

Beyond Awareness: Non-Sped Teachers' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices on the Implementation of Inclusive Education for Learners with Special Needs

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAPs) of non-SpEd teachers regarding inclusive education implementation and examined the relationships among these variables at Talavera Elementary School for the School Year 2025–2026. Utilizing a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design, the study gathered data from 30 non-SpEd teachers selected through purposive sampling. The findings revealed that the teachers exhibited a moderate level of knowledge (Mean = 3.22) about inclusive education principles, suggesting familiarity but limited mastery of technical strategies. However, they demonstrated a positive attitude and reported highly inclusive practices in their classrooms. Crucially, the correlation analysis showed no significant relationship among the study variables (Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice). This implies that the teachers' foundational knowledge and positive outlook do not automatically translate into consistent or effective application of inclusive strategies, highlighting a gap between willingness and practical competence, likely due to a lack of sustained training or institutional support. The study concludes that while non-SpEd teachers at Talavera Elementary School are committed to inclusion, their moderate knowledge level and the non-significant correlation among KAPs demand intervention. The results serve as the basis for a proposed School-Based Action Plan focused on continuous professional development, hands-on coaching, and resource provision to bridge the gap and strengthen the consistent implementation of inclusive education practices.

Keywords: Special Education, Knowledge-Attitude-Practice (KAP), Learners with Special Needs, Inclusive Education, 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

Statement of the Problem

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 Talavera Elementary 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?
1. What are the levels of knowledge, attitudes, and practices on the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special needs?
2. 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?
3. 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 respondents of this study were 30 non-SpEd Talavera Elementary 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 were tallied, analyzed, and interpreted. The relationship between the study variables were 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 was 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.

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.

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 was 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 was 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 be 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.

RESULTS

This chapter presents and interprets the data on the knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAPs) of non-SpEd teachers at Talavera Elementary 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	4	13%
31-35	5	17%
36-40	6	20%
41-45	4	13%
46-50	5	17%
51-55	1	3%
Over 55 years old	5	17%
Gender		
Man	4	13%
Woman	26	87%
Non-Binary	0	0%

Age

The data showed that the largest groups of respondents were those aged 36–40 (20%), followed by 31–35 (17%), 46–50 (17%), and over 55 (17%). Teachers aged 25–30 and 41–45 each represented 13%, while only 3% were aged 51–55. This distribution indicated that the teaching force was composed mostly of mid-career educators rather than newly hired or nearing-retirement teachers.

This suggested a workforce with stable teaching experience and practical familiarity with classroom dynamics—factors that could positively influence inclusive practices when complemented by continuous professional learning. According to Rahman and Zulkifli (2023), mid-career teachers tended to possess

adaptive teaching competencies developed through sustained experience, enabling them to respond more effectively to student diversity. However, Chen et al. (2024) emphasized that schools benefited most when there was a balanced mix of younger and senior educators, as intergenerational collaboration fostered both innovation and mentoring in inclusive education.

Therefore, while Talavera Elementary School's teacher profile reflected maturity and experience, there remained a need to sustain inclusive teaching practices through ongoing training and collaborative professional learning across age groups.

Gender

The data revealed that 87% of respondents were women, while 13% were men, with no respondents identifying as non-binary. This finding aligned with national trends in the Philippines, where women generally dominated the teaching profession, particularly in basic education.

While gender did not directly determine teaching competence in inclusion, it could influence perceptions of empathy and learner engagement.

Diao and Liu (2022) reported that female teachers tended to express stronger emotional responsiveness toward learners with special needs, whereas male teachers often demonstrated strength in classroom structure and behavioral management. Meanwhile, Alkhateeb et al. (2023) found no significant gender differences in inclusive education competence, highlighting that professional training and reflective practice were more critical than gender itself.

Given the predominance of female teachers in this study, inclusive education initiatives needed to ensure that both male and female educators received equal opportunities to enhance the affective, social, and instructional skills necessary for inclusive classrooms.

Table 5 Educational Attainment of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	2	7%
Masteral Units	20	67%
Masteral Graduate	6	20%
Doctorate units	1	3%
Doctoral Graduate	1	3%

Results showed that 67% of respondents had earned master's units, 20% were master's graduates, 7% held a bachelor's degree, and only 6% had attained or were pursuing doctoral studies.

This indicated that the majority of teachers were engaged in or had completed graduate-level education, reflecting a strong commitment to professional growth.

Teachers with higher academic qualifications were more likely to demonstrate advanced understanding and application of inclusive education principles.

Agboola (2024) observed that postgraduate coursework enhanced teachers' confidence in adapting instruction for diverse learners. Similarly, Tzivinikou and Kagkara (2022) found that educators with postgraduate training showed stronger reflective and problem-solving abilities essential for inclusive practice.

Hence, the high percentage of teachers with master's-level exposure suggested a favorable environment for developing inclusive education practices, as professional learning was already embedded in their career pathways.

Table 6 Grade Level Handled by the Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Grade Level Handled:		
Kindergarten	2	7%
Grade 1	3	10%
Grade 2	3	10%
Grade 3	6	20%
Grade 4	5	17%
Grade 5	5	17%
Grade 6	6	20%

Grade Level Handled

As shown in the data, teachers were distributed across all grade levels, with Grade 3 and Grade 6 each having the highest representation (20%), followed by Grades 4 and 5 (17% each). Meanwhile, Grades 1 and 2 had 10% each, and Kindergarten accounted for 7%.

This distribution showed that teachers were spread fairly evenly across grade levels, suggesting a balanced exposure to learners with varied developmental needs.

According to Tzivinikou and Kagkara (2022), teachers who handled multiple grade levels or varied student age groups tended to develop greater pedagogical flexibility—an important quality for inclusive education.

They needed to continuously adjust instructional strategies to accommodate diverse cognitive, emotional, and behavioral characteristics. Such exposure likely enhanced teachers' adaptability, reflective practice, and differentiated instruction skills, all of which were foundational for inclusion.

Table 7 Training of the Respondents on Inclusive Education

	Frequency	Percentage
Training on Inclusive Education		
Yes	7	23%
No	23	77%

Training on Inclusive Education

The data showed that only 7 out of 30 teachers (23%) had received training on inclusive education, while 23 teachers (77%) had not. This substantial gap underscored the limited institutional support for capacity-building in inclusive teaching.

While some respondents had attended relevant programs such as Empowering Educators: The Science of Teaching, Learning, and Inclusive Strategies for Diverse Learning and Specialized Programmes of Support for Students of Determination, participation remained low and inconsistent.

This finding aligned with Raguindin (2025), who found that Filipino teachers' competencies in inclusive education significantly depended on access to structured, practice-based professional development.

Similarly, Kimhi and Bar Nir (2025) noted that consistent, context-specific training enhanced teacher confidence and readiness to accommodate students with diverse learning needs. Furthermore, Habibnezhad Allameh (2024) emphasized that brain-based learning programs, while useful for understanding cognitive differences, could not substitute for specialized inclusive education training focused on learners with disabilities.

Therefore, the data highlighted a pressing need for systematic and continuous professional learning that combined theory, practice, and mentoring. Without such initiatives, inclusive education might have remained an aspirational goal rather than an established classroom reality.

Overall, the demographic data revealed that Talavera Elementary School had a predominantly mid-career and male teaching force with strong academic backgrounds but limited specialized training in inclusive education. The teachers' educational attainment and teaching experience provided a solid foundation for implementing inclusive practices.

However, the low participation in inclusion-focused training programs indicated a gap that needed to be addressed through institutionalized professional development. Strengthening teacher preparedness for inclusion would have ensured that diverse learners, especially those with disabilities, received equitable learning opportunities.

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	3.22	Moderate
Attitude	2.60	Positive
Practices	3.30	Highly Inclusive

Knowledge Level

The mean score for knowledge was 3.22, which was interpreted as moderate. This indicated that the teachers in Talavera Elementary School possessed a fair understanding of inclusive-education concepts, yet they still lacked depth in key areas such as individualized instruction, use of assistive devices, and curriculum modification. The moderate level likely reflected limited formal training or only intermittent exposure to inclusive-education professional development opportunities.

According to Baguisa and Ang-Manaig (2021), their study found that while teachers held basic knowledge of inclusive education, their skills in adaptation and intervention were limited when sustained training was lacking. Therefore, the finding pointed to the need for more systematic and targeted professional development to elevate teacher knowledge from general awareness toward more advanced application of inclusive practices.

Attitude Level

The mean score for attitude was 2.60, interpreted as positive. This indicated that the respondents generally held favourable beliefs and perceptions toward inclusive education—they appeared open to accommodating learners with special needs and viewed inclusion as beneficial both for those learners and their peers.

This finding was aligned with research in the Philippines: one study reported favourable teacher attitudes toward inclusive education despite gaps in training and resources. Nuñez and Rosales (2021), supported by cross-national research, noted that teachers' attitudes were often shaped by prior exposure, training, and inclusive practice contexts. However, a positive attitude by itself did not automatically guarantee high-quality inclusive practices; teacher knowledge, confidence, and institutional support remained essential. Thus, the favourable attitude found in this study should have been leveraged through strengthened training, mentoring, and supportive school systems (Charitaki et al., 2022).

Practice Level

The mean score for practices was 3.30, interpreted as highly inclusive. This suggested that the respondents were actively engaging in inclusive practices in their classrooms—such as differentiated instruction, peer collaboration, and adaptive learning strategies. The relatively high practice mean, despite only moderate knowledge, may have indicated that the teachers relied on experience, empathy, or peer support rather than formal training to guide their inclusive efforts.

Empirical studies showed that teachers who had even minimal inclusive-education training or supportive school environments often applied more inclusive teaching strategies. One study found that teachers' training level had a significant relationship with their sense of efficacy in inclusive teaching (Masongsong et al., 2023). According to Jukan (2024), while attitudes were positive, actual practices were contingent on resources, support, and collaborative structures.

Nonetheless, sustaining inclusive practices required continuous professional development, monitoring, and coaching to ensure that implemented strategies aligned with current standards and effectively responded to diverse learners' needs.

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	-0.254	—
	df	28	—
	p-value	0.175	—

The correlation coefficient of -0.254 indicated a weak negative relationship between teachers' knowledge and their attitudes toward inclusive education, and the p-value of .175 showed that this relationship was not

statistically significant. This meant that, in this data set, higher knowledge scores did not reliably correspond to more positive attitudes among teachers. Put another way, the data suggested that greater knowledge about inclusive education did not guarantee a more favourable attitude toward inclusive teaching.

This finding contrasted with the study of Alkahtani (2022), which showed positive, significant relationships between knowledge and attitudes. For example, one study found a strong correlation ($r = 0.83$, $p < .001$) between teachers' knowledge of students with emotional and behavioural disorders and their attitudes toward those students. Similarly, Dapudong (2014) reported a positive relationship between general knowledge of inclusive education and positive attitudes among teachers.

The lack of a significant correlation in the data suggested that other factors (e.g., institutional support, resource availability, prior experience) might have moderated or mediated the relationship between knowledge and attitude. It was possible that teachers had knowledge but still held reservations because of contextual or implementation barriers.

Table 10 Correlation of Attitude and Practices

		Attitude	Practices
Attitude	Pearson's r	—	
	df	—	
	p-value	—	
Practices	Pearson's r	0.126	—
	df	28	—
	p-value	0.507	—

The correlation coefficient of 0.126 indicated a very weak positive relationship between teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education and their actual inclusive practices. However, the p-value of .507 showed that this relationship was not statistically significant. Essentially, even though teachers had expressed positive attitudes toward inclusion, these attitudes did not appear to reliably translate into observable inclusive practices in the classroom.

This aligned with prior literature that emphasized that a positive attitude alone was insufficient for inclusive practice implementation. Roslyakova and Sokolova (2024) found that favourable attitudes did not necessarily lead to inclusive practice implementation when structural supports were missing. Similarly, a study in a European context noted that while attitudes were positive, actual behaviours required sufficient competency, external support, and resources (Cate, 2018).

Therefore, this result suggested that schools needed to look beyond attitudes, ensuring that mechanisms, resources, training, follow-up, and support systems were in place so that teachers' positive dispositions could be converted into effective inclusive pedagogy.

Table 11 Correlation of Practices and Knowledge

		Practices	Knowledge
Practices	Pearson's r	—	
	df	—	

	p-value	—	
Knowledge	Pearson's r	0.099	—
	df	28	—
	p-value	0.602	—

The Pearson's r value of 0.099 showed a very weak positive relationship between teachers' knowledge of inclusive education and their inclusive practices. The p-value of .602 again indicated a non-significant result. In short, higher knowledge levels among teachers did not significantly correspond to higher implementation of inclusive practices.

This was consistent with the interpretation from Table 7, which suggested that knowledge and attitude alone may not drive practices. According to Yilmaz and Derya (2025), in their study of teacher preparedness for inclusive education, although knowledge levels were high, actual adoption of inclusive principles varied and was sometimes unrelated to knowledge alone. Moreover, while one might have expected a sequence of knowledge → attitudes → practices, the weak links observed suggested that barriers existed (e.g., lack of training follow-through, institutional constraints, large class sizes, and lack of assistive technologies) that hindered knowledge from converting into practice.

Thus, the findings highlighted that having knowledge about inclusive education was not sufficient by itself to guarantee inclusive practices; implementation required enabling conditions, ongoing support, and fidelity of training and resources.

CONCLUSIONS

The study assessed the knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAPs) of non-SpEd teachers on the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special needs at Talavera Elementary School for School Year 2025–2026. The findings revealed that while teachers possess a moderate level of knowledge about inclusive education, they exhibit positive attitudes and demonstrate highly inclusive practices in their classrooms. This indicates that teachers are open and committed to creating an inclusive learning environment despite limited training and technical expertise. However, the correlation results showed no significant relationships among knowledge, attitude, and practice, suggesting that having awareness and favorable perceptions alone does not automatically lead to consistent implementation of inclusive strategies.

These results imply that while non-SpEd teachers at Talavera Elementary School have the willingness and foundational understanding necessary for inclusion, there remains a pressing need for continuous professional development, structured mentoring, and institutional support to strengthen their competence in delivering inclusive education. Hence, an action plan focusing on sustained training, hands-on workshops, and resource provision is essential to bridge the gap between teachers' conceptual understanding and practical application, ensuring the effective inclusion of learners with special needs in mainstream classrooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that Talavera Elementary School implement a Capacity-Building and Support Program on Inclusive Education designed to enhance teachers' knowledge and sustain their positive attitudes and inclusive practices. The program may include regular training sessions integrated in the LAC session, classroom-based coaching between mentor and mentee and collaborative learning activities focused on practical strategies for addressing diverse learning needs. Additionally, the school administrator should ensure continuous monitoring and evaluation (M&E), provision of learning materials, and peer mentoring opportunities to help teachers translate inclusive education principles into consistent classroom practices.

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