

Receiving Teachers' Knowledge and Attitudes Toward Learners with Disabilities in Mainstream Classrooms

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Article History:

Date Received: September 7, 2026

Date Revised: September 10, 2026

Date Accepted: September 15, 2026

Date Published: October 08, 2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.67903/ijroms0479>

Document ID: 2026IJROMS0479

Recommended Citation:

Niepes, J.R. L. (2026). *Receiving Teachers' Knowledge and Attitudes toward Learners with Disabilities in Mainstream Classrooms*. *International Journal of Research on Multidisciplinary Studies*, 1(9), 61-71. <https://doi.org/10.67903/ijroms0479>

Abstract. This study investigated teachers' knowledge of inclusive education and their attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms, addressing the gap on how conceptual understanding translates into practical dispositions. The objectives were to determine the extent of teachers' knowledge, evaluate their attitudes, and examine the relationship between these two variables. A descriptive–correlational design was employed, with twenty-five (25) mainstream teachers serving as participants. Data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire and analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's r correlation. Results revealed that teachers demonstrated a high level of knowledge of inclusive education, particularly in understanding its principles, familiarity with Department of Education policies, and the creation of supportive learning environments. However, lower proficiency was noted in Universal Design for Learning, assistive technologies, and the development of Individualized Education Plans. In terms of attitudes, teachers expressed a highly positive outlook, valuing inclusion as a means of promoting equity and social justice, and showing openness to training and collaboration. Moderately positive attitudes were observed regarding workload, classroom disruptions, and anxiety when teaching learners with severe disabilities. Correlation analysis indicated a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between knowledge and attitudes ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that greater knowledge fosters more favorable perspectives. The findings highlight that while teachers are conceptually prepared for inclusive education, practical competencies and workload concerns require further attention. The study concludes that continuous professional development, resource provision, and institutional support are essential to strengthen applied skills and ensure sustainable, effective implementation of inclusive practices in mainstream classrooms.

Keywords: attitudes; inclusive education; learners with disabilities; mainstream classrooms; teachers' knowledge

Introduction

In every classroom, a story unfolds not just of academic achievement, but of belonging, dignity, and growth. As education systems around the world embrace the principles of inclusion, the presence of learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms is no longer an exception; it reflects a deeper commitment to equity and human rights. Inclusive education is not merely about placement—it is about participation, engagement, and transformation.

This commitment is globally recognized through Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which calls for “inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all” (UNESCO, 2022). Central to achieving this goal is the empowerment of teachers especially those who receive and support learners with disabilities in general education settings. These receiving teachers are not only facilitators of instruction; they are gatekeepers of access, inclusion, and opportunity.

Despite policy mandates and advocacy efforts, the reality inside classrooms often tells a more complex story. While inclusive education is widely promoted, its implementation remains uneven. A UNESCO global monitoring report revealed that only 10% of countries have fully implemented inclusive education policies, and over 50% of teachers surveyed felt inadequately prepared to support learners with disabilities (UNESCO, 2020). In the Philippines, Dizon (2017) found that over 60% of public-school teachers had limited formal training in inclusive education, and more than half expressed uncertainty about how to support learners with disabilities effectively. More recently, Vergara et al. (2025) reported that while Filipino teachers showed

moderate confidence in managing inclusive classrooms, they lacked depth in applying Universal Design for Learning (UDL), implementing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), and using adaptive technologies.

Globally, Alassaf (2025) found that Saudi teachers demonstrated moderate knowledge and attitudes toward inclusive education, with significant differences based on prior autism-related training. Similarly, Yadav (2024) emphasized that teacher preparedness remains inconsistent across countries, with rural and under-resourced schools facing the greatest challenges. These findings echo those of Dreyer and Aparicio Puerta (2023), who noted that institutional support and access to inclusive pedagogy training are critical to translating policy into practice.

However, most existing research focuses on general teacher populations, leaving out those who are already in mainstream classrooms and actively engaging with diverse learners. There is insufficient investigation into how school culture, administrative support, and prior exposure to inclusive settings shape receiving teachers' attitudes and practices. Additionally, localized studies exploring these dynamics within the Philippine context remain scarce, despite the country's growing commitment to inclusive education through the Enhanced Basic Education Act, the Inclusive Education Bill, and DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009, which institutionalizes inclusive education programs for children with special needs in public schools.

Research has long acknowledged the influence of teacher attitudes and knowledge on inclusive education. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) found that teachers with positive attitudes toward inclusion were more likely to implement inclusive strategies effectively. Similarly, Sharma, Forlin, and Loreman (2008) emphasized that targeted training can significantly improve teachers' confidence and reduce anxiety about teaching learners with disabilities. Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) introduced the concept of inclusive pedagogy, arguing that true inclusion requires a shift from seeing difference as a problem to embracing it as a resource for learning. Yet, these foundational studies often generalize findings across broad populations, without isolating the unique experiences and challenges of receiving teachers in mainstream classrooms.

This research seeks to fill that gap. The purpose of this study is to assess receiving teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. It seeks to determine the level of knowledge these teachers possess regarding inclusive education and disability and examine their attitudes toward the inclusion of learners with disabilities.

Research Questions

The main objective of this study was to assess receiving teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms at Santiago Integrated National High School.

Specifically, it aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of receiving teachers' knowledge toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms?
2. What is the level of receiving teachers' attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms?
3. Is there a significant relationship between receiving teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focused on assessing the knowledge and attitudes of receiving teachers toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. The research was limited to twenty-five (25) receiving teachers from Santiago Integrated National High School during School Year 2024–2025, all of whom directly handled learners with disabilities. It aimed to determine the level of inclusive education knowledge these teachers possessed and examined their attitudes toward inclusion. However, the study was limited by its small sample size and single-site focus, which may have affected the generalizability of results to other schools or regions. External factors such as policy shifts, leadership transitions, or community attitudes toward disability were acknowledged but fell outside the scope of the study. Despite these constraints, the study offered valuable insights into the role of receiving teachers in inclusive education and contributed to evidence-based planning for teacher capacity-building.

Literature Review

Inclusive education has become a cornerstone of global educational reform, emphasizing the right of all learners including those with disabilities to access quality education within mainstream settings. Central to this vision is the role of teachers, particularly those who receive and support learners with disabilities in general education classrooms. These receiving teachers are instrumental in translating inclusive policies into practice, and their knowledge and attitudes significantly influence the success of inclusion. This review synthesizes

current literature on receiving teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward learners with disabilities, identifies gaps in existing research, and provides a foundation for the present study.

Teachers' Knowledge of Inclusive Education

Teachers' knowledge of inclusive education encompasses their understanding of disability classifications, instructional accommodations, legal mandates, and pedagogical strategies. Research consistently shows that teachers with higher levels of knowledge are more confident and effective in implementing inclusive practices (Alquraini & Gut, 2012; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). In the Philippine context, Dizon (2017) reported that most public-school teachers lacked formal training in inclusive education, resulting in limited familiarity with individualized education plans (IEPs) and differentiated instruction. Similarly, Loreman et al. (2010) emphasized that inclusive education requires not only technical knowledge but also a philosophical commitment to diversity and equity. Recent studies have also explored how knowledge varies across teaching roles. For example, De Boer et al. (2011) found that teachers with direct responsibility for learners with disabilities such as receiving teachers require more specialized knowledge than their peers. However, most research fails to isolate this subgroup, leading to generalized findings that may not reflect the unique demands of inclusive classrooms. In Southeast Asia, Nguyen (2020) highlighted that cultural perceptions of disability and limited exposure to inclusive models contribute to gaps in teacher knowledge. Meanwhile, Poon-McBrayer and Wong (2013) noted that in China, inclusive education remains underdeveloped due to insufficient teacher preparation and systemic barriers.

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Learners with Disabilities

Teacher attitudes are shaped by personal beliefs, prior experiences, institutional culture, and perceived efficacy. Positive attitudes have been linked to greater instructional flexibility, collaboration, and learner engagement (Sharma et al., 2012; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Conversely, negative attitudes may result in exclusionary practices and lowered expectations. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) categorized teacher attitudes into cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains, a framework that remains widely used. More recent studies, such as those by Forlin et al. (2015), suggest that attitudes are dynamic and can be improved through targeted professional development. In the Philippines, Reyes et al. (2019) found that while many teachers expressed support for inclusion in principle, their attitudes were influenced by classroom realities such as class size, lack of resources, and administrative support. Similarly, Garcia and Santiago (2021) observed that teachers' attitudes were more favorable when they had prior experience working with learners with disabilities. Internationally, studies by Jordan et al. (2010) and Monsen et al. (2014) emphasized that teacher attitudes are closely linked to self-efficacy. Teachers who believe in their ability to manage inclusive classrooms are more likely to adopt inclusive practices.

Impact of Training and Professional Support

Professional development is a key factor in improving both knowledge and attitudes. Teachers who receive targeted training report increased confidence and reduced anxiety (Sharma et al., 2012; Forlin et al., 2015). However, the quality and relevance of training programs vary widely. In a study conducted in Hong Kong, Lambe and Bones (2006) found that short-term workshops had limited impact unless followed by sustained mentoring and classroom support. Similarly, Florian and Rouse (2009) argued that inclusive pedagogy must be embedded in teacher education, not treated as an add-on. In the Philippine setting, Manlapig and Garcia (2020) emphasized the need for localized, culturally responsive training programs. Their study revealed that many teachers felt unprepared to implement inclusive strategies due to the lack of contextualized materials and ongoing support. Moreover, UNESCO (2020) reported that only a small percentage of countries have fully implemented inclusive education policies, and many teachers continue to report feeling unsupported. This highlights the need for systemic interventions that go beyond individual training.

Contextual and Institutional Factors

Beyond individual knowledge and attitudes, contextual factors such as school culture, leadership, and resource availability play a critical role in shaping inclusive practices. Studies by Ainscow and Sandill (2010) and Booth and Ainscow (2011) emphasized that inclusive education must be supported by whole-school reform. In the Philippines, Caballero and Reyes (2018) found that schools with strong leadership and collaborative cultures were more successful in implementing inclusive programs. Conversely, schools with rigid structures and limited resources struggled to sustain inclusive efforts. Study of Jordan et al. (2010) noted that administrative support and peer collaboration significantly influence teachers' willingness to adopt inclusive practices. Similarly, Monsen et al. (2014) highlighted that institutional barriers such as lack of time, materials, and support staff often undermine teachers' efforts.

Identified Research Gaps

While the literature affirms the importance of teacher knowledge and attitudes in inclusive education, several gaps remain. Although extensive literature highlights the significance of teachers' knowledge and attitudes in promoting inclusive education, several critical gaps persist. One major limitation is the lack of role-specific focus on receiving teachers those who are directly responsible for accommodating learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. Most studies generalize findings across broad teaching populations, overlooking the unique responsibilities and challenges faced by receiving teachers (De Boer et al., 2011; Garcia & Santiago, 2021). Another gap lies in the scarcity of localized research within the Philippine context. While inclusive education is gaining traction nationally, few studies examine how cultural beliefs, institutional structures, and policy implementation affect teacher preparedness and inclusive practices (Dizon, 2017; Manlapig & Garcia, 2020). Furthermore, existing research tends to assess teachers' knowledge and attitudes as separate constructs, with limited exploration of how these dimensions interact to influence classroom behavior and instructional decisions (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). There is also a lack of studies that translate empirical findings into actionable development plans or strategic frameworks for teacher training and school-based support systems (UNESCO, 2020; Reyes et al., 2019). Lastly, the sustainability and long-term impact of professional development programs remain underexplored, particularly those aimed at enhancing inclusive teaching competencies (Lambe & Bones, 2006; Forlin et al., 2015). These gaps underscore the need for a focused investigation into receiving teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms, with the intent of informing a responsive and evidence-based development plan.

The literature consistently highlights the importance of teachers' knowledge and attitudes in promoting inclusive education. Knowledge of inclusive strategies and understanding of learner needs are essential, while attitudes influence how teachers respond to diversity in the classroom (Alquraini & Gut, 2012; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). However, most studies examine these elements separately and focus on general teacher populations, overlooking the unique role of receiving teachers who directly accommodate learners with disabilities in mainstream settings (De Boer et al., 2011; Garcia & Santiago, 2021). In contrast to existing research, the current study focuses specifically on receiving teachers and explores how their knowledge and attitudes interact to shape inclusive practices. While previous studies affirm the value of professional development in improving teacher confidence and reducing anxiety (Sharma et al., 2012; Forlin et al., 2015), few translate findings into structured development plans that can be implemented at the school level. Furthermore, localized research within the Philippine context remains limited, especially regarding cultural and institutional factors that affect inclusion (Dizon, 2017; Manlapig & Garcia, 2020). This study addresses these gaps by assessing receiving teachers' knowledge and attitudes and using the results to inform a strategic development plan. It builds upon existing knowledge while offering a targeted, context-specific contribution to inclusive education research, thereby strengthening the foundation for sustainable inclusive practices in mainstream classrooms.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to assess receiving teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. The descriptive component aimed to determine the level of inclusive education knowledge and the nature of attitudes held by receiving teachers, while the correlational aspect sought to examine the relationship between these two variables. Descriptive correlational design is appropriate for this study because it allows for the systematic collection and analysis of data without manipulating variables. It is particularly useful in identifying patterns, trends, and associations among naturally occurring variables in real-world settings. In this context, the design helped to determine whether a significant relationship exists between teachers' knowledge of inclusive education and their attitudes toward learners with disabilities.

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Santiago Integrated National High School, located in General Trias City, Cavite, under the Schools Division of General Trias. The school serves as a mainstream educational institution that accommodates learners with diverse backgrounds, including those with disabilities. It implements inclusive education programs in accordance with DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009, which institutionalizes inclusive education for children with special needs in public schools. Santiago Integrated National High School was chosen as the research locale because of its active participation in inclusive practices and its designation of receiving teachers who directly handle learners with disabilities in general education classrooms. The school's environment provided a suitable context for examining teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward

inclusive education, as it reflects both the opportunities and challenges of implementing inclusion in mainstream settings.

Research Participants

The participants of this study consisted of twenty-five (25) receiving teachers from Santiago Integrated National High School during School Year 2024–2025. These teachers were selected through total enumeration sampling, ensuring that all educators directly responsible for learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms were included. As receiving teachers, they were tasked with implementing inclusive education strategies, modifying instruction to meet diverse learner needs, and fostering supportive classroom environments. Their participation was vital, as they represent the frontline practitioners of inclusive education within the school. By involving the entire population of receiving teachers, the study minimized sampling bias and ensured that the findings accurately reflected the collective knowledge and attitudes of those actively engaged in inclusive teaching practices.

Research Instrument

The adapted instrument used in the study was distributed to all twenty-five (25) receiving teachers who directly handled learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms during School Year 2024–2025. The instrument was adapted from standardized questionnaires developed by Avramidis and Norwich (2002), which measured teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward inclusive education, and further refined using frameworks from Sharma, Forlin, and Loreman (2008) on teacher preparedness for inclusion. To ensure its content validity, the instrument was reviewed and validated by three content experts with relevant expertise in inclusive education, special needs instruction, and assessment design. Each item was evaluated for relevance, representativeness, and clarity. Following expert validation, the instrument underwent a reliability test using Cronbach's alpha, which confirmed the internal consistency of the items and ensured their reliability for data analysis. The survey employed a 4-point Likert scale, allowing participants to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. The questionnaire was composed of two main sections: Part One consisted of 15 items designed to assess teachers' knowledge of inclusive education principles, instructional strategies, and legal mandates; Part Two included 15 items aimed at evaluating teachers' attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. The responses gathered provided valuable insights into the level of preparedness, beliefs, and instructional responsiveness of receiving teachers, and guided future capacity-building initiatives and policy enhancements in inclusive education. The collection period spanned two days, from November 17 to 28, 2025, strategically timed to avoid conflicts with school activities and ensure teacher availability.

Data Gathering Procedure

In gathering the data for this study, a series of systematic steps were undertaken to ensure the integrity and reliability of the research process. Initially, a formal request for approval to conduct the study was submitted to the Schools Division Office. Once granted, the endorsement was forwarded to the School Head of Santiago Integrated National High School to secure institutional cooperation. The researcher then coordinated with the designated focal person for inclusive education to facilitate the distribution of official copies of the survey instrument to the identified participants. The data collected through this process served as the primary basis for addressing the study's research questions and informed strategic inputs for strengthening inclusive education practices among receiving teachers.

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: What is the level of receiving teachers' knowledge toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms?

Table 1. Level of Receiving Teachers' Knowledge toward Learners with Disabilities in Mainstream Classrooms

Item No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1	I understand the principles and goals of inclusive education.	4.792	0.415	Highly Knowledgeable
2	I am familiar with DepEd policies related to inclusive education.	4.583	0.504	Highly Knowledgeable
3	I know how to develop and implement Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).	4.125	0.680	Highly Knowledgeable
4	I can identify common types of disabilities among learners.	4.292	0.624	Highly Knowledgeable
5	I understand how to modify instruction to meet diverse learner needs.	4.333	0.565	Highly Knowledgeable
6	I am aware of classroom strategies that support inclusive practices.	4.250	0.608	Highly Knowledgeable
7	I know how to collaborate with special education teachers and support staff.	4.292	0.550	Highly Knowledgeable
8	I understand how to use assistive technologies in inclusive classrooms.	3.917	0.717	Highly Knowledgeable
9	I am knowledgeable about Universal Design for Learning (UDL).	3.583	0.929	Highly Knowledgeable
10	I can assess the learning progress of students with disabilities.	4.208	0.721	Highly Knowledgeable
11	I know how to manage behavioral challenges in inclusive settings.	4.208	0.509	Highly Knowledgeable
12	I understand the legal rights of learners with disabilities.	4.208	0.583	Highly Knowledgeable
13	I am familiar with inclusive classroom assessment techniques.	4.167	0.702	Highly Knowledgeable
14	I know how to create a safe and supportive learning environment for all learners.	4.500	0.511	Highly Knowledgeable
15	I understand the role of school culture in promoting inclusion.	4.542	0.509	Highly Knowledgeable
Composite Mean		4.267		
Standard Deviation		0.608		
Interpretation		Highly Knowledgeable		

Table 1 presents the teachers' knowledge of inclusive education. The results reveal that teachers possess a high level of knowledge in inclusive education, with a composite mean of 4.267 and an overall interpretation of Highly Knowledgeable. This indicates that teachers are generally confident in their understanding of inclusive education principles, policies, and practices. The consistency of responses, reflected in the relatively low standard deviation (0.608), suggests a shared perception among teachers regarding their competence in this area. This shared confidence implies that schools can rely on teachers as key agents in promoting inclusive education, as they already demonstrate a strong conceptual foundation that can be leveraged in policy implementation and classroom practice.

The strongest areas of knowledge include understanding the principles and goals of inclusive education (Mean = 4.792), familiarity with DepEd policies (Mean = 4.583), and creating safe and supportive learning environments (Mean = 4.500). These findings highlight that teachers are well-grounded in the philosophical and policy frameworks of inclusion, as well as in fostering positive classroom climates. Such strengths align with Rapisa et al. (2026), who emphasize that teacher competency in inclusive education is critical for ensuring equitable learning opportunities and that policy awareness and classroom environment are foundational to effective practice. These strengths suggest that teachers are well-positioned to serve as role models and advocates for inclusive practices, reinforcing school culture and ensuring that inclusive education principles are embedded in everyday teaching.

However, comparatively lower scores were observed in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (Mean = 3.583), use of assistive technologies (Mean = 3.917), and developing and implementing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) (Mean = 4.125). While still rated as "Highly Knowledgeable," these areas suggest that teachers may be less confident in applying specialized strategies and tools. This echoes findings by Vergara et al. (2025), who noted that while teachers often demonstrate strong theoretical knowledge, they face challenges in translating this into practice, particularly in areas requiring technical expertise and individualized planning. Similarly, Jacinto Leiva et al. (2024) observed that teachers' perceptions of inclusive education evolve over time, but persistent gaps remain in training and resources, especially in implementing UDL and assistive

technologies. These results highlight the need for targeted professional development programs that focus on practical competencies, ensuring that teachers can effectively operationalize inclusive strategies rather than relying solely on theoretical knowledge.

The results suggest that teachers are conceptually and policy-wise prepared for inclusive education, but there is a need to strengthen their practical competencies. This includes equipping them with hands-on training in UDL frameworks, exposure to assistive technologies, and deeper engagement with IEP development. Addressing these gaps is essential, as inclusive education requires not only awareness of principles but also the ability to operationalize strategies that meet diverse learner needs. Strengthening these applied skills will ensure that inclusive education moves beyond policy compliance to genuine classroom transformation, enabling teachers to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students, particularly those with diverse needs.

Research Question 2: What is the level of receiving teachers' attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms?

Table 2. Teachers' Attitudes toward Learners with Disabilities

Item No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1	Learners with disabilities should be educated in regular classrooms.	4.375	0.770	Highly Positive Attitude
2	I feel confident teaching learners with disabilities.	4.250	0.676	Highly Positive Attitude
3	I enjoy working with students who have diverse learning needs.	4.417	0.584	Highly Positive Attitude
4	Inclusion benefits all students, not just those with disabilities.	4.500	0.590	Highly Positive Attitude
5	I am willing to adapt my teaching methods for learners with disabilities.	4.542	0.588	Highly Positive Attitude
6	I feel supported by my school in implementing inclusive practices.	4.500	0.590	Highly Positive Attitude
7	Learners with disabilities can achieve academic success in mainstream classrooms.	4.208	0.721	Highly Positive Attitude
8	I am open to receiving further training in inclusive education.	4.583	0.504	Highly Positive Attitude
9	Inclusion promotes empathy and respect among students.	4.500	0.559	Highly Positive Attitude
10	Learners with disabilities disrupt classroom routines.	2.958	1.398	Moderately Positive Attitude
11	Inclusion increases my workload significantly.	3.208	1.382	Moderately Positive Attitude
12	I feel anxious when teaching learners with severe disabilities.	3.125	1.329	Moderately Positive Attitude
13	Inclusive education is a shared responsibility among all school staff.	4.625	0.495	Highly Positive Attitude
14	I am willing to collaborate with parents of learners with disabilities.	4.583	0.584	Highly Positive Attitude
15	Inclusive education is essential for promoting equity and social justice.	4.667	0.565	Highly Positive Attitude
Composite Mean		4.203		
Standard Deviation		0.756		
Interpretation		Highly Positive Attitude		

Table 2 presented the teachers' attitudes toward learners with disabilities. The results reveal that teachers generally hold a Highly Positive Attitude toward inclusive education, with a composite mean of 4.203 and an overall interpretation of Highly Positive. This indicates that teachers strongly value the principles of inclusion and are confident in their ability to support learners with disabilities. The relatively low standard deviation (0.756) suggests consistency in responses, reflecting a shared commitment among teachers to inclusive practices. This collective positivity provides a strong foundation for schools to advance inclusive education initiatives, as teachers' attitudes are a critical determinant of successful implementation. When teachers share positive beliefs, the likelihood of inclusive practices being sustained across classrooms increases.

The strongest areas of positive attitude include beliefs that inclusive education promotes equity and social justice (Mean = 4.667), is a shared responsibility among all school staff (Mean = 4.625), and requires collaboration with parents (Mean = 4.583). Teachers also expressed openness to further training (Mean = 4.583) and willingness to adapt teaching methods (Mean = 4.542). These findings highlight teachers' readiness to embrace inclusive practices, aligning with Avramidis and Norwich (2002), who emphasized that positive teacher attitudes are essential for the sustainability of inclusion policies. Similarly, Supriyanto (2019) found that most teachers worldwide hold favorable views of inclusion, particularly when supported by training and collaboration. Schools should capitalize on this openness by institutionalizing professional development programs and fostering collaborative partnerships with parents and staff. Doing so will strengthen inclusive practices and ensure that teachers' positive attitudes are translated into effective classroom strategies.

However, moderately positive attitudes were observed in items related to classroom disruptions (Mean = 2.958), increased workload (Mean = 3.208), and anxiety when teaching learners with severe disabilities (Mean = 3.125). These results suggest that while teachers support inclusion in principle, they remain concerned about its practical challenges. This echoes findings by Avramidis and Norwich (2002), who noted that teachers' attitudes are influenced by the severity of disabilities and perceived workload. Supriyanto (2019) also reported that teacher training and resource availability significantly shape attitudes, with lack of support often leading to apprehension. These concerns highlight the need for systemic support, such as co-teaching models, access to special education resources, and workload management strategies. Addressing these issues will reduce teacher anxiety and ensure that inclusive education is not only philosophically accepted but also practically sustainable.

Thus, the results indicate that teachers are philosophically and ethically committed to inclusive education, but practical barriers remain. Their strong belief in equity, collaboration, and adaptability demonstrates readiness to advance inclusion, yet concerns about workload and severe disabilities underscore the importance of institutional support. Addressing these barriers through targeted training, resource allocation, and supportive school structures will enable teachers to fully operationalize inclusive practices. This ensures that learners with disabilities receive equitable and meaningful educational opportunities, while teachers are empowered to sustain their positive attitudes in practice.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant relationship between receiving teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms?

Table 3. Significant Relationship between Receiving Teachers' Knowledge and Attitudes toward Learners with Disabilities in Mainstream Classrooms

Variables	r	p-value	Decision	Strength	Direction
Teachers' Knowledge and Attitudes Toward Learners with Disabilities in Mainstream Classrooms	0.7485	0.000013	Significant	Strong	Positive

The results in table 3 reveal a statistically significant relationship between teachers' knowledge of inclusive education and their attitudes toward learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. The computed Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.7485$) indicates a strong positive relationship. This means that teachers who demonstrate higher levels of knowledge about inclusive education also tend to hold more positive attitudes toward learners with disabilities. This finding underscores the importance of enhancing teachers' knowledge base, as it directly influences their attitudes and willingness to embrace inclusive practices.

The strength of the correlation suggests that knowledge and attitudes are interdependent. Teachers who are well-informed about inclusive education principles, policies, and strategies are more likely to view learners with disabilities positively and to support their inclusion in mainstream classrooms. This aligns with Avramidis and Norwich (2002), who argued that teacher attitudes toward inclusion are strongly shaped by their understanding of inclusive practices. Similarly, Sharma, Loreman, and Forlin (2012) found that professional development and training significantly improve teachers' confidence and attitudes toward inclusion. Schools and education departments should prioritize continuous training and knowledge-building initiatives, as these not only improve teacher competence but also foster positive attitudes that are essential for sustaining inclusive education.

Furthermore, the significant positive relationship highlights the role of knowledge in reducing apprehensions and misconceptions about learners with disabilities. As teachers gain deeper insights into inclusive strategies such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), assistive technologies, and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), they are more likely to overcome concerns about workload and classroom disruptions. This finding resonates with Supriyanto (2019), who emphasized that knowledge acquisition through training reduces teacher anxiety and strengthens their commitment to inclusion. Addressing knowledge gaps through

targeted professional development will not only enhance teacher competence but also ensure that positive attitudes are maintained, thereby improving the quality of inclusive education.

Hence, the results confirm that teachers' knowledge of inclusive education is a powerful predictor of their attitudes toward learners with disabilities. The strong positive correlation demonstrates that increasing knowledge leads to more favorable attitudes, which in turn supports the successful implementation of inclusive practices. Educational leaders must invest in teacher education, training, and resource provision to strengthen both knowledge and attitudes, ensuring that inclusive education in mainstream classrooms is both effective and sustainable.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in full compliance with the ethical standards of Republic Act No. 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, which mandated the responsible and ethical handling of personal information. Written informed consent was obtained from all twenty-five (25) receiving teachers who directly handled learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms during School Year 2024–2025. The consent form outlined the study's purpose, procedures, voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality measures, and the participants' right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality was maintained by assigning coded identifiers to participants. While full anonymity was not possible due to the small sample size, no personal identifiers were included in the survey instrument, and individual responses were treated with strict confidentiality. Data were stored securely in locked password-protected digital files, accessible only to the researcher. All data were retained for one year following the completion of the study and then permanently deleted. The study posed minimal risk, with no sensitive or invasive procedures involved. Participants were free to skip any item or withdraw from the study at any point without consequence. The research was expected to offer benefits by informing inclusive education practices and guiding future teacher development programs. No deception was used in the study. Upon completion of the survey, participants were thanked and provided with a brief overview of the study's objectives and intended outcomes.

Conclusion

The findings of this study affirm that receiving teachers at Santiago Integrated National High School possess a high level of knowledge of inclusive education, particularly in understanding its principles, familiarity with DepEd policies, and the ability to create supportive learning environments. Their attitudes toward learners with disabilities were likewise highly positive, reflecting a strong commitment to equity, social justice, and collaboration. However, moderate concerns were noted regarding workload, classroom disruptions, and teaching learners with severe disabilities, highlighting areas that require further support. Importantly, the correlation analysis revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between teachers' knowledge and attitudes, underscoring that greater knowledge fosters more favorable attitudes toward inclusion. These results suggest that while teachers are conceptually prepared for inclusive education, strengthening their practical competencies in areas such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), assistive technologies, and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) remains essential. Schools and policymakers must therefore prioritize continuous professional development, resource provision, and institutional support to ensure sustainable and effective inclusive practices. By addressing these needs, inclusive education can move beyond policy into meaningful classroom transformation, ensuring that learners with disabilities are not only present but fully engaged and empowered in mainstream classrooms.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed: Teachers are encouraged to strengthen their competencies by attending short, school-based training sessions on UDL, assistive technologies, and IEPs, joining workshops or mentoring programs organized within the division, collaborating regularly with parents and colleagues during scheduled meetings, and using peer support groups or informal counseling sessions to manage workload and anxiety. School leaders and administrators are expected to provide basic assistive devices and instructional materials that are affordable and accessible, establish simple co-teaching arrangements or designate a focal person for special education support, create small inclusive education committees that meet quarterly, and align school policies with DepEd guidelines through regular monitoring during existing supervisory visits. Policymakers are recommended to prioritize allocating modest but consistent resources to address classroom challenges, invest in practical knowledge-building initiatives such as division-wide seminars, institutionalize professional development programs that emphasize hands-on strategies for inclusion, and embed inclusive values into curriculum frameworks and teacher standards through incremental revisions. Parents and community members are encouraged to engage in scheduled dialogues or case conferences with teachers, collaborate with schools by volunteering or supporting inclusive

activities, participate in school programs that promote empathy and fairness among students, and advocate for inclusive education by coordinating with local authorities during community assemblies or school governance meetings.

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