

The Implementation Barriers of Inclusive Education: Reference to An Action Plan

KASSANDRA GAVERIELLE B. DELA CRUZ

Philippine Women's University, Manila, Philippines

2020t1421@pwu.edu.ph

ALVIN S. SICAT, LPT, Ph.D.

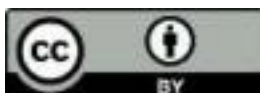
Faculty, Philippine Women's University

assicat@pwu.edu.ph

Abstract

This study investigates the barriers to implementing inclusive education in public elementary schools, focusing on how teachers' profiles influence their experiences. Employing a mixed-methods design, data were gathered from 100 receiving teachers through surveys and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative analysis assessed the extent of policy, teacher-related, resource, attitudinal, and curriculum barriers, while qualitative insights explored effective teaching practices and solutions to address these barriers. The findings reveal that resource and infrastructure barriers pose the greatest challenges, followed by teacher-related and curriculum issues, with attitudinal and cultural barriers encountered to a limited extent. Teachers' experiences significantly affect their perceptions of these barriers, with more experienced educators reporting greater difficulties. Differences were also noted based on sex, educational attainment, specialization, and training frequency, particularly in terms of resources and attitudes. Qualitative data highlighted individualized support, assessment adaptations, pull-out accommodations, empathy, home-school partnerships, teacher initiative, and adaptability as key strategies to overcome obstacles. The study concludes that while teachers are generally ready and positive toward inclusion, systemic constraints hinder effective practices. An action plan is proposed to enhance professional development, resource allocation, policy clarity, and collaborative leadership, aiming to bridge the gap between inclusive education policies and classroom reality. Strengthening these areas will empower educators and improve learning outcomes for students with special needs.

Keywords: *Inclusive education, implementation barriers, teacher profile, special educational needs, resource constraints*



Bio-profile

The researcher is a master's candidate specializing in Special Education, currently affiliated with the Department of Education at Schools Division of Caloocan. Their research primarily focused on identifying and addressing barriers to implementing inclusive education in public elementary schools. Utilizing mixed-methods approaches, they examined how teacher profiles influence experiences with policy, resource, attitudinal, curriculum, and systemic challenges in inclusive settings. Their recent study highlights resource and infrastructure constraints as the most significant obstacles, alongside teacher-related and curriculum issues, while also exploring effective teaching strategies, such as individualized support, assessment adaptations, and home-school partnerships. The researcher holds a bachelor's in education and is committed to advancing professional development, resource allocation, and policy clarity to bridge the gaps between inclusive education policies and classroom realities. Their work aims to empower educators and improve learning outcomes for students with special educational requirements.

Introduction

The landscape of modern pedagogy has undergone a profound transformation, evolving from a framework of basic integration to a comprehensive reform aimed at achieving systemic educational equity (Lauron, 2024; Lindner & Schwab, 2020; Sharma & Loreman, 2021). Central to this evolution is a fundamental paradigm shift: education has moved away from the traditional "medical model," which views disability as an inherent deficit within the individual that requires a "cure" (Cifuentes-Faura & Faura-Martínez, 2022). Instead, contemporary practice is anchored in the "social model" of disability, which posits that the primary hurdles to learning are environmental and systemic barriers created by society (Abrasaldo, 2024; Lawson & Beckett, 2021). Under this humanized lens, the learner is no longer viewed as a problem to be "fixed," but as a student whose environment must be actively adjusted to facilitate full participation (Meijer & Watkins, 2019).

Despite the global adoption of rights-based frameworks, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals, a significant "disjuncture" persists between high-level policy aspirations and the localized reality of the classroom (Rashid & Wong, 2023). While global and national mandates—including the Inclusive Education Bill and the Enhanced Basic Education Act in the Philippines—set a gold standard for equity, the actual experience often falls short because of a lack of institutional infrastructure (Department of Education, 2025). This gap leaves students navigating a landscape that is theoretically inclusive but practically fragmented (EDCOM 2, 2025).

The success of these inclusive initiatives ultimately rests upon the "human element"—the self-efficacy and attitudes of the educators themselves (Sharma & Loreman, 2021). Although many teachers support the ideology of inclusion, they frequently encounter



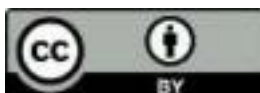
"pedagogical anxiety," a state of distress stemming from the feeling that their foundational training did not prepare them for the complexities of neurodiversity (Sharma & Loreman, 2021). Without robust professional development, even the most progressive policies remain stagnant, as instructional quality suffers when teachers lack confidence in adapting their teaching methods (Lindner & Schwab, 2020).

In implementing inclusive education, practitioners face multidimensional barriers (Cifuentes-Faura & Faura-Martínez, 2022). These include: Policy and Administrative Barriers, such as excessive paperwork and a "correction bias" that favors student adaptation over system change (Lawson & Beckett, 2021; Wang & Hartman, 2020); Teacher-Related Barriers, characterized by a lack of specialized training and a tendency to "teach to the middle" (Lindner & Schwab, 2020); Resource and Infrastructure Barriers, encompassing the scarcity of assistive technology and specialized human resources, such as speech-language pathologists (Gabales & Batadbatad, 2026; Karagianni & Drigas, 2023; Meijer & Watkins, 2019); Attitudinal and Cultural Barriers, often referred to as "invisible walls" rooted in social stigma and low academic expectations (Cifuentes-Faura & Faura-Martínez, 2022; Sharma & Loreman, 2021); and Curriculum and Instructional Barriers, where rigid, standardized testing and inflexible pacing guides marginalize diverse learning profiles (Tamayo, 2025; Vembye & Jensen, 2024).

Research suggests that the extent to which teachers encounter these barriers is significantly influenced by their professional and demographic profile (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Factors such as age, gender, educational attainment, and years of specialized experience with learners with special educational needs (LSEN) create a unique lens through which educators perceive and navigate classroom challenges (Catanus, 2024; Makoelle, 2014; Vembye & Jensen, 2024). For instance, while younger teachers may support the ideology of inclusion, they often find classroom management more difficult than their more experienced colleagues (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). This study aimed to examine these implementation barriers to bridge the gap between policies and practices. By correlating the specific profiles of educators with the obstacles they face, this study seeks to move beyond a mere listing of problems. Instead, it concludes with a Proposed Action Plan designed to transform "aspirational" goals into operational realities, providing school leaders and practitioners with a strategic framework for genuine belonging and educational equity (Karagianni & Drigas, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored in the Social Model of Disability, which asserts that disability is not an inherent deficit within the individual but rather a consequence of environmental, systemic, and attitudinal barriers that prevent full participation (Lawson & Beckett, 2021). Unlike the traditional medical model, which seeks to "fix" or "cure" the

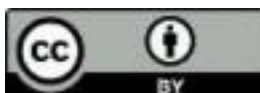


learner to fit into a rigid system, the Social Model recontextualizes the challenge by identifying the school environment itself as the entity that must be adjusted (Cifuentes-Faura & Faura-Martínez, 2022). This theory is fundamental to this investigation as it directly validates the study's purpose: to identify and dismantle the specific Policy, Administrative, Teacher-Related, Resource, Attitudinal, and Instructional barriers that currently hinder inclusive education (Lawson & Beckett, 2021). By adopting this lens, the research moves beyond viewing Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN) as a problem and instead focuses on analyzing the "invisible walls" of stigma and structural neglect that exclude them (Jardinez & Natividad, 2024).

Supporting this foundational perspective is the framework of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which serves as a critical theoretical counter to the "Curriculum and Instructional Barriers" identified in the study (Flood & Banks, 2021). UDL posits that educational environments should be designed for accessibility from the outset, providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and action rather than retrofitting lessons for specific students after the fact (Karagianni & Drigas, 2023). This framework is relevant to this study as it offers a concrete solution to the rigid, standardized curricula that currently marginalize neurodivergent learners (Flood & Banks, 2021). This aligns with the study's goal of proposing an action plan that integrates digital tools and flexible materials to create an environment where access is a right rather than a privilege (Karagianni & Drigas, 2023).

Complementing UDL is the theory of Differentiated Instruction (DI), which provides a pedagogical mechanism for implementing inclusion in diverse classrooms (Tomlinson, 2014). This theory emphasizes the necessity of tailoring instruction to the unique sociocultural and functional profiles of every student, ensuring that teaching methods match the learner's readiness and interests (Goyibova et al., 2025). DI is appropriate for this investigation because it addresses the "one-size-fits-all" teaching barrier that many educators default to when they lack confidence (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). This justifies the need for the study to examine teacher competence, as the successful application of DI requires educators to move away from teaching to the "middle" and towards strategies like tiered assignments that challenge every learner appropriately (Tomlinson, 2014).

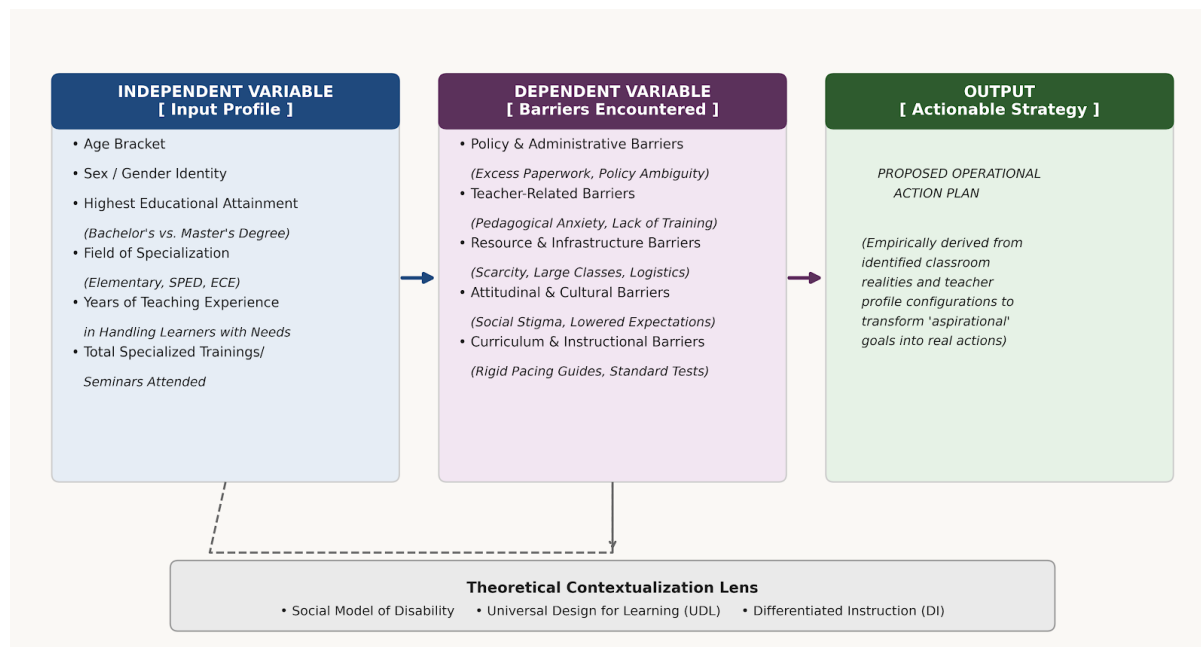
Finally, the study integrates the concept of Teacher Self-Efficacy, which is identified as the "heart of instructional success" and a primary determinant in the successful implementation of inclusive practices (Sharma & Loreman, 2021). This concept suggests that a teacher's internal conviction in their ability to facilitate learning is directly linked to their effectiveness in managing diverse classrooms (Friesen et al., 2023). This theoretical perspective is crucial for understanding the "Teacher-Related Barriers" scrutinized in this research, specifically "pedagogical anxiety" and the lack of professional training in the field (Sharma & Loreman, 2021). This supports the research's focus on professional development,



positing that increasing a teacher's specialized skills and confidence will reduce their anxiety and directly lower the perceived obstacles to inclusion (Desimone, 2009).

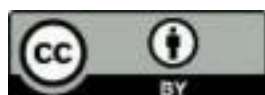
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model of Inclusive Education Implementation



The conceptual framework in Figure 1 illustrates a linear input-process-output (IPO) progression, grounded in the premise that a teacher's professional profile fundamentally shapes their experience within inclusive education (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). The model begins on the left with the Independent Variables, encompassing factors such as age, specialization, and training history (Makoelle, 2014). Notably, the literature suggests that higher educational attainment and specific experience with special-needs learners significantly mitigate competence gaps and anxiety among teachers (Rashid & Wong, 2023; Vembye & Jensen, 2024).

This profile directly influences the central component, the Dependent Variable, which measures the specific barriers teachers encounter (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). These challenges are multidimensional, ranging from administrative burdens and resource scarcity to deeper issues regarding cultural stigma and rigid curriculum standards (Cifuentes-Faura & Faura-Martínez, 2022; Meijer & Watkins, 2019). Finally, the framework culminates in the Output: A Proposed Action Plan. Visualized through a professional blue color scheme, the flow of the diagram indicates that the final strategy is not arbitrary but is empirically derived from the specific barriers identified during the study (Karagianni & Drigas, 2023).



This idea stresses the importance of studying inclusive education starting with basic levels. By correlating the specific profiles of educators with the barriers they face, this study aims to create a targeted Action Plan (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). This is essential because, even with laws such as the Inclusive Education Bill, a gap remains between big plans and what happens in class (Department of Education, 2025). This framework ensures that the resulting action plan transforms "aspirational" goals into real actions (EDCOM 2, 2025).

Research Questions

This research aimed to examine the implementation barriers of inclusive education, with the end result of an action plan. In particular, it sought answers to the following:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 Age,
 - 1.2 Sex,
 - 1.3 Highest Educational Attainment,
 - 1.4 Field of Specialization,
 - 1.5 Years of Teaching Experience in Handling Learners with Special Needs,
 - 1.6 Number of Trainings/Seminars Attended Relative to Special and Inclusive Education?
2. To what extent do the respondents encounter the following barriers in handling learners with special needs:
 - 2.1 Policy and Administrative Barriers,
 - 2.2 Teacher-Related Barriers,
 - 2.3 Resource and Infrastructure Barriers,
 - 2.4 Attitudinal and Cultural Barriers,
 - 2.5 Curriculum and Instructional Barriers?
3. Is there a significant difference in the extent of the respondents' encounter with the various barriers in handling learners with special needs in inclusive education when grouped according to their profile?
4. What appropriate teaching practices may be employed to address these barriers?
5. Based on the findings, what action plan may be proposed?

Literature Review

Inclusive Education Implementation

The execution of inclusive education has changed from basic integration to a thorough reform of the educational system in recent years (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). Existing studies stress that while global policies have changed toward rights-based structures, gaps remain



between what the law intends and what happens in classrooms (Srivastava et al., 2015). At the heart of this evolution is technological integration. As Karagianni and Drigas (2023) highlight, "e-inclusion" serves as a vital mechanism for equity; by utilizing digital tools to dismantle cognitive and physical hurdles, educators can tailor instruction to individual functional profiles, fostering an environment where access is a right rather than a privilege.

Despite the clear benefits of inclusive tools, a significant "disjuncture" remains between global aspirations and local realities. Rashid and Wong (2023) observe that many institutions suffer from a lack of institutional infrastructure and faculty preparedness, which leaves students navigating a landscape that is theoretically inclusive but practically fragmented. The success of these initiatives ultimately rests on the self-efficacy and attitudes of the educators (Sharma & Loreman, 2021). Lindner and Schwab (2020) emphasize that without robust professional development, even the most progressive policies remain stagnant, proving that the human element is just as critical as the technological one. Concurrently, the persistent shadow of social stigma remains an obstacle. Cifuentes-Faura and Faura-Martínez (2022) note that the fear of being labeled often leads students with disabilities to withdraw and avoid help, which undermines a cohesive community.

Learners with Special Needs

Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN) require specific teaching methods, support, or services to succeed (Turnbull et al., 2015). Contemporary education has moved away from a medical model toward a social model that identifies disability as a product of environmental and systemic barriers (Lawson & Beckett, 2021; Meijer & Watkins, 2019). Central to this approach is the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) (Turnbull et al., 2015). However, as highlighted by EDCOM 2 (2025), a significant identification gap persists, where students are recognized only by behavioral manifestations rather than receiving formal clinical support. To address this, legislative frameworks such as Republic Act 11650 in the Philippines have institutionalized Child Find systems to actively locate and evaluate underserved learners (Department of Education, 2025).

Instructional efficacy for LSEN relies on structured multimodal strategies (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2019). Research points to peer-mediated instruction as a gold standard, leveraging the social dynamics of developing peers to boost communication skills and self-esteem (Carter et al., 2016). This approach builds a culture of mutual support rather than isolation (Jardinez & Natividad, 2024). Furthermore, visual and digital support is critical for students with neurodevelopmental differences (Karagianni & Drigas, 2023). Tools such as visual schedules and communication apps like Proloquo2Go provide a vital voice to nonverbal students (Karagianni & Drigas, 2023). In tandem, the co-teaching model offers a collaborative path toward curriculum access (Vembye et al., 2024). However, teacher self-efficacy remains a primary concern; many educators feel inadequacy without hands-on specialized training (Sharma & Loreman, 2021). Resource scarcity is also a global obstacle,



as a lack of funding for multidisciplinary teams leaves many schools unable to fulfill the holistic needs of their students (Meijer & Watkins, 2019).

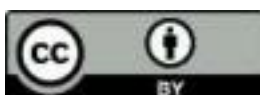
Barriers Encountered in Handling Learners with Special Needs

Addressing the needs of learners with special educational needs is a noble yet complex endeavor, but progress is often slowed by problems in systems, attitudes, and real-world practices (Cifuentes-Faura & Faura-Martínez, 2022; Donohue & Bornman, 2014; Friesen et al., 2023). General education teachers placed in diverse classrooms without specific training often feel stressed and default to one-size-fits-all teaching, which does not respect IEPs and can exclude students from the system (Lindner & Schwab, 2020; Mader & Mader, 2022; Sharma & Loreman, 2021). Inclusion requires specialized infrastructure, including assistive technologies, sensory-neutral spaces, and universal physical access (Karagianni & Drigas, 2023). However, many institutions are trapped in a funding-logic barrier, where critical resources are withheld until a student is formally labeled with a diagnosis (Meijer & Watkins, 2019). This administrative delay treats student needs as ledger entries rather than immediate human rights.

Perhaps the most difficult obstacles to dismantle are the attitudinal and hidden cultural stigmas. The hidden curriculum often excludes learners because of common social misunderstandings (Jardinez & Natividad, 2024). When teachers and students see things through a charity point of view, they take away students' independence by focusing on limitations instead of rights (Lawson & Beckett, 2021). This creates low expectations and can cause social isolation (Cifuentes-Faura & Faura-Martínez, 2022). Finally, educators face obstacles owing to administrative restrictions. Large class sizes and administrative duties reduce opportunities for individualized assistance (Wang & Hartman, 2020). Standardized testing requirements also conflict with the need for adaptable assessment methods suitable for students experiencing developmental delays, compelling educators to choose between institutional compliance and individual requirements (Donohue & Bornman, 2014; Thurlow et al., 2014; Vembye & Jensen, 2024).

Method

This study utilized a mixed-method embedded design with the integration of both quantitative and qualitative data to thoroughly explore the challenges encountered in the application of inclusive education and devise an efficient action plan (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative section used a descriptive-correlational design to characterize the magnitude of the implementation barriers and explore meaningful differences when categorized by demographic and professional profiles (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Concurrently, the qualitative aspect employed semi-structured interviews to obtain rich data from selected respondents regarding their experiences, observations, and recommended teaching methods



within inclusive classrooms. By combining both methods, the research reflects a more holistic basis upon which interventions might be framed.

This study involved 100 respondents from public elementary schools who are presently managing or have managed special needs learners in inclusive classrooms. They were purposively sampled to ensure that they already possessed experience with the practice of inclusive education. Of the 100 teachers, 10 were selected for a second interview to gain more specific information. The inclusion criteria were active instruction in inclusive classes, at least one year of teaching experience with students with special needs, and attendance at least one workshop related to inclusive education. The survey questionnaire was graded on a five-point Likert scale (4 – Great Extent, 3 – Some Extent, 2 – Limited Extent, 1 – Not at All). Personal information was secured and kept private following the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173).

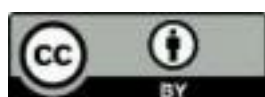
Results and Discussion

1. Profile of the Respondents

To address Research Question 1, demographic characteristics of the 100 basic education teachers were gathered and analyzed, as shown in Table 1 below. The data indicates that the largest segment of the workforce falls within the 31–35 age bracket (31%), a cohort open to inclusion but requiring structural mentoring to develop confidence (Ventista & Brown, 2023). Localized research by Catanus (2024) confirms that demographic backgrounds significantly dictate teacher performance in handling classroom adjustments. The sample is predominantly female (88%), consistent with gender patterns in elementary education (Meharunisa et al., 2024). Regarding qualification, 44% hold master's degrees, though a critical gap in specialized training remains (Korthals Altes et al., 2024). Crucially, only 8% specialized in Special Education, meaning general education teachers predominantly run inclusive environments (Tveitnes et al., 2025). This lack of specialized expertise alters standard layouts and compromises instruction (Lauron, 2024). Furthermore, 63% attended only 1–3 training sessions, confirming that limited systematic professional development undermines teacher preparedness (Meda et al., 2023).

Table 1: The Demographic Characteristics of the participants

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.1 Age	26–30 years old	20	20%
	31–35 years old	31	31%
	Other ages	49	49%
1.2 Sex	Female	88	88%
	Male	12	12%



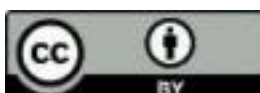
1.3 Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor's degree	54	54%
	Master's degree	44	44%
	Doctoral degree	2	2%
1.4 Field of Specialization	Elementary Education	53	53%
	Early Childhood Education	29	29%
	Special Education (SPED)	8	8%
	Others	10	10%
1.5 Experience with LSEN	Less than 1 year	11	11%
	1–3 years	20	20%
	More than 10 years	38	38%
	Other ranges	31	31%
1.6 Trainings/Seminars Attended	1–3 training sessions	63	63%
	4–6 training sessions	18	18%
	More than 6 sessions	19	19%

2. Extent of Barriers Encountered in Handling Learners with Special Needs

The weighted mean scores and verbal interpretations for the five barrier categories were calculated and presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: The weighted mean scores and verbal interpretations for the five barrier categories

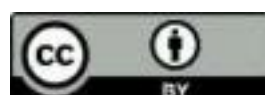
Barrier Category	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Ranking
2.3 Resource and Infrastructure Barriers	2.96	Some Extent	1



2.2 Teacher-Related Barriers	2.85	Some Extent	2
2.5 Curriculum and Instructional Barriers	2.62	Some Extent	3
2.1 Policy and Administrative Barriers	2.47	Limited Extent	4
2.4 Attitudinal and Cultural Barriers	2.31	Limited Extent	5

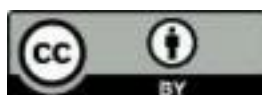
Table 3: The itemized parameters across individual indicator variables within each domain.

Domain and Core Operational 3Indicators	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
2.1 Policy and Administrative Barriers	2.47	Limited Extent
• Unclear or fragmented school policies	2.62	Some Extent
• Inadequate administrative monitoring of inclusion initiatives	2.62	Some Extent
• Misalignment of school policies with goals	2.18	Limited Extent
2.2 Teacher-Related Barriers	2.85	Some Extent
• Severe lack of formal, hands-on training	2.95	Some Extent
• Feelings of pedagogical anxiety modifying daily lessons	2.90	Some Extent
• Limited collaboration time between general and special ed teams	2.70	Some Extent
2.3 Resource and Infrastructure Barriers	2.96	Some Extent
• Insufficient localized differentiated teaching materials	3.12	Some Extent



• Scarcity or complete lack of digital assistive technologies	3.06	Some Extent
• Excessively large class sizes (crowded rooms)	3.04	Some Extent
• Physical inaccessibility of school rooms or buildings	2.72	Some Extent
2.4 Attitudinal and Cultural Barriers	2.31	Limited Extent
• Cultural stigma negatively shaping community acceptance	2.49	Limited Extent
• Pity-based or negative teacher perspectives toward disability	2.06	Limited Extent
2.5 Curriculum and Instructional Barriers	2.62	Some Extent
• Insufficient instructional time for individual remedial tasks	2.70	Some Extent
• Overly rigid, unadapted standardized learning structures	2.53	Some Extent

The Tables 2 and 3 present the quantitative scores confirm resource and infrastructure barriers as the most prominent challenge (mean = 2.96), and attitudinal obstacles as the least (mean = 2.31). This reveals severe material deficits despite high cultural willingness to welcome special needs students (Engelbrecht, 2020). Itemized indicators reveal insufficient teaching materials (mean = 3.12), lack of assistive tools (mean = 3.06), and crowded class sizes (mean = 3.04) as core challenges (Zickafoose et al., 2024). Local evidence by Gabales and Batadbatad (2026) shows that funding bottlenecks and procurement delays worsen this resource gap, compelling teachers to personally finance classroom adaptations. Lack of training remains a severe hurdle (mean = 2.95) under teacher-related barriers, causing persistent pedagogical anxiety (Sharma & Loreman, 2021). Policy ambiguity and weak tracking further hinder structural progress (mean = 2.62) (Ralebese et al., 2025). Finally, instructional time insufficiency (mean = 2.70) reflects intense tension between rigid standardized pacing guides and individual student profiles (Flood & Banks, 2021). Tamayo (2025) demonstrates that when digital inclusion assets are scarce, adjusting a rigid curriculum becomes operationally unsustainable.

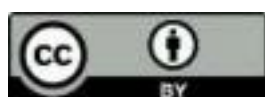


3. Differences in the Extent of Barriers Grouped by Respondent Profile

To answer Research Question 3, ANOVA testing was executed. Table 4 summarizes the profile dimensions where statistically significant differences were isolated. In Table 4, Inferential analysis reveals that systemic challenges are not experienced uniformly. Younger educators report fewer attitudinal barriers, confirming positive generational shifts toward social model alignment (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Conversely, female teachers report higher encounters with resource barriers ($p = 0.047$) due to hands-on care roles, while males identify higher community resistance ($p = 0.042$) (Butler & Hodge, 2004). Notably, master's holders and specialized teachers (SPED/ECE) perceive significantly greater obstacles; this supports Forlin (2010) and Makoelle (2014), showing that advanced professional training increases critical awareness of systemic deficiencies rather than eliminating them. This longitudinal trend is confirmed by veteran teachers, who report higher encounters across all domains ($p < 0.05$) due to their deep familiarity with institutional constraints (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Teachers with moderate training (4-6 sessions) experience the greatest frustration ($p = 0.040$) due to a disconnect between theory and structural rules (Desimone, 2009).

Table 4: The Significant Differences in the Extent of Barriers When Grouped by Respondent Profile

Grouping Profile Variable	Affected Barrier Category	Statistical Significance (p)	Finding / Trend Details
Age Bracket	Attitudinal and Cultural	$p = 0.001$	Younger teachers report significantly fewer encounters, suggesting generational shifts.
Sex / Gender Identity	Resource & Infrastructure Attitudinal & Cultural	$p = 0.047$ $p = 0.042$	Females report higher resource barriers due to hands-on roles; males report higher attitudinal barriers.
Highest Education	Teacher-Related Resource Barriers	$p = 0.004$ $p = 0.007$	Master's degree holders perceive significantly greater challenges due to acute systemic awareness.
Field of Specialization	Resource Barriers Attitudinal Barriers	$p = 0.023$ $p = 0.025$	SPED and ECE specialists report more frequent encounters, holding higher



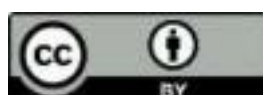
			environmental expectations.
Experience with LSEN	All Barrier Categories	$p < 0.05$	More experienced veteran educators consistently report higher encounters across all barriers.
Trainings Attended	Teacher-Related Barriers	$p = 0.040$	Teachers with 4–6 training sessions perceive the greatest challenges and systemic frustration.

4. Appropriate Teaching Practices to Address Implementation Barriers

To answer Research Question 4, qualitative thematic analysis identified seven key strategies used by teachers to navigate classroom obstacles, as presented in Table 5. Interpretation of Table 5: Qualitative findings prove that in the face of persistent structural constraints, educators deploy specialized professional autonomy. Strategies such as individualized scaffolding (Tomlinson, 2014) and multimodal assessment adjustments (Salvia et al., 2020) mitigate the pressure of rigid standardized pacing. Emotional co-regulation (Shanker, 2016) and structural family collaboration (Epstein, 2018) confirm that teacher initiative effectively acts as a primary buffer to navigate deep operational resource gaps.

Table 5: The Seven Key Strategies Used by Teachers

Identified Qualitative Theme	Core Practice Details & Literature Alignment
1. Individualized and Differentiated Support	Teachers emphasized one-on-one interactions, explicit scaffolding ('I do, we do, you do'), and differentiated instruction tailored to learners' unique profiles, aligning with Tomlinson's proactive adjustments (Tomlinson, 2014).
2. Assessment-Informed Adaptation	Modifying assessments by reducing item numbers, altering formats, and utilizing verbal responses to ensure fair evaluation of learners' actual progress (Salvia et al., 2020).
3. Pull-out and Special Accommodations	The use of pull-out spaces, classroom leadership roles to channel behavior, and equity-based time allocation to address complex engagement needs (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2019).
4. Empathy and Calming Strategies	Fostering emotional regulation through empathy, proactive de-escalation, and positive peer reinforcement in a supportive learning environment (Shanker, 2016).



5. Home-School Partnerships

Active collaboration with parents through shared activities, shadow parent involvement, and closely monitored assessments to guarantee continuity of support (Epstein, 2018).

6. Policy Independence and Teacher Initiatives

Teachers demonstrated strong autonomy by actively preparing localized IEPs, profiling learners, and creating custom supplementary activities despite minimal institutional support (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019).

7. Experience-Driven Adaptability

Dynamic seating arrangements, individualized pacing, structured play-based learning, and consistent, predictable rule enforcement (Kern & Clemens, 2007).

5. The Proposed Action Plan

A Proposal for an Operational Action Plan: Bridging the Gaps in Inclusive Education Implementation

To: School Administrators, Department of Education (DepEd) District Stakeholders, and Institutional Review Board

From: Kassandra Gaverielle B. Dela Cruz & Alvin S. Sicat, LPT, Ph.D.

Subject: Highly Detailed Operational Implementation Pathway for Handling Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN)

1. Rationale, Scope, and Target Beneficiaries

Empirical metrics confirm that Resource and Infrastructure Barriers constitute the most significant impediment to inclusion (mean = 2.96), followed by Teacher-Related challenges (mean = 2.85) (Engelbrecht, 2020; Sharma & Loreman, 2021). Relying on abstract mandates creates a fragmented landscape (EDCOM 2, 2025). This proposal provides a concrete operational pathway to structure resources, clear procurement lines, deploy localized materials, and eliminate diagnostic bottlenecks. The scope spans public basic elementary schools. Target beneficiaries include receiving teachers facing high anxiety, LSENs requiring flexible pacing, and administrators requiring quantifiable monitoring frameworks.

2. Concrete Operational Framework across Key Result Areas (KRAs)

Key Result Area (KRA)	Operational Objectives	Core Activities & Step-by-Step Methodology	Expected Quantifiable Outputs & Verification Indicators
KRA 1: Resource & Infrastructure Support	Mitigate material scarcity and physically restructure	1. Establish a cloud-based server managed by master's degree holders to host editable differentiated worksheets and lesson exemplars.	• Cloud-based repository populated with 50+ editable lesson exemplars. • 100% of rooms equipped



classroom
sensory layouts.

2. Execute structured classroom audits using standardized noise and visual checklists.
3. Install acoustic divider curtains and establish a dedicated 'Quiet Zone' (sensory-neutral spaces with tactile mats) in every room.
4. Partner with local government units (LGUs) to secure assistive tools.

with operational Quiet Zones.
• LGU-procured screen readers deployed to classrooms.

KRA 2: Teacher Proficiency & Development

Lower pedagogical anxiety and close the competence gap via continuous peer mentorship.

1. Formally pair the 8% of SPED specialists and veteran teachers with the 53% of general education teachers.
2. Conduct weekly in-class co-teaching sessions where mentors model behavior management models.
3. Dedicate weekly Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions to hands-on IEP drafting, functional behavioral assessments, and data profiling.
4. Enforce mandatory attendance thresholds.

- 100% of general receiving teachers paired with a designated SPED mentor.
- Verified logs of weekly IEP-drafting LAC sessions.
- Mandatory minimum threshold of 5 specialized training blocks completed per teacher per year.

KRA 3: Curriculum & Instruction

Inject high elasticity into rigid standardized pacing and core competencies.

1. Conduct grade-level writeshops to redesign core testing instruments, allowing verbal testing and multimodal portfolio grading.
2. Apply a 30% reduction in question counts on timed tests for students with delays.
3. Restructure daily class schedules to introduce a mandatory 45-minute 'Time-Block' for peer-mediated intervention (PMII) and teacher remediation.
4. Embed UDL lesson options.

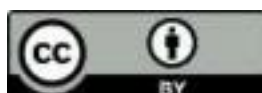
- Alternative multimodal evaluation rubrics approved and integrated.
- Documented 45-minute daily remedial block embedded in school schedules.
- Differentiated unit tracking paths mapped for all high-need profiles.

KRA 4: Policy & Administration

Eliminate diagnostic-label funding bottlenecks and establish clear monitoring loops.

1. Convene administrators, legal experts, and teacher representatives to draft explicit, localized school-based tracking guidelines.
2. Mandate the immediate release of assistive tools based on educational performance indicators, completely bypassing formal clinical diagnosis wait-times.
3. Establish a centralized digital communication loop connecting general, special ed, and admin teams.

- Published school-based inclusion guidelines signed by administration.
- Direct asset release system operating independently of clinical diagnosis labels.
- Multi-department tracking log deployed to remove role confusion.



3. Project Timeline, Monitoring, and Evaluation Plan

Execution spans a 12-month cyclical schedule: Phase 1 (Months 1-2) focuses on infrastructure audits and policy formulation writeshops; Phase 2 (Months 3-5) focuses on the 5-session training tracks and weekly peer-mentorship pairings; Phase 3 (Months 6-8) deploys the digital material repository and constructs in-class Quiet Zones; Phase 4 (Months 9-10) embeds the daily 45-minute remedial blocks and parental consultation forums; Phase 5 (Months 11-12) executes data-driven end-of-year comprehensive audits using SPSS software version 26 to output feedback reports to division supervisors.

Sustainability is guaranteed via three operational evaluation designs: (1) Formative Tracking Checklists: School administrators will perform bi-weekly unannounced walkthroughs to evaluate sensory zones, alternative tests, and peer-mediated workflows, providing immediate mentoring to any teacher scoring low. (2) Formalized Home-School consultation paths: Mandate monthly parent-teacher paths where parent-logged booklet feedback provides active validation data for student IEP updates (Epstein, 2018). (3) Summative Progress Analysis: Compile compiled data at the end of each academic cycle to refine resource allocation and adjust professional development focus areas for the subsequent year.

Conclusions

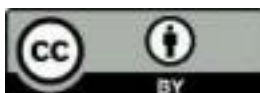
Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn.

1. Transformative inclusion requires shifting from merely changing individual mindsets toward actively reinforcing the institutional framework and physical environments. While cultural readiness is high, material deficits and procurement bottlenecks severely restrict classroom execution.
2. Teachers' demographic and professional profiles fundamentally shape their experiences, with advanced educational attainment and longer experience expanding critical awareness of structural constraints rather than removing them.
3. Overcoming rigid standardized pacing and instructional time constraints requires institutionalized, structured schedules rather than relying solely on individual teacher initiative and professional autonomy.

Recommendations

From the conclusions, the researchers suggested the following remedies:

1. School administrators must move from passive policy acceptance to active institutional support by establishing explicit school-based guidelines and monitoring systems to ensure consistent policy implementation.
2. To mitigate the resource gap, the creation of a localized digital repository for differentiated



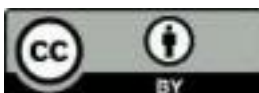
materials and assessment exemplars is essential, enabling teachers to share successful assessment adaptations instead of working in isolation.

3. Professional development must transition from theoretical seminars to active, hands-on collaborative writeshops and curriculum mapping sessions, focusing on practical skills like differentiated instruction and emotional co-regulation.

4. Home–School Partnerships should be formalized through regular consultation paths, utilizing parental insights as a primary source of data to support the continuous development of students' IEPs.

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