

Efficacy and Challenges of Inclusion Teachers in Using Differentiated Instruction: A Premise for Pedagogical Support Program

Jordan T Aquino

Teacher-Researcher of Imus Pilot Elementary School, Philippine

***Corresponding author:** Jordan T Aquino, Teacher-Researcher of Imus Pilot Elementary School, Philippine.

Submitted: 29 November 2025 **Accepted:** 08 December 2025 **Published:** 15 December 2025

 <https://doi.org/10.63620/MKJDMECA.2025.1005>

Citation: Aquino, J.T. (2025). *Efficacy and Challenges of Inclusion Teachers in Using Differentiated Instruction: A Premise for Pedagogical Support Program, J of Digit Mark E-Com Con Ana, 1(2), 01-11.*

Abstract

This study aimed to identify the efficacy and challenges of receiving teachers of inclusion in using differentiation of instruction in teaching learners with special needs in inclusive setting. The respondents of this study consisted of 30 receiving teachers of one public school in Imus City, Cavite. The study followed a mixed method design and consisted of two parts. First, a quantitative analysis of a questionnaire of 10 items to measure the level of efficacy of the respondents in using differentiated instruction. Second, a qualitative analysis of a focal group discussion was conducted. Results of the study showed that the receiving teachers have minimal level of experience in using differentiated instruction. On the other hand, the study found out the challenges that the teachers encountered are: lack of knowledge, limited trainings and large number of learners per class. The study recommends that provision of training seminars for all teachers about better understanding of differentiated instructional strategies and how to implement them specially in large classes.

Keywords: Efficacy, Challenges, Receiving Teachers, Inclusion, Differentiated Instruction.

Introduction

The Individuals with Disabilities Act articulates the school's responsibility to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the core curriculum of general education in the least restrictive environment with proper modification and accommodation. In the Philippine setting, the Department of Education is required to provide students with disabilities, the essential knowledge and skills through special education services. Department of Education (DepEd) Order 72, s. 2009 with the title "**Inclusive Education as Strategy for Increasing Participation Rate of Children**" gives highlight that the Special Education in the Philippines has only served 2% of the targeted 2.2 million children with disabilities in the country have no access with a basic human right: the right to receive quality education. To urgently address this problem, DepEd has organized procedures to guarantees the right for these children to receive appropriate education within the regular or inclusive classroom setting. Inclusive education embraces the philosophy of accepting all children regardless of race, size, shape, color, ability or disability with support from school staff, students, parents and the community. One of the components of this DepEd Order focusses on the curriculum

modifications. This shall be implemented in the forms of adaptations and accommodations to foster optimum learning based on individual's needs and potentials. Modification in classroom instructions and activities is a process that involves new ways of thinking and developing teaching-learning practices. It also involves changes in any of the steps in the teaching-learning process.

The research of about Differentiated Instructional Strategies to Accommodate Students with Varying Needs and Learning Styles mentioned that through the use of differentiated instructional strategies, teachers can meet the varying needs of all students and help them to meet and exceed the established standards. Differentiated teaching provides paths to learning so that the classroom becomes a 'good fit' for varied learners. Education has traditionally been subject to change and renewal [1]. Providing differentiated instruction is considered an important element in education. However, it requires complex teaching skill which many of the teachers have not mastered and feel unprepared for. As cited [2]. Howard Gardner emphasized that the biggest mistake of past centuries in teaching has been to treat all students

as if they were variants of the same individual and thus to feel justified in teaching them all the same subjects the same way. In order to design professional development activities, a thorough description of Differentiated Instruction is required. Any classroom with more than one student presents a range of diverse learning needs, teachers often struggle to provide all their students with focused learning activities specifically designed to what works best for them.

Receiving Teachers of inclusion are the center stage in implementing Inclusive Education. Their existing pedagogical competency in handling children with disabilities in inclusive setting are needed for a progressive and successful inclusive education program. Research shows that teachers with less knowledge about the concepts of Inclusive Education are also less ready in managing their students' requirement in inclusive classroom [3].

Inclusion requires well-trained teachers to address the needs of children with disabilities. The researchers in the present study tried to find out the efficacy and challenges of receiving teachers of inclusion in using differentiation of instruction in teaching learners with special needs in inclusive setting. The study will provide results that will be used as a basis for possible support program that will be given for receiving teachers.

Literature Review

Differentiated instruction is a frame of mind as well as a teaching process. Emphasize differentiation of instruction as a teaching philosophy based upon the premise that teachers should adapt instruction to student differences because one size does not fit all. According to researchers at the National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum, differentiation of instruction is also an instructional process that recognizes and acknowledges the differences among students' background knowledge, readiness, language, culture, and learning preferences and interest, and then reacts responsively and positively to these natural differences [4]. Differentiated instruction is a process for teaching students who vary in how they learn in the same classroom. It is a way for teachers to proactively plan for and respond to individual differences via process of adapting and modifying materials, learning goals, instructional methods and learning activities, and what students are required to do and produce in the classroom [5].

Stated otherwise, differentiated instruction requires teachers provide students with multiple means of representation (content differentiation), multiple means of engagement (process differentiation) and multiple means of expression (product differentiation). To do this requires attention and differentiation at what has come to be known as the four instructional access design points. Describe the four access design points for differentiation instruction with the following elements.

Access Design Point #1: Gather Facts About the Students Educators who differentiate must first gather facts about the differences in students' background knowledge, readiness, language, culture, and learning Preferences and Interests.

Access Design Point #2: Content Demands Given this information about students, educators then differentiated content. Content is multidimensional because it involves not only what

is to be taught and differentiated for students, but variations in learning objectives and levels of knowledge and proficiency students need to demonstrate, as well as variations in the materials to be used.

Access Design Point # 3: Product Demands This product access design point concerns how students show what they know and have learned and how their products are evaluated. Information gathered about student learning preference can be used to enable students to best show what they have learned. Standardized assessments are augmented with authentic assessment process.

Access Design Point #1 Process Demands

This process design point requires teachers to consider how best to help students make sense of what they are to learn. Teachers use various lesson formats and arrangements, technology and evidence based instructional practices and scaffolds to provide access for every student.

The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student' growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is in the curriculum, and assisting each student to learn via his or her unique learning process. Differentiated instruction, is a way to shake things up in the classroom, changing how teachers teach so that all students have access to powerful and effective learning. Notably, differentiation of instruction can be best and most easily occur for every child when general educator specialist rethink how to deliver their expertise and services.

Differentiation most easily and naturally occurs when educators collaborate in planning and instruction to not only accommodate the learning differences learners with special needs, but to accommodate the learning differences experienced by all students through instructional delivery arrangements such as co-teaching than pullout services. The differentiated instruction entails as the procedures for the reorganization of classroom instruction and learning strategies to afford learners different options of accessing information. Different methods of accessing content, processing ideas, formulating meaningful comprehension and developing outcomes are afforded the learner so effective learning can take place. Another way of defining it sees it as teaching through various methods that are student-centered, as well as in tune with the diversities of learners. Therefore, differentiated instruction is a new approach to designing and delivering instruction to best reach each student. Defines differentiated instruction as a philosophy of teaching that is premised on the idea that learning best takes place when the teachers accommodate differences and diversity in the levels of readiness, learning profiles and interests among students [6].

Learners with special needs are a part of the regular class that has to take their educational needs and their ability to face academic difficulties into consideration; therefore, the need for differentiated instruction that has its focus on the right of learners to learn to their highest capabilities comes with the presence of students with learning disabilities. According to learners with special needs can be better included in regular classrooms when they are given sufficient opportunities to actively participate, positively identify and develop their capabilities with the assistance of skilled teachers who would create and implement lessons that

are meaningfully designed to accommodate all students and aid their academic success. There is evidence in international studies that elementary grade learners with special needs may attain good educational outcomes; 50% of them may attain the level of their regular classroom peers and enhance their achievements with the provision of effective teaching (McLeskey & Nancy, 2011).

To increase the effectiveness of teachers in teaching learners with special needs more changes are required to meet the needs of this category of students to provide them high quality education that meets their needs; the system must work to put in place deeply rooted, multi-faceted changes by using cutting-edge pedagogical approaches and redefining the roles of teachers towards achieving the desired outputs. There is thus a need for an updated organizational and institutional educational systems to help teachers better understand their roles in this regard [7].

The dearth of effective teaching tailored towards the needs of learners with special needs in inclusion settings is revealed in the relevant educational literature. Teachers mandated with the task of ensuring the effectiveness of this type of education do not have the time or skills to correctly play their roles; they generally follow the old routines inside their classroom and stick to a single style of teaching, hence their failure to contribute towards the required educational outcomes for all their students. In addition, the existing resources for instruction and learning were not designed with learners with special needs in mind. According to in his study, in spite of the joint efforts by the Ministries of Education and Social Welfare to raise awareness on “inclusion” and “disability”, the realization of “inclusion” in its comprehensive sense is still far away. Effort has to be made to bring educators and decision-makers together to fashion out training programs for professional teachers on the implementation of differentiated instruction for students with special needs who are placed in regular classrooms [8].

A study by Lora, Nancy, and looked into teachers' tendencies, classroom application and the effectiveness of differentiated instruction [9]. There were nine teachers from elementary and secondary classes and three teachers per stage included in the sample of the study, which was carried out in a classroom. The study found that successfully differentiated instruction takes time to apply, and there is need for professional development of teachers so they can manage a class and apply effective strategies of differentiated instruction to cater for the needs of every learner within a comprehensive environment.

Dixon, Yssel, McConnell, and carried out a study entitled “Differentiated Instruction, Professional Teachers Training and Effectiveness of Teachers” into the role professional training plays in the implementation of differentiated instruction and the effectiveness and self-efficacy of teachers [10].

A large area with high income and a medium-sized area with low income were selected for the study. The study sample was made up of 45 male and female teachers chosen from four schools (2 elementary schools, 1 middle school, and 1 secondary school) from each area. The study assessed self-efficacy and the effectiveness of teachers using the variables: educational locations, basic-level schools, teachers' experiences (number of years),

and the number of professional development training (hours) they had undergone. The results showed a positive and proportional relationship between teachers' qualifications and their effectiveness in implementing differentiated instruction. A study by assessed the impact of differentiated instruction on those failing to catch up in reading in Grade. In the study, teachers were meant to find ways to help students with learning disabilities read fluently using a semi-experimental differentiated instruction methodology, two experimental groups and one control group (traditional teaching). The sample had 60 students from Grade 1. The results showed that use of differentiated instruction improved students' reading skills. The test results showed differences between pre- and post-assessments over three scholastic semesters in “fluency” and “reading”.

There was a study by entitled “Teachers views on differentiation in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in terms of vision, practices and challenges.” The study examined the diversity of content and merging of languages in CLIL in Finland to figure out ways of supporting individual students with special needs in public classrooms. The study had a combination of qualitative cases and quantitative statistical studies of elementary school teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction and different practices in CLIL and the challenges encountered during implementation. To gather qualitative data, there were interviews with three teachers who apply the principles of differentiated instruction and CLIL provision to all their students. For quantitative data, questionnaires were distributed to 143 male and female teachers. Results showed that teachers look differently to differentiation and that they differentiate in instruction, content and language Integration. Problems associated with differentiated instruction had to do with time, materials and class environment. study on “Differentiation or non-differentiation in using technology in regular classes” was aimed at measuring the effectiveness of using technology to improve classroom management and raising the academic achievements of students with learning disabilities. An internet-based program that differentiates instructions in response to the learning style of students was the focus of the study. A hundred and thirty-one teachers were trained on the use of technological solutions as part of the research-based educational program, relying on analysis of individual student's data in terms of learning styles, educational goals, and student's level, plus each student's ability to merge technology (using computers) alongside his practical classroom work and make use of what he has learnt. Going by the results, differentiation in teaching is a valuable model for teachers.

The results of the study of about the inclusive education in the Philippines: through the eyes of teachers, administrators, and parents of children with special needs highlighted that the public schools in the Philippines in both cities and rural areas are remain ill-equipped. Many regular teachers in the public schools doubt their capacity to teach in an inclusive setting. in underlined those teachers are willing to handle work under inclusive education, but they are not prepared to take on the challenge of handling students with special educational needs. At this point, teachers in the Philippines, whether trained or otherwise, will have to accept that they will be spread too thinly in an inclusionary setting because the presence of students with special needs in an oversized group of students, if taken seriously, requires the preparation of more than one lesson plan and differentiation of

instruction [11, 12].

Therefore, we can deduce that the educational problems will be minimized if the differentiated instruction is used in regular classes specially in teaching learners with special need in inclusive setting. Also, there is a strong direction to consider the educators needs and requirements, the emphasizes that each student has certain qualities that distinguishes them from the rest of the students in the classroom, and the importance of using and implementing the differentiated instructions which has the qualities and distinguishing factors that can face up to the learners with special needs and requirements to achieve the best academic results.

Research Problem

The purpose of this study is to determine the efficacy of receiving teachers of inclusion in using differentiation of instruction in teaching learners with special needs in inclusive setting. The study specifically aims to find out the following: What is the level of experience of receiving teachers in using differentiation of instruction? What are the challenges that the teachers encountered during their implementation of differentiated instruction when teaching learners with special needs in inclusive setting? Based on the findings what possible pedagogical support program can be given for receiving teachers of inclusion?

Significance of the Study

Differentiated instruction practices and implementation challenges for teaching learners with special needs are very important in effecting changes in the process of learning, and its regular application by classroom teachers can create a clear picture of the realities and challenges of teaching students with learning disabilities in inclusion settings. This also helps to identify the role of teachers in increasing the academic achievement of learners with special needs as well as the problems they encounter and it will examine the advantages and disadvantages of these practices so they can serve as a guide in the formulation of teacher training programs. They can help to identify requirements for teacher training programs that encompass differentiated instruction.

Scope and Limitation

The results of this study are limited to: Human Limitation: The study is limited to receiving teachers of Imus Pilot Elementary School with the total number of thirty (30) teachers.

Instrument of the study: The researchers adopted the standardized test of entitled “The Inclusive Education Checklist: A Self-Assessment of Best Practices” page 67- 72 for quantitative part and focal group discussion for qualitative part.

Method

Research Design

The study used mixed method design. The research design was done in systematic method. The first part used of quantitative research. The researchers used checklist assessment to determine

the level of experience of receiving teachers in using differentiation of instruction in handling learners with disability in inclusive setting. The second part used qualitative analysis method specifically thematic analysis to describe the challenges that the receiving teachers encountered during their implementation of differentiated instruction when teaching learners with special needs in inclusive setting.

Participants

The study sample was made up of thirty (30) receiving teachers of Imus Pilot Elementary School who teach learners with special needs in primary level (Kinder to Grade 3) in inclusive setting. Teachers who were selected in this study were teachers who: work at the school in the SY 2019 -2020 and provide service to learners with special needs, kinder to Grade 3 for at least two years; were familiar with special education services and pedagogical approach specifically in differentiated instruction; and have professional teacher training about special education.

Instrument

For the quantitative part, the study adopted the standardized checklist of entitled “The Inclusive Education Checklist: A Self-Assessment of Best Practices” page 67- 72.

For the qualitative part, the researchers asked structured interview questions to the participants.

Validity

Although the instrument is standardized; it still underwent content validation and review by the experts in special education to ensure that the instruments directly related to major concept of study. Comments and suggestions by the experts are closely observed and considered.

Analysis of Data

Quantitative Data Analysis

The researchers used several criteria- referenced assessments that include test items that are directly relevant to the outcomes to be measured. This information and procedure were used to provide answers to the quantitative part of the study.

Frequency count: This simple statistical tool was used to tally the item score of the respondents in determining degree of the respondents' experience in handling differentiated instructions in teaching learners with disability in inclusive setting.

Simple Percentage: This statistic was used in describing the consolidated answer of the respondents.

Ranking: This procedure was used to determine the top three items with the highest and the lowest mean of degree of differentiation experience of the receiving teachers.

Weighted Mean: This procedure was used to measure the extent by which the respondents were assessed by the given research

Mean Average	Interpretation	Description	Level
3.50 - 4.00	High	This indicates that the receiving teachers are fully experience and knowledgeable in using differentiated instruction in teaching leaners' with disability in inclusive setting.	4

2.50 - 3.49	Moderate	This indicates that the receiving teachers have quite experience and moderate knowledge in using differentiated instruction in teaching learners' with disability in inclusive setting.	3
1.50 - 2.49	Minimal	This indicates that the receiving teachers have few experiences and minimal knowledge in using differentiated instruction in teaching learners' with disability in inclusive setting.	2
1.0 - 1.49	Low	This indicates that the receiving teachers have low point of experience and knowledge in using differentiated instruction in teaching learners' with disability in inclusive setting.	1

Qualitative Data Analysis

For the qualitative part, the study used thematic analysis to analyze data obtained from the face-to-face focus group discussion with the receiving teachers using audio-recording and coding sheets. The steps for thematic analysis are as follows: First, the data from the audio-recording and coding sheet were verified to ensure the integrity of the codes and that they have not been misinterpreted. The audio-recording and coding sheets were reviewed separately by the two researchers to check the consistency of the data.

Second, from the coding sheet, the researchers consolidated the answers and content analysis was done using the process of ex-

amining, categorizing, recording patterns, and identifying preliminary codes.

Third, the researchers analyzed the collected codes and a deeper review for the identified themes. The researchers provided theme names. Lastly, the researcher transformed the analysis into an interpretable piece of writing by using compelling literature and studies that related to themes, and research specific objective.

Result and Discussion

Question 1: What is the level of experience of receiving teachers in using differentiation of instruction?

Table 1: Receiving Teachers Degree of Differentiation of Instruction Experiences

No.	Indicator	Mean	Rank	Level
1	Receiving teacher understand that they have a responsibility to proactively adapt instruction to accommodate students' differences.	4.3	1	high
2	Receiving teacher gather data about students from varying multiple sources in order to differentiate instruction in response to their students' varying background knowledge, interest, strengths, culture, language, learning preferences, and means of communication.	3	2	moderate
3	Within each unit of the study, process differentiation routinely occurs to help students make sense of the ideas, concepts, procedures, and principles, and principles being taught through the use of multiple instructional formats.	2.60	3	moderate
4	Receiving teacher have had explicit and extensive training in and understand what constitutes differentiated instruction.	2.3	4	minimal
5	Within each unit of study, process differentiation routinely occurs to help students make sense of the ideas, concepts, procedures, and principles being taught through alterations of the physical environment.	1.89	5	minimal
6	Within each unit of the study, process differentiation routinely occurs to help students make sense of the ideas, concepts, procedures, and principles being taught through the use of multiple instructional strategies.	1.76	6	minimal
7	Within each unit of study, product differentiation routinely occurs, with students being offered multiple ways to express what they have learned.	1.70	7	low
8	Within each unit of study, process differentiation routinely occurs to help students make sense of ideas, concepts, procedures, and principles being taught through the use of multiple arrangements.	1.56	8	low
9	Within each unit of study, content and materials differentiation routinely occurs, with students being offered multiple options for taking in information.	1.55	9	low
10	Instructional personnel collaborate to share differentiated lessons and unit plans.	1.53	10	low
	weighted mean	2.22		minimal

Table 1 shows the aggregate assessment of 30 receiving teachers' degree of differentiation experience for each indicator with a total weighted mean of 2.22 indicating that the respondents have a minimal level of experience.

For the top three items with the highest mean of level of differentiation experience of receiving teachers are: indicator number 1: receiving teacher understand that they have a responsibility to

proactively adapt instruction to accommodate students' differences gaining a highest mean of 4.3 or high; followed by indicator number 3: receiving teacher gather data about students from varying multiple sources in order to differentiate instruction in response to their students' varying background knowledge, interest, strengths, culture, language, learning preferences, and means of communication gaining a total mean of 3 or high; and lastly, indicator number 6: within each unit of the study, process

differentiation routinely occurs to help students make sense of the ideas, concepts, procedures, and principles, and principles being taught through the use of multiple instructional formats with a mean score of 2.60 or moderate.

The items with lowermost weighted means are; indicator number 10: instructional personnel collaborate to share differentiated lessons and unit plans gaining a total mean of 1.53 or low, followed by indicator number 4: within each unit of study, content and materials differentiation routinely occurs, with students being offered multiple options for taking in information with a mean score of 1.55 or low and lastly indicator number 7: with in each unit of study, process differentiation routinely occurs to help students make sense of ideas, concepts, procedures, and principles being taught through the use of multiple arrangements with a mean score of 1.56 or low.

As a whole, the findings show that the receiving teachers have minimal level of experience in using differentiated instruction

Table 2: Coded Data Based on the Challenges that the Teachers Encountered During Their Implementation of Differentiated Instruction

FGD 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all teachers have knowledge on differentiated instruction. Some of the teachers had no trainings in regard to awareness of disabilities, materials and pedagogy. We don't have time to use Differentiated Instruction because of large number of the pupils in the class.
FGD 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The learning environment is not suitable for differentiated instruction. Lack of knowledge in using differentiated instruction because of limited trainings. Large number of students per class.
FGD 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all of them apply the special education strategies and techniques because of large number of students. Lack of knowledge, we need to undergo trainings and seminar. Limited instructional materials.
FGD 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Density of learners in the classroom. Large number of learners Too much work assigned to the teachers.
CODES	<p>Large number of learners</p> <p>Lack of Knowledge</p>

Table 2 showed the coded data based on the challenges that the teachers encountered during the implementation of differentiated instruction (See Appendix B). Given the different perspective of receiving teachers in using differentiated instruction in teaching learners with special needs. Most of the teachers expressed the lack of knowledge in using differentiated instruction. They also expressed their ideas to the needs for trainings in using different pedagogy in teaching learners with disability in regular settings. Through attending various trainings and programs about special education the teachers can get basic knowledge and they can improve their classroom pedagogy in handling learners with special needs in a regular setting. Lastly, the receiving teachers highlighted that the main challenges in using differentiated instruction in teaching learners with special need in a regular setting is the large number of learners per class. The study of revealed that differentiated instruction in large classes is challenging. However, teachers of large classes need a better understanding of differentiated instructional strategies and how to implement them [13].

Question 3: Based on the findings what possible pedagogical support program can be given for receiving teachers of inclusion? In obedience to the maximization of trained teachers and administrators in special education, as well as with the Depart-

in handling learners with special needs in inclusive setting. The result of the present study is contradicting with the result of the study of about Differentiated Instructional Strategies to Accommodate Students with Varying Needs and Learning Styles. He mentioned that through the use of differentiated instructional strategies, teachers can meet the varying needs of all students and help them to meet and exceed the established standards. Differentiated teaching provides paths to learning so that the classroom becomes a 'good fit' for varied learners.

The result of having a minimal level of experiences in handling learners with disabilities in inclusive setting is the evidence that the teachers are not well versed with the use of differentiated instruction in handling learners with disability.

Question 2: What are the challenges that the teachers encountered during their implementation of differentiated instruction when teaching learners with special needs in inclusive setting?

ment of Education's plunge to provide quality and inclusive basic education for all, a proposed pedagogical support program has been created [14].

The proposed pedagogical support program was aligned with the DepEd Order no 35, s.2016 or “The Learning Action Cell as a K to 12 Basic Education Program School-Based Continuing Professional Development Strategy for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning”. The DepEd Order gave special emphasis on some key features of the K to 12 Basic Education Program and specifically mentioned the following: Including learner diversity and student inclusion in the LAC sessions emphasizes that learners are the reason for all education processes. It is the central role of teachers to establish learning environments that are responsive to learner diversity. It underscores the importance of teachers' knowledge and understanding of, as well as respect for, learners' characteristics and experiences. Diversity emanates from a variety of factors (which may be in combination) such as gender, community membership, religious beliefs, family configurations, and special learning needs. Teachers who celebrate diversity in their classrooms adjust and differentiate their instruction to include all learners and to foster harmony in their class. Furthermore, learner inclusion requires that teachers provide remedial instruction for those who are experiencing dif-

ficulties in learning lessons. Such interventions prevent failure and communicate caring by the teacher for students [15, 16].

The proposed pedagogical support program was designed based from the top three most predominant concerns based from the experiences of receiving teachers in handling learners with special needs. The top three concerns are the following: experiences of instructional personnel in collaborating and sharing differentiated lessons and unit plans; experiences of receiving teachers on content and materials differentiation; and process differentiation that routinely occurs to help students make sense of ideas, concepts, procedures, and principles that being taught through the use of multiple arrangements.

“See Appendix A for Pedagogical Support Program Training Matrix” Conclusion: Based on the findings, the study presents the following conclusion. The study concludes that the receiving teachers have a minimal level of experience in using differentiated instruction in handling learners with special needs in inclusive setting. This is evidently shown that the receiving teachers have restricted experience in using differentiated instruction [17-19].

Given the perspective of receiving teachers, the result finds that most of the teachers have lack of knowledge in using differentiated instruction. They also expressed their ideas to the needs for trainings in using different pedagogy in teaching learners with disability in regular settings. The receiving teachers highlighted that the main challenges in using differentiated instruction in teaching learners with special need in a regular setting is the large number of learners per class. It is every evident that implementing differentiated instruction in large classes is very challenging. However, teachers of large classes need a better understanding of differentiated instructional strategies and how

to implement them [20]. The recommended pedagogical support program must be based on the top three concerns where activities may be designed to address the needs of the receiving teachers [21]. With the computed ranking of the top three most predominant concerns based from the experience of receiving teachers in using differentiated instruction in handling learners with special needs. The study shows the needs for the pedagogical support program for the following area of enrichment: collaboration and sharing differentiated lessons and unit plans; content and materials differentiation; and process differentiation that routinely occurs to help students make sense of ideas, concepts, procedures, and principles that being taught through the use of multiple arrangements [22].

Recommendations

It is necessary to increase the knowledge of receiving teachers in using differentiated instruction. Proper preparation and training would be best for receiving teachers to undergo such as: attend/ seminars/ workshops and other continuing education activity in pedagogical approach in special education.

Provision of training seminars for all teachers about better understanding of differentiated instructional strategies and how to implement them specially in large classes.

Provide all means of support to encourage the receiving teachers to use modern teaching strategies, especially the differentiated instruction strategy.

Conducting further study on the teaching strategies that are most effective in teaching learners with special needs in an inclusive setting.

Appendix A Suggested Pedagogical Support Program Training Matrix

TIME	SESSION/ AGENDA	PERSON-INVOLVED
DAY 1		
7:00 – 7:30 AM	Registration	Program Organizer
7:30 – 8:00 AM	Preliminaries	Program Organizer
	Training Rationale, Scope and Procedure	School Head
8:00 – 10:00 AM	Philosophical Foundation of Special Education	Invited Speaker (Experienced Special Education Teacher)
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Health Break	
10:15- 11:45 PM	Challenges of Inclusion Teachers in Using Differentiated Instruction	Well-Experienced Teacher(s) of Inclusion
11:45 – 12:00 PM	Open Forum	
12:00 – 1:00 PM	Lunch Break	
1:00- 3:00 PM	Maximization of Trained Teachers and Administrators in Special Education	SPED EPS or Invited Speaker (Experienced Special Education Teacher)
3:00 – 4:00 PM	Open Forum	
DAY 2		
7:00 – 8:00 AM	Preliminaries	Program Organizer
8:00 – 10:00 AM	Facing Learners Diversity and Students in Inclusion	Invited Speaker (experts from the field of special education)
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Health Break	

10:15- 11:45 PM	Enhance Knowledge and Skills of Teachers, Administrators and Supervisors in Handling and Managing Programs for Children with Special Needs	Invited Speaker (experts from the field of special education)
11:45 – 12:00 PM	Open Forum	
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch Break	
1:00- 3:00 PM	Accommodation and Modification in Inclusive Classrooms	Invited Speaker (experts from the field of special education)
3:00 – 4:00 PM	Open Forum	
7:00 – 8:00 AM	Preliminaries	Program Organizer
8:00 – 10:00 AM	Effective Teaching Strategies and Intervention in Teaching Learners with Disabilities	Invited Speaker (experts from the field of special education)
10:00 – 10:15	Health Break	
10:15- 11:45 AM	Research-Based Pedagogical and Instructional Strategies in Inclusive Education	Invited Speaker (experts from the field of special education)
11:45- 12:00 PM	Open Forum	
12:00 - 1:00 PM	Lunch Break	
1:00 – 3:00 PM	Demo Teaching	SPED or Regular Teacher(s)
3:00 – 4:00 PM	Technical Assistance	School Head, Master Teacher or EPS
4:00 – 5:00 PM	Closing Program	

Appendix B

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Coded Data Fgd 1 Coded Data

Questions	Response / Significant Statements
Do the receiving teachers apply the special education strategies and techniques specifically differentiated of instructions in teaching learners with disability in inclusive setting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merong sa amin mga selected teachers na kahit paano may knowledge na tungkol sa inclusive education kasi nakapag division seminar na. Kaya lang nawawala ang teacher kasi ang iba sa amin ay nalilipat ng grade level. Kaming mga nasa primary level ay oo pero sa tingin ko ang 4, 5 at 6 ay hindi. Some of the teachers had no trainings in regards to awareness of disabilities, materials and awareness of the parents. Kulang ang training of teachers na binibigay ng DepEd. Dapat kapag nag training for SPED, hindi lang SPED teachers, dapat kasama din ang regular teachers. Mahal ang registration fee for SPED training. Kalahati lang sa amin ang nakakapag provide dahil sa dami ng task na ibinibigay sa amin.
Do the receiving teachers have knowledge in using differentiated instructions in teaching learners with special needs in inclusive setting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May knowledge naman kami sa differentiation of instruction minsan ginagawa naman naming pero hindi palagi. Kasi iba-iba kami ng hawak. Iba sa amin madaming bata na hawak. Marunong naman kami gumamit ng accommodation at modification.
Do the receiving teachers implement inclusive education by using differentiated instructions in teaching learners with disability in inclusive settings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Para sa akin/amin hindi masyado. Preparedness of teachers hindi ganun ka sufficient in terms of strategies and techniques. Limited ang trainings for teachers Case to case basis ulit. Kasi hindi lahat. May mga teachers na ayaw ng ganun pero tumatanggap sila dahil required. Pero ang iba naman ay willing mag accept voluntarily at the same time nag-aaral sila. Very satisfactory. Lahat kasi ng kailangan imainstream nailalabas. Yung demand na propoide naman at the same time nag-aaral willing kami matuto

Fdg 2 Coded Data

Questions	Response / Significant Statements
Do the receiving teachers apply the special education strategies and techniques specifically differentiated of instructions in teaching learners with disability in inclusive setting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Masasabi ko na effective sa ibang paraan. Pero hindi totally lahat kasi yong ibang teachers napapansin ko lack pa sila ng knowledge kung paano nila tuturuan ang bata sa loob ng regular class. Marami pa hindi alam sa paghahandle ng bata na may kapansanan kaya kailangan pa nila ng training and seminars para ma sila. May alam naman sila pero hindi full.
Do the receiving teachers have knowledge in using differentiated instructions in teaching learners with special needs in inclusive setting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sa tingin ko oo. Kasi mahirap sa amin kasi madaming bata. Saka di ba ang aming mga materials ay provided ng DepEd kaya mahirap mag provide ng differentiated instruction para sa kanila. No because of lack of knowledge kung paano tuturuan ang bata.
Do the receiving teachers implement inclusive education by using differentiated instructions in teaching learners with disability in inclusive settings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Namamanage naman pero hindi fully. Nagkakaroon ng inclusive education kasi kailangan. Mahirap iimplement ang differentiated instruction lalo na sa public school.

Fdg 3 Coded Data

Questions	Response / Significant Statements
Do the receiving teachers apply the special education strategies and techniques specifically differentiated of instructions in teaching learners with disability in inclusive setting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Siguro yung accommodation na ginagawa namin. Tapos modification of our teaching. Yung way of teaching modification. Pero hindi siguro lahat, kasi masminimind talaga nila ang regular kasi dalawa lang naman in a class ang SPED. So ang mas focus talaga namin yung regular. So parang wala lang. Parang wala pa ding SPED students ditto na tinatawag na SPED inclusion
Do the receiving teachers have knowledge in using differentiated instructions in teaching learners with special needs in inclusive setting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wala. No. Kasi hindi properly trained talaga. Poor yung performance namin kasi hindi naman kami properly trained. Actually ganto yon sir. May nakapagsabi sa akin na teacher na may anak na SPED child. Sabi niya sa akin dapat ang mga regular teacher ay makapag trained kayo sa atin kasi may mga regular teachers na hindi pa talaga totally accepted ang mga bata kasi nakikita ko kung paano nila itreat ang bata pagkasama na ang regular students. Sila na din ang nag sabi na kaylган sila itrained para sa special education. Kulang din kami sa instructional materials. May mga subjects nga na wala pang libro.
Do the receiving teachers implement inclusive education by using differentiated instructions in teaching learners with disability in inclusive settings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. Kasi ano eh. Kasi kulang pa ang knowledge. kaya step by step hindi pa talga na papaimplement yon. Sobrang kulang din kami sa resources.

Fdg 4 Coded Data

Questions	Response / Significant Statements
Do the receiving teachers apply the special education strategies and techniques specifically differentiated of instructions in teaching learners with disability in inclusive setting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meron may seminar about receiving teachers at inclusion. Updated naman sila saka may background naman sila kung paano mag handle ng bata doon. Meron na silang skills lalo na sa behavioral modification. Kasi minsan yung mga bata may behavior problem yung mga yun e pero nakakaya naman ng teacher. Sa alternative communication wala silang alam sa brailing hindi sila marunong siguro basic sign language meron silang alam. Sa skills wala sila masyadong alam kasi ang DepEd wala naman binibigay na program para doon. Kaya minsan ang mga HI hindi mo pwede ilagay sa regular kasi hindi naman marunong mag sign language yung mga receiving teacher. Yung ibang teachers very love naman nila yung mga bata sa SPED. Pero hindi natin pwedeng sabihin na lahat yon. Tatanggapin nila ng buo yung mga bata na lalagay naming doon kasi may mga teacher kasi na sa una una lang sila okay okay pero pag tumagal na ineneglect din nila yung bata. Ang problema lang talga ay ung masayadong madaming hawak na bata sa isang klase. Alam mo naman sa public school.

<p>Do the receiving teachers have knowledge in using differentiated instructions in teaching learners with special needs in inclusive setting?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hindi natin masabi na knowledgeable talga sila pero meron naman silang idea saka background kahit paano. Oo naman po. Hindi naman mag sstay yung bata doon kung hindi sila skilled at knowledgeable kung paano ihandle lalo na pag nag tatantrums na yung bata.
<p>Do the receiving teachers implement inclusive education by using differentiated instructions in teaching learners with disability in inclusive settings?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Siguro hindi rin masyado, isang factor kasi doon yung madaming bata sa isang klase. Tapos iba-iba pa ng klase ng bata. Masyado kasi madaming ginagawa sa public school. Siguro pag wala kami masyadong ginagawa kahit paano makakapag provide kami ng ibang instructions para sa kanila.

Appendix C

Declaration of Anti-Plagiarism

We, Jordan T. Aquino and Clarissa E. De Guzman understand that plagiarism is the act of taking and using another's ideas and works and passing them off as one's own. This includes explicitly copying the whole work of another person and/or using some parts of their work without proper acknowledgement and referencing. We hereby attest to the originality of this research proposal and has cited properly all the references used. We further commit that all deliverables and the final research study emanating from this proposal shall be of original content. We shall use appropriate citations in referencing other works from various sources. We understand that violation from this declaration and commitment shall be subject to consequences and shall be dealt with accordingly by the Department of Education and School Division Research Committee.

Appendix D

Declaration of Absence of Conflict of Interest

We, Jordan T. Aquino and Clarissa E. De Guzman, understand that conflict of interest refers to situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise my judgement in evaluating, conducting, or reporting research. We hereby declare that we do not have personal conflict of interest that may arise from our application and submission of our research proposal. We understand that our research proposal may be returned to us if found out that there is conflict of interest during the initial screening. Further in case of any form of conflict of interest (possible or actual) which may inadvertently emerge during the conduct of our research, we will duly report it to the research committee for immediate action. We understand that we may be held accountable by the Department of Education and School Division Research Committee for any conflict of interest which we have intentionally concealed.

References

- Gentry, R. (2013). Differentiated instructional strategies to accommodate students with varying needs and learning styles (Master's thesis or Dissertation). Jackson State University.
- Siegel, J., Shaughnessy, M. F. (1994). An interview with Howard Gardner: Educating for understanding. The Phi Delta Kappan.
- Anuar, N., & Rahim, N. (2012). Implementation of co-teaching approach in an inclusive classroom: Overview of the challenges, readiness, and role of special education teacher. <https://link.springer.com>
- Hall, T., Strangman, N., Meyer, A. (2011). Differentiated instruction and implications for UDL implementation. Wakefield, MA: National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum.
- Universal Design for Learning. (2013). What it is, what it looks like, where to learn more. The Special Edge.
- Collinson, T., Keith, M. (2012). The Routledge Falmer reader in inclusive education. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
- James, M., Nancy, L. (2011). Educational Programs for Elementary Students with Learning Disabilities. Learning Disabilities Research & Practice. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5826.2010.00324.x>.
- Abu-Hamour, B., Al-Hamouz, H. (2013). Special education in Jordan. European Journal of Special Needs Education.
- Abu-Hamour, B., Al-Hamouz, H. (2013). Special education in Jordan. European Journal of Special Needs Education
- Dixon, F. A., Yssel, N., McConnell, J., Hardin, T. (2014). Differentiated instruction professional development and teacher efficacy. Journal for the Education of the Gifted.
- Muega, M. A. (2016). Inclusive education in the Philippines: Through the eyes of teachers, administrators, and parents of children with special needs (Unpublished thesis or dissertation). University of the Philippines.
- Muega, M. A., Echavia, D. (2011). Inclusion of exceptional students in regular classrooms: School readiness and teachers' knowledge and willingness.
- Truner, W. (2017). Differentiating instruction for large classes in higher education. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 29(3), 490–500. Utah State University.
- Department of Education. (2008). DepEd Order No. 53, s. 2008: Maximization of trained teachers and administrators in special education. <https://www.deped.gov.ph/2008/07/05/do-53-s-2008>
- Bender, W. N. (2012). Differentiating instruction for students with learning disabilities: New best practices for general and special educators (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Department of Education. (2016). DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016: The Learning Action Cell as a K to 12 basic education program school-based continuing professional development strategy for the improvement of teaching and learning. <https://www.deped.gov.ph/2016/06/07/do-35-s-2016>
- Florian, L., Black-Hawkins, L. (2011). Exploring inclusive pedagogy. British Educational Research Journal, 37(5), 813–828. Routledge.

18. James, M., Kelly, A., Shirley, E., Karla, M., Shannon, W. (2011). Increasing the teaching efficacy of a beginning special education teacher using differentiated instruction: A case study. *International Journal of Special Education*.
19. Learner, J. (2009). Learning disabilities and related mild disabilities: Characteristics, teaching strategies, and new directions. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.
20. Logan, B. (2011). Examining differentiated instruction: Teachers respond. *Research in Higher Education Journal*.
21. Roiha, A. S. (2014). Teachers' views on differentiation in content and language integrated learning (CLIL): Perceptions, practices and challenges. *Language and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2012.748061>
22. Roiha, A. S. (2014). Teachers' views on differentiation in content and language integrated learning (CLIL): Perceptions, practices and challenges. *Language and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2012.748061>

Copyright: ©2025 Jordan T Aquino. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.