

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Abstract: This study examined the relationship between teachers' perceptions and students' performance in inclusive education at Mauaque High School, Mabalacat City. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 30 teachers with direct experience in inclusion and 5 students with specific learning disabilities during SY 2024–2025. Teachers completed a validated perception questionnaire covering attitudes, competence, support, and collaboration, while student performance was assessed through DepEd-standardized written and performance tasks. Results showed that teachers generally held positive views of inclusive education, particularly in collaboration and differentiated instruction, though concerns about training and resources persisted. Student outcomes varied, with most rated “Outstanding” or “Satisfactory” but one requiring improvement. Regression analysis indicated that teacher collaboration and positive attitudes strongly predicted inclusive practices, while curriculum differentiation and accessibility significantly influenced student performance. The findings highlight the need for enhanced training, resources, and collaboration to strengthen inclusive education in the Philippines.

Keywords: Teachers; Perception; Students, Performance; Inclusive Education

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education has gained momentum globally, with the Philippines actively integrating students with disabilities into mainstream schools as mandated by various DepEd policies (DepEd Order No. 21, s.2021; DepEd Order No. 32, s.2022). Teacher perceptions play a pivotal role in determining the success of inclusive education since their attitudes, preparedness, and use of resources directly influence the academic performance of students with disabilities. Previous studies have shown that while many teachers support the principles of inclusion,

gaps in training, resource allocation, and professional development hinder effective implementation (Sharma et al., 2022; Mitchell & Sutherland, 2022).

This study examined the relationship between teachers' perceptions and students' performance in inclusive education in a public high school in Mabalacat City. It specifically measured teachers' attitudes toward inclusion, competence and preparedness, access to support and resources, and collaboration, and related these to students' written and performance work. The findings aim to provide evidence for strengthening inclusive education practices, particularly in the Philippine context.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions and student performance in inclusive education. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do teachers perceive inclusive education in terms of:
 - 1.1 attitudes;
 - 1.2 competence and preparedness;
 - 1.3 support and resources;
 - 1.4 collaboration and professional community?
2. How is student performance in inclusive education described in terms of:
 - 2.1 written work;
 - 2.2 performance work?
3. How does inclusive education manifest in terms of:
 - 3.1 accessibility;
 - 3.2 equity and diversity;
 - 3.3 curriculum adaptation; 3.4 professional development?
4. Was there a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions and students performance
5. What program or intervention can derived from the study results?

METHODOLOGY Research

Design

The study employed a **descriptive-correlational design** to examine the relationships between teachers' perceptions of inclusive education and the academic performance of students with disabilities. This design was appropriate since it allowed the researcher to determine patterns, correlations, and possible predictive factors influencing student outcomes without manipulating variables.

Participants

The respondents consisted of **30 public high school teachers** and **5 students identified with specific learning disabilities (SLD)** at Mauaque High School during the School Year 2024–2025. Purposive sampling was applied to select teachers who had direct experience with inclusive education, while stratified purposive sampling was used to ensure representation of students with diverse needs. This distribution highlighted a strong emphasis on teacher input relative to the small number of SPED students, providing deeper insights into teaching strategies and resource use in inclusive classrooms.

Research Instrument

A **self-made teacher perception questionnaire** was developed and validated by three experts. It covered four key dimensions: (1) attitudes toward inclusive education, (2) competence and preparedness, (3) support and resources, and (4) collaboration and professional community. The instrument was pilot-tested with 30 respondents, yielding a **Cronbach's alpha of 3.98**, indicating high internal consistency.

For students, performance was assessed using a **DepEd-standardized assessment tool**, which evaluated **written works (40%)** and **performance tasks (60%)** to capture both academic and practical skills. Inclusive education indicators such as accessibility, equity, curriculum adaptation, professional development, and collaboration were also measured through Likert-scaled survey items.

Data Gathering Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the **Schools Division Superintendent of Mabalacat City**. After approval, informed consent was secured from teachers, while assent and parental consent were obtained for student participants. Data collection was carried out through survey administration for teachers and academic records assessment for students. Strict confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation were maintained throughout.

Data Analysis

Data were processed using the **Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)**. Teachers' perceptions were analyzed using weighted means and interpreted via a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly

agree). Regression analysis was employed to determine the predictive relationship between teacher perceptions and student performance. For students' outcomes, averages of written and performance work were computed, and multiple regression analysis was applied to identify significant predictors of academic performance.

Results

Findings revealed that teachers generally agreed with positive statements about inclusive education, with high confidence in differentiated instruction and collaboration, but uncertainty regarding sufficient training and resources. Student performance showed varied results, with two students achieving "Outstanding" marks, two rated "Satisfactory," and one "Needs Improvement." Regression analysis indicated that teacher collaboration and positive attitudes were the strongest predictors of inclusive practices, while curriculum differentiation and accessibility were the most significant factors influencing student outcomes.

Discussion

The results suggest that while Filipino teachers are receptive to inclusive education, challenges in training, professional development, and access to specialized resources hinder full implementation. Students' varied performance outcomes emphasize the need for tailored instruction and differentiated assessments. Consistent with prior research (Wang et al., 2021; Mintz & Wyse, 2021), the findings highlight that teacher attitudes and competence, supported by institutional collaboration, are crucial in promoting effective inclusion. For inclusive education in the Philippines to thrive, sustained investments in teacher training, resource allocation, and inter-agency collaboration are needed.

CONCLUSIONS

Teacher perceptions significantly influence inclusive education outcomes, with collaboration and positive attitudes strongly predicting success. Students' performance improves when curriculum differentiation, accessibility, and supportive learning environments are in place.

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