levels of knowledge, attitudes, and practices on the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special needs?
3. Is there a significant relationship between study variables as to:
 - 3.1 Knowledge vs. attitude;
 - 3.2 Attitude vs. practice; and
 - 3.3 Practice vs. Knowledge?
4. Based on the study findings, what action plan can be proposed?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research methodology and procedures, covering the study area, population and sample, sampling technique and size, statistical treatment of data, and the ethical considerations observed in the study.

Research Design

This research employs quantitative approach utilizing descriptive-correlational design. Faltaldo et al. (2016) mentioned that correlational design systematically examines the nature and extent of relationships among variables without exploring their causal reasons.

This design is appropriate for the present study because it seeks to determine the relationship between the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of non-SpEd teachers in the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special needs. By using this design, the researchers can objectively measure the variables and analyze how they are related, providing a clear understanding of the extent to which teachers' knowledge and attitudes influence their actual classroom practices.

Environment

The locus of the study was in Nangka National High School. Nangka National High School offers a setting where inclusive practices are tested at the secondary level, where academic requirements and student needs are more complex. Teachers in this institution face the challenge of balancing curriculum demands while ensuring that learners with special needs receive adequate support. The school is an important research site as it demonstrates the role of secondary education in preparing diverse learners for higher education, employment, and life skills.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were 30 non-SpEd teachers Nangka National High School. These teachers currently handle learners whom they suspect to have special needs but are considered regular students due to the absence of Learner Information System (LIS) tagging and formal assessment. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling, as the study specifically required teachers who have direct classroom experience with learners exhibiting possible special educational needs. This sampling method was deemed appropriate because it intentionally targets participants who can provide relevant insights into the implementation of inclusive education.

Instrument

The instrument used in this research is a survey questionnaire. Moreover, the survey questionnaires had three parts:

First part contains the profile of the respondents as to their age, gender, educational attainment, grade level taught, training received in inclusive education and years of teaching experience.

The second part contains questions on the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of the non-SpEd teachers towards inclusive education of learners with special needs. The researchers adopted the knowledge and attitudes questionnaire from the study of Gerald S. Mhetwa (2008) on Principals' Knowledge and Attitudes Regarding Inclusive Education: Implications for Curriculum and Assessment, as cited in Abantas (2022). Meanwhile, the practices questionnaire was adopted from the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) Scale developed by Sharma et al. (2012), as cited in Selenius and Hau (2021) in their study A Scoping Review on the Psychometric Properties of the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) Scale.

To establish the local validity and reliability of the adapted questionnaires, a pilot test was conducted with a small group of non-SpEd teachers who are not part of the actual respondents. The results were analyzed, and Cronbach's alpha was computed to determine the internal consistency of each section, with a coefficient of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable.

Data Gathering Procedure

This study follows four phases in the data-gathering procedure to address the sub-problems.

Phase one. The researchers would seek approval from the head of their division and institution before conducting the study. As soon as the researchers have received the permission, they may start with the data gathering.

Phase two. The nature and intent of the research instrument must be explained clearly to the respondents so that proper instructions regarding critical areas would be explained thoroughly to them, and the respondents would be given a clear overview of the nature and relevance of the study. The demographic and work characteristics questionnaire would be administered first to get the respondents' profiling, and this would be followed by the knowledge, attitudes and practices inquiry on the respondents.

Phase three. After data gathering, responses would be tallied, analyzed, and interpreted. The relationship between the study variables would also be tested.

Phase four. After the interpretation, the researchers would craft an action plan for the school to address the issue/concern.

Statistical Treatment

The responses of the teachers were collected, tallied, and tabulated. The researcher used the following statistical tools:

Frequency Distribution and Simple Percentage

This would organize and present the respondents' profile according to their age, gender, and number of years of teaching experience.

Weighted mean and Verbal Description

This was used to determine the respondents' levels of knowledge, attitudes and practices.

$$WM = \frac{\Sigma fx}{n}$$

where: **WM** – weighted mean

Σ – summation symbol

f – frequency of the responses under each scale

x – weight assigned to each scale

n – number of responses

For the verbal description of the computed weighted mean for the levels of knowledge, attitude, and practices, the hypothetical mean range is used, as shown.

Pearson's r Correlation

Pearson's r correlation was employed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship among teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices on the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special needs. This statistical tool is appropriate because it measures the degree of linear relationship between continuous variables, which aligns with the study's objective of examining the interconnections among KAPs. In this study, the researchers assumed normal distribution of the data, which satisfies one of the key assumptions of Pearson's r.

$$r = \frac{\Sigma(X - \bar{X})(Y - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\Sigma(X - \bar{X})^2 \cdot (Y - \bar{Y})^2}}$$

where: **X** = independent variable values

Y = dependent variable values

\bar{X} and \bar{Y} = means of X and Y

The results of the correlation analysis, alongside the descriptive findings, served as the basis for designing the action plan. Specifically, identifying whether teachers' knowledge significantly relates to their attitudes and practices highlighted which domains require targeted interventions. For example, if knowledge shows only a weak correlation with practices, the action plan emphasized capacity-building and training programs. Conversely, if attitudes strongly predict practices, then strategies focused on fostering positive beliefs toward

inclusive education. This ensured that the action plan was not only evidence-based but also tailored to address the actual gaps revealed in the study.

Ethical Consideration

This study adhered to strict ethical guidelines to ensure the protection, confidentiality, and well-being of all participants.

Informed Consent. Prior to their participation, all teacher-respondents were thoroughly informed of the study's purpose, objectives, and scope. A clear explanation of the research procedures, including the process of completing the survey questionnaire and the estimated time required, was provided to ensure full understanding. Each respondent was asked to sign an **informed consent form** as confirmation of their voluntary participation and acknowledgment of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage, without penalty or adverse consequences.

Data Privacy. This research observes the provisions of the Privacy Act of 2002, which primarily aim to safeguard the personal information of the respondents as part of this academic undertaking. To ensure confidentiality, all gathered data was securely kept by the researchers and was not disclosed to anyone. The information collected shall be used exclusively for this study.

Confidentiality and Anonymity. All personal information and responses of the participants were treated with the highest level of confidentiality. Identifying details such as names did not appear in any reports, presentations, or publications. To safeguard anonymity, all data was coded, and only the researcher and authorized personnel involved in the analysis were given access to the raw information. Data would be securely stored both physically and digitally to prevent unauthorized access.

Voluntary Participation. Participation in this study was entirely voluntary. Teacher-respondents were not coerced, pressured, or unduly influenced to take part in the research. They were clearly informed that refusal to participate or withdrawal at any stage would not affect their professional standing, teaching responsibilities, or relationship with the school administration in any way.

Beneficence and non-maleficence. The study was guided by the principle of beneficence, with the aim of generating insights that could enhance inclusive education practices and support teachers in balancing academic and behavioral demands more effectively. At the same time, the principle of non-maleficence was upheld by ensuring that no psychological, social, or professional harm would result from participation.

Ethical Approval and Coordination. Before the commencement of data collection, formal approval was sought from the principals and school authorities of the participating schools in Cebu Province. The researcher coordinated closely with school representatives to ensure that the study aligns with institutional policies and guidelines, thereby fostering transparency, respect, and mutual cooperation throughout the research process.

RESULTS

This chapter presents and interprets the data on the knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAPs) of non-SpEd teachers at Nangka National High School regarding the implementation of Inclusive Education for Learners with Special Needs for the School Year 2025–2026. It includes the respondents' demographic profile, their levels of knowledge, attitude, and practice, the relationships among these variables, and the findings that serve as the basis for a proposed action plan to improve inclusive education in the school.

Demographic Profile of The Respondents

This section presents the age, gender, along with the educational attainment and grade level handled of the non-SpEd teachers.

Table 4. Age and Gender Profile of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Under 25 years old	0	0%
25-30	14	47%
31-35	9	30%
36-40	5	17%
41-45	2	7%
46-50	0	0%
51-55	0	0%
Over 55 years old	0	0%
Gender		
Man	6	20%
Woman	24	80%
Non-Binary	0	0%

Age

The data showed that the majority of respondents were between 25–30 years old (47%), followed by those aged 31–35 (30%). This indicated that most of the teachers at Nangka National High School belonged to the younger generation of educators. The dominance of younger teachers suggested a workforce that had recently undergone pre-service teacher education programs, which may have included more contemporary approaches to inclusive education.

According to Albaladejo and Giménez (2023), younger teachers tended to exhibit greater openness toward inclusive education because they were trained with modern pedagogical frameworks emphasizing diversity and inclusion. In contrast, older teachers often relied on traditional classroom practices that may not have fully aligned with inclusive strategies. The observed age distribution therefore implied that the school's inclusive education efforts could have benefited from the innovative perspectives and adaptability of younger teachers. However, the relative absence of older teachers (41 and above) could also have meant a lack of institutional memory and mentoring support from more experienced educators, which Chen et al. (2024) noted as essential for sustaining inclusive teaching through intergenerational collaboration.

Hence, the age composition at Nangka National High School pointed to a strong potential for progressive inclusion practices but also highlighted the importance of mentorship structures to balance youthful innovation with veteran experience.

Gender

The gender distribution revealed that 80% of the respondents were women, while 20% were men, and none identified as non-binary. This aligned with the general trend in the teaching profession, particularly in the Philippines, where female educators continued to dominate.

Gender, while not a strong determinant of attitudes toward inclusion, could still shape classroom dynamics and empathy levels. Diao and Liu (2022) found that female teachers often expressed higher levels of compassion and positive attitudes toward inclusive education. Conversely, Alkhateeb et al. (2023) reported no significant gender-based differences in inclusive education competence, suggesting that inclusivity awareness depended more on professional development than biological sex.

Given that most teachers in the study were women, it could be inferred that the overall attitude toward inclusion may have leaned toward more empathetic and nurturing approaches—attributes often associated with the promotion of inclusive learning environments. Nonetheless, the absence of non-binary representation suggested that inclusivity within the faculty itself could have been further strengthened by recognizing and supporting gender diversity in the teaching workforce.

Table 4. Educational Attainment of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	12	40%
Masteral Units	15	50%
Masteral Graduate	3	10%
Doctorate units	0	0%
Doctoral Graduate	0	0%

Educational Attainment

The data indicated that 50% of the respondents had earned master's units, 40% held a bachelor's degree, and 10% were master's graduates. None had pursued doctoral studies. This suggested that a majority of the teaching staff were currently advancing their education, reflecting a commitment to professional growth.

Higher educational attainment often correlated with better understanding and implementation of inclusive education practices. Agboola (2024) emphasized that teachers with postgraduate qualifications demonstrated higher confidence and competence in addressing diverse learning needs. Similarly, Rahman and Zulkifli (2023) found that advanced studies enhanced teachers' reflective thinking and application of inclusive pedagogical frameworks.

Therefore, the predominance of teachers with postgraduate exposure at Nangka National High School likely contributed positively to the effective implementation of inclusive education. It also indicated a favorable environment for knowledge sharing and peer mentoring among teachers with varying academic backgrounds.

Table 6. Grade Level Handled by the Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Grade Level Handled:		
Grade 7	4	13%
Grade 8	1	3%
Grade 9	1	3%

Grade 10	2	7%
Grade 11	5	17%
Grade 12	7	23%
Multiple Grade levels	10	33%

Grade Level Handled

Results showed that 33% of respondents handled multiple grade levels, while others taught single levels, with Grade 12 (23%) and Grade 11 (17%) having the highest representation among those who taught one level. This distribution suggested that many teachers were versatile, handling different grade levels, which may have enhanced their adaptability in inclusive settings.

According to Tzivinikou and Kagkara (2022), teachers who handled higher grades often faced more complex instructional challenges due to the specialized content and diverse student needs. At the same time, those handling multiple grade levels developed broader pedagogical flexibility, which was crucial for differentiated instruction—a cornerstone of inclusive education.

The observed data implied that the teachers' exposure to multiple grade levels could have contributed to stronger inclusive teaching competencies, as it demanded continuous adjustment of strategies to meet varying developmental and learning needs. However, this also underscored the need for targeted professional development to prevent burnout and ensure quality instruction across diverse classroom contexts.

Table 7. Training of the Respondents on Inclusive Education

	Frequency	Percentage
Training on Inclusive Education		
Yes	3	10%
No	27	90%

Training on Inclusive Education

Based on the data, only 3 out of 30 teachers (10%) had attended training on inclusive education, while 27 teachers (90%) had not. This significant gap indicated that the majority of teachers lacked formal exposure to inclusive education principles, which were essential in meeting the diverse learning needs of students, particularly those with disabilities. The few trainings recorded—such as the Webinar on Instructional Adaptation in Mathematics and Science for Children with Special Needs and Assistive Technology in Special Education—represented valuable initiatives, but their limited reach underscored the need for broader and sustained capacity-building across the teaching force. Without adequate training, teachers may have struggled to differentiate instruction or utilize assistive technologies effectively, leading to possible inequities in learning outcomes for students with special needs.

The findings aligned with Raguindin (2025), who emphasized that teachers' competence in inclusive education strongly depended on their access to targeted professional development programs. When teachers were trained in instructional adaptation and differentiated teaching strategies, they were more capable of addressing individual differences in learning styles, cognitive levels, and behavioral needs. Similarly, Kimhi and Bar Nir (2025) found that consistent and structured training significantly enhanced teachers' confidence and effectiveness in implementing inclusive practices. In this study's context, the lack of sufficient training among most teachers may have led to challenges in integrating inclusive approaches within general education

classrooms, hindering the realization of DepEd's goal of providing equitable and quality education for all learners.

Furthermore, while some teachers had participated in general professional development activities such as Teaching with Brain Colors and the Revised K–12 Curriculum Training, these sessions primarily focused on pedagogy and curriculum reform rather than specialized inclusive strategies. As noted by Habibnezhad Allameh (2024), brain-based learning approaches enhanced understanding of cognitive diversity but could not replace training explicitly designed to support learners with disabilities. Likewise, Saabi (2025) stressed that assistive technologies were only effective when teachers possessed adequate knowledge and skills to implement them in classroom instruction. Therefore, the data reflected an urgent need to provide all teachers—not just a small subset—with inclusive education training that combined theory, application, and follow-up mentoring.

In summary, the data highlighted a pressing professional development gap in inclusive education among teachers. The 10% participation rate suggested that inclusion-focused training remained peripheral rather than integral to teacher development programs. Addressing this issue required school-wide efforts to institutionalize continuous, practice-based professional learning that empowered teachers to design accessible lessons, apply adaptive strategies, and foster supportive learning environments for all students. Strengthening teachers' competencies in inclusive education was not merely a compliance measure but a fundamental step toward ensuring that every learner, regardless of ability, had the opportunity to succeed academically and socially in the classroom.

Levels of Knowledge, Attitudes, And Practices

Table 8 presents the respondents' level of knowledge, attitude and practices of the respondents.

Table 8. Levels of Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices

Category	Mean	Interpretation
Knowledge	2.81	Moderate
Attitude	2.70	Positive
Practices	3.24	Inclusive

Knowledge Level

The mean score of 2.81, interpreted as moderate, suggested that teachers possessed a fair understanding of inclusive education concepts but may have lacked depth in certain areas such as individualized instruction, use of assistive devices, and curriculum modification. This moderate level indicated partial familiarity, likely resulting from limited training opportunities or sporadic exposure through seminars and webinars. According to Raguindin (2025), Filipino teachers often demonstrated moderate knowledge of inclusive education because most had not undergone sustained, practice-based professional development. Similarly, Masongsong et al. (2023) found that while teachers understood the general principles of inclusion, they often struggled with technical aspects like differentiated assessments and intervention planning. Therefore, the result highlighted the need for consistent and focused professional training to elevate teachers' knowledge from basic awareness to expert application of inclusive education principles.

Attitude Level

The mean score of 2.70, interpreted as positive, indicated that teachers generally held favorable beliefs and perceptions toward inclusive education. This meant that they were open to accommodating students with disabilities and viewed inclusion as beneficial to both learners with and without special needs. According to Roslyakova and Sokolova (2024), teachers' positive attitudes toward inclusion often stemmed from empathy,

awareness campaigns, and exposure to success stories of inclusive classrooms. Likewise, Charitaki et al. (2024) emphasized that teachers with supportive attitudes tended to be more motivated to implement inclusive practices despite resource limitations. However, a positive attitude alone may not have ensured effective implementation if teachers lacked sufficient knowledge and administrative support. The combination of a positive disposition and enhanced training opportunities was crucial for translating these attitudes into consistent classroom practices.

Practice Level

The mean score of 3.24, interpreted as inclusive, suggested that teachers were actively applying inclusive practices in their classrooms, such as differentiated instruction, peer collaboration, and adaptive learning strategies. This implied that teachers were making deliberate efforts to accommodate learners' diverse needs and promote participation among students with disabilities. According to Navas-Bonilla (2025), inclusive teaching practices were strengthened when educators integrated technology and cooperative strategies that addressed individual learning differences. Furthermore, Kimhi and Bar Nir (2025) found that teachers who had undergone even minimal inclusive education training tended to adopt more inclusive classroom practices compared to those who had not. The relatively high mean in practices, despite moderate knowledge, may have indicated that teachers relied on experience, collaboration, and empathy to compensate for their limited formal training. Nevertheless, continuous monitoring and structured coaching were needed to sustain these inclusive efforts and ensure alignment with educational standards.

Test of Correlation

Tables 9, 10 and 11 presents the correlation between and among the variables knowledge, attitude and practices.

Table 9. Correlation of Knowledge and Attitude

		Knowledge	Attitude
Knowledge	Pearson's r	—	
	df	—	
	p-value	—	
Attitude	Pearson's r	0.628	—
	df	28	—
	p-value	<.001	—

The correlation coefficient of 0.628 indicated a strong positive relationship between teachers' knowledge and their attitudes toward inclusive education, and the p-value of < .001 confirmed that this relationship was statistically significant. This meant that teachers who possessed higher levels of knowledge about inclusive education also tended to exhibit more positive attitudes toward its implementation. The result supported the idea that understanding inclusive education principles enhanced teachers' openness and confidence in handling learners with diverse needs.

According to Kimhi and Bar Nir (2025), teacher training and increased knowledge about inclusive education significantly improved teachers' attitudes, as awareness of inclusive strategies helped reduce anxiety and resistance toward inclusive classrooms. Similarly, Charitaki, Kolaitis, and Tzivinikou (2024) found that teachers who were well-informed about inclusive practices were more likely to express empathy and acceptance toward learners with disabilities. In the Philippine context, Raguindin (2025) also highlighted that professional development in inclusive education strengthened teachers' belief in their ability to teach in

diverse classrooms. Therefore, the strong and significant correlation suggested that enhancing teachers' knowledge through continuous professional learning could foster even more positive attitudes toward inclusive education.

Table 7. Correlation of Attitude and Practices

		Attitude	Practices
Attitude	Pearson's r	—	
	df	—	
	p-value	—	
Practices	Pearson's r	-0.116	—
	df	28	—
	p-value	0.542	—

The correlation coefficient of -0.116 with a p-value of 0.542 indicated a very weak and statistically insignificant negative relationship between attitude and practices. This suggested that while teachers may have expressed positive attitudes toward inclusive education, these attitudes did not necessarily translate into consistent or observable inclusive classroom practices. The insignificance of the correlation implied that having a favorable mindset alone was not enough to ensure the implementation of inclusive teaching strategies; external factors such as resources, administrative support, class size, and ongoing mentoring may also have influenced teachers' actual practices.

According to Roslyakova and Sokolova (2024), positive attitudes often failed to produce corresponding inclusive practices when schools lacked structural support, materials, and proper follow-up after training. Navas-Bonilla (2025) further explained that although teachers may have valued inclusion conceptually, practical implementation required continuous hands-on coaching and sufficient access to assistive technologies. In the same vein, Masongsong et al. (2023) found that Filipino teachers with positive perceptions toward inclusion often faced barriers such as lack of training and inadequate classroom resources, preventing them from fully enacting inclusive methods. Thus, this study's finding aligned with existing literature showing that attitudes alone were insufficient without systemic and institutional support.

Table 8. Correlation of Practices and Knowledge

		Practices	Knowledge
Practices	Pearson's r	—	
	df	—	
	p-value	—	
Knowledge	Pearson's r	-0.167	—
	df	28	—
	p-value	0.379	—

The correlation coefficient of -0.167 and p-value of 0.379 showed a weak and statistically insignificant negative correlation between knowledge and practices. This meant that a teacher's level of knowledge about

inclusive education did not necessarily correspond to the frequency or quality of their inclusive practices. In other words, teachers who knew more about inclusive education did not always apply that knowledge consistently in their classrooms.

This finding reflected what Habibnezhad Allameh (2024) emphasized—that theoretical understanding of inclusive strategies had to be accompanied by continuous practice, reflection, and administrative support to influence actual teaching behaviors. Kimhi and Bar Nir (2025) also argued that without experiential learning opportunities or classroom coaching, the transfer of knowledge into daily inclusive practice remained limited. In the Philippine context, Raguindin (2025) observed that while teachers may have gained theoretical knowledge through short trainings or webinars, a lack of follow-through and school-level reinforcement led to minimal change in classroom behavior. Hence, the insignificant correlation reinforced the notion that classroom inclusion required not only knowledge but also practical engagement, peer collaboration, and school-wide support systems.

CONCLUSIONS

The teachers demonstrated a moderate level of knowledge, indicating familiarity with the basic concepts of inclusive education but limited mastery of specialized strategies such as curriculum modification and assistive technology integration. Despite this, their attitudes were generally positive, showing openness, empathy, and willingness to embrace inclusive practices, although many lacked adequate formal training. Interestingly, their classroom practices were rated as inclusive, suggesting that teachers make conscious efforts to accommodate diverse learners even without extensive formal preparation.

While a strong positive and significant relationship between knowledge and attitude, emphasizing that improved understanding of inclusive education enhances teachers' acceptance and confidence in its implementation, a weak negative relationships between attitude and practices and knowledge and practices suggest that favorable attitudes and awareness do not automatically lead to consistent inclusive practices. Factors such as limited training opportunities, lack of administrative support, and insufficient teaching resources may hinder full implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the implementation of a Comprehensive Inclusive Education Program at Nangka National High School to strengthen teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices in accommodating learners with special needs.

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