

# Assessing Teachers' Professional Engagement and Competence in Fostering Inclusive Classrooms

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## **Abstract:**

The study examined teachers' demographic profile, professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms, as well as the relationship between these variables at Cebu, Philippines during the school year 2025-2026. The respondents of the study were the 30 teachers who were identified through purposive sampling. Using a descriptive-correlational design, the data were gathered through a survey questionnaire. The study revealed that most of the teachers had a very strong teaching experience of more than 10 years, leaned towards handling a large class size of 31-40, and had adequate inclusive trainings or seminars attended of more than 10. In terms of professional engagement, teachers perceived themselves as highly engaged along the dimensions of personalized instruction, communicative scaffolding, and collaboration strategies, while engaged in terms assessment strategies. When it came to teachers' competence, teachers viewed themselves to be highly proficient in the dimensions of noticing diversity, quality of learner interaction, and creating a stimulating environment. Moreover, it was found out that teachers' demographic profile such as the number of learners handled in a class and inclusive education seminars or trainings had no significant relationship with professional engagement and competence. In contrast, there was a slightly positive relationship between number of years of teaching experience and professional engagement and competence.. It was concluded that professional development needed to be strengthened to enhance teachers' necessary skills in implementing inclusive classrooms. Ultimately, the findings became the basis of designing an action plan for the inclusive classroom management.

**Keywords:** Special Education, Inclusive Education, Professional Engagement, Teachers' Competence, Descriptive-Correlational Design, Toledo City, Cebu

## **Chapter 1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS SCOPE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Rationale of the Study**

Upholding equality, accessibility, and acknowledgment of diverse learners which is founded on inclusive education becomes the goal why educational programs for learners with special educational needs (LSEs) are created. Inclusive education warrants that all learners irrespective of abilities/disabilities, are provided with chances to learn and engage meaningfully in the conventional classrooms. These educational programs' success relies on the teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classroom, since these domains influence how teachers adhere to individual differences, establish supportive learning climate, and employ effective instructional strategies that encourage both academic and behavioral growth.

Recently, inclusive education has earned a significant worldwide attention as countries strive to make sure that equitable access to education for all learners irrespective of their capabilities, orientations, backgrounds, or learning differences is achieved. The fourth United Nations Sustainable Development Goal gives emphasis on inclusive and quality education and the upgrading of lifelong learning opportunities for all. In a similar vein, educators play a crucial function in realizing inclusive education, as their professional engagement, and competence directly influence the means as to how diverse learners are supported in the classroom [1]. Conversely, in spite of the increasing advocacy for inclusive education, teachers, globally still encounter challenges in efficiently managing inclusive learning environments because of limited preparation, inadequate training, and varying levels of professional engagement and competence [2].

In the national context, the Department of Education (DepEd) has established great emphasis on inclusivity through policies such as the DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009 better known as the *"Inclusive Education as Strategy for increasing Participation Rate for Children"* and the Republic Act 7277 or the *"Magna Carta for Disabled Persons"* which highlights the necessity to provide self-development, self-independence, and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, and their engagement in the mainstream society. Furthermore, Republic Act No. 11650 or the *"Inclusive Education Act of 2022"* directs the formation of inclusive learning resource centers and teacher trainings devoted for inclusivity in the classroom. Regardless of these initiatives, previous findings divulge that several Filipino teachers are still unprepared to manage classrooms, often attributed to insufficient professional development and lack of continuous training as hindrances to competence [3]. The association between teachers' professional engagement and their actual competence in managing inclusive classrooms remains a continuing issue in the Philippine education.

Locally, schools in Cebu have displayed initiatives to carryout inclusive practices by accommodating learners with diverse educational needs within the conventional classroom settings. Conversely, informal observations and reports such as the School Monitoring, Evaluation and Adjustment (SMEA) revealed that while basic education teachers show willingness to teach in inclusive classrooms, the extent to which they engage in professional development efforts differs significantly. While there are other teachers who actively participate in trainings, workshops or advanced studies vis-à-vis inclusivity, there are others who encounter limitations because of their workload, lack of support, or inadequate access to capacity-building opportunities. The discrepancy presented may result in inconsistent classroom practices and different intensities of the competence of teachers in addressing the needs of learners having disabilities and other diverse learners.

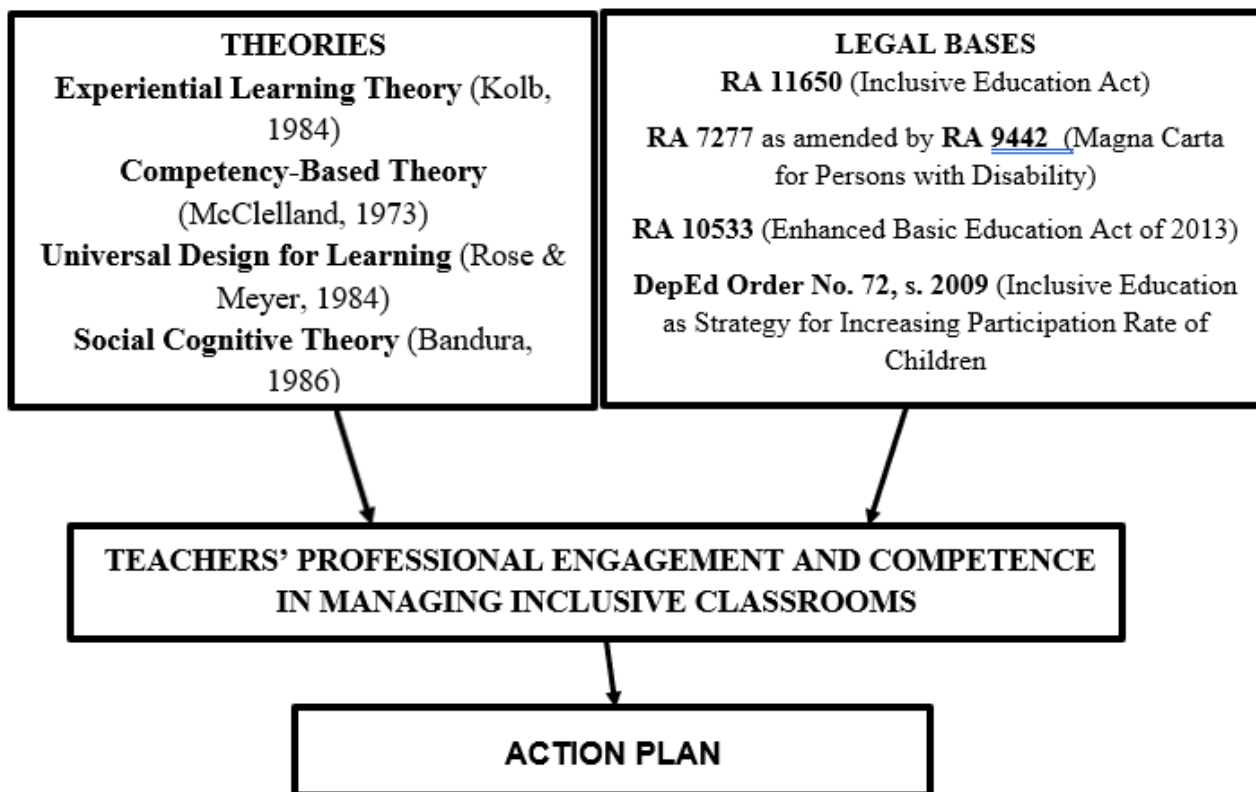
Given these conditions, a research gap occurs in exploring how teachers' professional engagement is linked with their competence in managing inclusive classrooms, particularly at the local level. While there are other studies that have focused on assessing teachers' preparedness towards inclusion, there is a scarcity of research that establish relationship between professional engagement, and competence in inclusive classroom management within the basic education setting. Attending to this gap can give valuable insights for policy makers, school leaders, and teacher education institutions in crafting targeted action plan that reinforces teachers' management of inclusive classrooms. Teachers, parents, and stakeholders are also crucial in the success of the implementation of inclusive education.

Henceforward, this study aimed at examining the relationship between basic educations teachers' professional engagement and their competence in inclusive classroom management. The findings are believed to contribute to the wider discourse of teacher empowerment and inclusive practices, supporting both national and global education goals and commitments to inclusive education for all.

### **Theoretical-Conceptual Background**

The models *Experiential Learning Theory*, *Competency-Based Theory*, *Social Cognitive Theory*, RA 11650, RA 7277 as amended by RA 9442, RA 10533 and DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009 anchored the study. These constructs are deemed relevant in understanding the variables of concern which are teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms as shown in Figure 1.

**Experiential Learning Theory.** Teachers' professional development in the context of managing inclusive classrooms encompasses not just the acquisition of new knowledge, but transforming that knowledge into practice, reflection and continuous improvement. The Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) by David Kolb in 1984 offers a strong theoretical framework in analyzing how teachers become competent in classroom practices through professional development efforts[4]. Kolb said that learning is a cyclical progression that happens in four phases – concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation [5]. Added that since the stages are not linear, effective learning necessitates that all stages are undertaken in some form to enable the learner to translate experience into knowledge, and the to carry out that knowledge in new situations.



**Figure 1.** Theoretical-Conceptual Framework of the Study.

Syatiana [6] supported that in the teacher engagement context, “concrete experience” corresponds to the teachers being engaged in real, contextualized professional learning activities like observing or being coached and mentored in inclusive classrooms, experimenting differentiated instruction or accommodations, or co-teaching activities with experienced workmates. These experiences offer the raw ingredient for growth. Next is “reflective observation” enables teachers to step back, evaluate what transpired, and assess what went wrong, and reflect how learner diversity, classroom interactions, and instructional approaches influenced results. This reflective stage is necessary for recognizing gaps in inclusive practice and for updating future change. Following reflective observation is the “abstract conceptualization which involves establishing or revising theories, constructs, frameworks, or general principles about inclusion such as comprehending universal design for learning (UDL), behavior management methods for diverse learners, or scaffolding instruction strategies. Educators incorporate insights from their experiences and reflections, depicting on educational research, instructional models, or policy standards to form a mind map of inclusive competence. Finally, the “active experimentation” is the stage whereby teachers try out new strategies (e.g., adapting lesson plans and instructional materials, utilizing new assessment practices, collaborating with co-teachers or families, trying out different classroom management approaches. By having the experimentation, teachers test their concepts and ideas in practice, gaining new experiences which restart the cycle.

Through engagement repetition in the experiential learning cycles, teachers’ professional engagement becomes a continuous and dynamic process, not a one-time shot. In inclusive classrooms where learners vary and continuously evolve, this cyclical situation ensures responsiveness. Teachers being engaged in professional inclusive practices initiatives tend to improve their competence; differentiating instructional styles, modifying materials, giving accommodations, implementing behavior techniques, and cooperating with workmates and stakeholders [7]. Moreover, experiential learning designs such as mentoring, coached trials, and

video reflections integrated in cycles of practice, feedback and improvement are associated with higher commitment in implementing inclusive practices.

Young [8] additionally reports that the measurement of professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms through observable indicators at each stage is supported by ELT. For instance, indicators of concrete experience might encompass presence in classroom-based inclusive teaching trials or observation of modeled inclusive teaching. For reflective observation, indicators might include the use of journals or collegial discussions. As for abstract conceptualization, development of strategy plans or incorporating theory into lessons. Ultimately for active experimentation, indicators might include the implementation of modified practices with varied learners and the collection of feedback.

In this study, the dimensions of teachers' professional engagement explored are personalized instruction strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, and collaboration strategies, and assessment strategies.

A major aspect of professional engagement is the teachers' capability to transform learning into personalized instructional strategies. It refers to the capacity to design, adapt, and differentiate lessons to meet differing needs [9]. A review of teacher professional engagement underscores on the hands-on, classroom-integrated training and follow-up coaching. These are what allow teachers to adopt adaptive activities such as differentiated tasks, flexible grouping, and scaffolded learning materials [10]. Furthermore, when professional engagement strengthens teachers' capacity to notice and observe learners' responses, personalization turns out to be more accurate and responsive [11].

Another dimension of professional engagement is communicative scaffolding strategies which refer to the ways teachers support language, interaction, and meaning making for diverse learners [12]. Reveal that teachers who are engaged in targeted professional practices tend to utilize dynamic scaffolds such as motivating, modeling, and contingent feedback during classroom communication which improves learner participation and comprehension. In addition, professional programs targeted at oral language, communicative teaching, and scaffolding practices positively impact teachers' confidence, and more frequent utilization of scaffolding happens after a classroom-integrated coaching and collaborative lesson study [13]. These works note that communicative scaffolding is both an emphasis of personal development content and an observable indicator of teacher engagement in inclusive practices.

Collaboration and assessment strategies completes the crucial dimensions of professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms. Engaged professional practices nurture teachers' practices of team planning, peer observation, shared problem solving, and formative assessment routines. Entire-school and collaborative professional engagement frameworks have been linked with enhanced inclusive practices because they create opportunities for shared reflections and assessment of learners' needs, and circulated responsibility for accommodation [14]. Formative assessment when associated with collaborative inquiry enables teachers to repeatedly refine instructional strategies for inclusion, transforming data into immediate instructional modifications rather than solo measurement practices.

Empirical syntheses underscore the general results and other remaining difficulties. Reviews about professional development across differing contexts show a positive impact on teachers' knowledge, self-efficacy, and some teaching practices, especially when professional development is consistent, contextually relevant, and involves mentoring. Nonetheless, gaps still remain which include inconsistent implementation, insufficient time for collaborative planning engagement, unequal access to quality mentoring and coaching, and construct alignment between professional development content and teachers' classroom realities [15].

The Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) is linked to the present study since it provides a wider understanding of teachers' professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms. By

connecting teacher readiness with ELT's framework, this study analyzes and interprets teachers' professional engagement in handling managing inclusive classrooms, specifically in terms of personalized instructional strategies, collaborative scaffolding strategies, collaboration strategies, and assessment strategies towards inclusive education, making ELT an appropriate framework.

Tuerah [16] found out that professional engagement is consistently identified as a critical predictor of success in inclusive education, openly influencing teachers' teaching competence. A study revealed that professional engagement is the connection between policy and classroom realities, emphasizing that teachers need to have both specialized knowledge of diverse learners and teaching skills for differentiated teaching and curriculum implementation. Quantitative correlational research revealed a strong positive association between professional development training and instructional effectiveness in inclusive contexts, strengthening the value of continuous training towards the promotion of effective teaching practices. Conversely, a primary concern which is lack of specialized training in special education strategies among many experienced teachers hampers their capability to implement inclusive practices effectively [17].

Ventista and Brown [18] in their study, criticize the "one-time" professional engagement activities for promoting the complex, sustainable changes necessary for inclusion. Instead, efficient professional development for inclusion is characterized by comprehensive, maintained approaches that incorporate theoretical awareness with real-classroom application, peer collaboration, and continuous support. Collaborative frameworks allow teachers to convene regularly to plan, differentiate lessons, and team teach. This allows for an open atmosphere where educators can safely share concerns and participate in brainstorming strategies resulting ineffective modifications in practice. Moreover, learning action cells (LAC) serves as a powerful scalable model for teacher awareness creation in inclusive environment enabling teachers to contribute to knowledge and engage in significant discussions relevant to inclusive practices.

Professional engagement plays an important role in influencing the teachers' attitudes, self-efficacy, and belief systems towards inclusive practices which are considered basic in handling inclusive classrooms effectively [19]. It was further found out that teachers who receive comprehensive professional teaching engagement are likely to exhibit higher levels of self-efficacy and more positive attitudes towards inclusion. Woodcock and Hardy [20] explored the relationship between self-efficacy and professional engagement, and it showed that more efficacious teachers engage in professional practices. Moreover, training programs targeted at inclusive practices have been found to impact teachers' willingness and competence to adapt teaching strategies to cater to different learners.

Even though there are studies that have highlighted the pivotal role of professional engagement relative to inclusion, there are other studies that underscore challenges to the successful adaptation of inclusive classroom management practices. One of which is the systemic resource challenges such as insufficient support and funding, institutional culture difficulties, inadequate proper training for teachers. Another concern raised by teachers is class size, which indicates that large class sizes negatively affect teaching and learning outcomes, and almost impossible for teachers to cope and adjust with learners with special educational needs[21].

Moreover, this study is supported by **Competency-Based Theory (CBT)**, which originated from the work of David McClelland in 1973 and eventually explained by Richard Boyatzis in 1982 [22]. This provides foundational framework for understanding teachers' competence, highlighting the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for effective work performance. The theory emphasizes that competence is exhibited not only by what an individual knows but by their skill to carry out such knowledge effectively in real-life settings. In the educational context, this translates to teachers' competence to design, implement, and evaluate teaching that meets diverse learner

needs. CBT asserts that professional effectiveness emerges from measurable and observable abilities that directly contribute to institutional and individual success [23].

In inclusive education, CBT underscores the significance of teachers possessing particular competencies that enable them to handle different learners within one learning atmosphere[24]. In inclusive classrooms, teachers are required to be skillful in differentiating lessons utilizing adaptive strategies, and encouraging positive classroom climate that supports learners including those with special educational needs.

According to [25], this encompasses pedagogical content knowledge, curricular adaptation aptitudes, and socio-emotional skills. CBT's application implies that inclusivity is not just an attitude, but a quantifiable competence that can be enhanced and assessed through focused professional learning and reflective practice.

Additionally, CBT aligns with the change towards performance-based teacher education, where the stress is positioned on exhibited outcomes rather than sole theoretical understanding. Teachers' competence in inclusive contexts, is assessed based on their capability to construct learning opportunities, cooperate with support staff, and involve families in the learning process. It is argued that effective performance in a complex educational contexts, is compelled both by principal traits such as motivation and values and learned abilities such as knowledge and skills [26]. Thus, CBT gives a model for enhancing teacher standards and professional backgrounds that openly outline the competencies necessary to ensure inclusive education success.

Competency-Based Theory also aids ongoing professional development as a mechanism for developing teachers' competence. In inclusion, teachers must regularly refine their skills to heed to the changing learner profiles and changing teaching demands. Teacher development utilizing competency-based approaches fosters reflective practice, mentoring, and evidence-based training programs [27]. This continuing assessment cycle and improvement ensures that teachers not only achieve minimum competency requirements but also develop towards mastery in inclusive instruction. Hence, CBT acts as a guide for teacher education institutions and policymakers in crafting practical, adaptive, and responsive programs to inclusive education objectives.

In this study, the specific aspects of teachers' competence explored are competence in noticing diversity, quality of learner interaction, and creating a stimulating learning environment.

Teachers' competence in inclusive classroom is multi-faceted in nature, that is, it encompasses perceptual skills like noticing and interpreting learner differences, interpersonal and pedagogical aptitudes such as interaction quality and scaffolding, and organizational/classroom design skills such as establishing stimulating and accessible environments. The idea of teacher noticing diverse learners has been examined in inclusive practices [28]. Skillful noticing allows a teacher to determine learners' varied needs, orientations and backgrounds, and participation levels, essential in nurturing equitable learning opportunities. Perceptive teachers to diversity are likely to make timely pedagogical decisions such as making adjustments in teaching, modifying learning materials, providing individualized support.

Reports have divulged that noticing diversity covers beyond acknowledging noticeable characteristics such as disabilities or language differences. It also involves comprehending learners' behavioral signs, emotional expressions, and social interactions that may hint primary learning or adjustment issues [29]. Report of [30] disclose that teachers in inclusive practices exhibit higher quality noticing which is characterized by more precise interpretations and adaptive responses than those with inadequate exposure. Professional development undertakings which include video-based reflection and collaborative lesson planning are deemed operative in enhancing teachers' skills in noticing[31]. Thus, noticing diversity is considered teachable and quantifiable skill that reinforces effective inclusive teaching practice.

The second key dimension of teacher competence in managing inclusive classrooms is the interaction quality between teachers and learners. High-quality interaction is characterized by reciprocated respect, constructive feedback, emotional support, and responsive communication [32]. Research notes that such interactions are important for fostering engagement, motivation, and academic achievement among learners with different abilities and circumstances. Moreover, teachers who demonstrate tough interpersonal and communication abilities can effectively support learning and promote inclusive classroom atmosphere where learners feel valued and supported [33].

Calandri further stresses the function of emotional skill in sustaining quality teaching, indicating that teachers' ability to control emotions and respond empathetically to learners' needs gives support to inclusive classroom management. In addendum, the school's social environment plays a pivotal role. Teachers working in schools with robust inclusion-embedded leadership and supportive cultures exhibit more adaptive interactional strategies [34]. These reviews propose that high-quality teacher-learner interaction does not only depend on individual skills but also shaped by institutional and contextual factors that promote inclusion.

Building a motivating and inclusive learning environment signifies a concrete expression of teachers' competence. This includes designing classroom spaces, teaching and learning materials, and learning experiences that cater to diverse learner profiles. Ramdas [35] transcribes that a motivating environment induces participation, curiosity, and independence among learners with differing learning needs. Utilizing Universal Design (UDL) principles provides various means of engagement, representation, and expression, and it has been acknowledged as an effective method to ensure availability and engagement for all learners [36].

Recent literatures highlight the significance of educators' adaptive knowledge in crafting flexible curricula and utilizing multimodal teaching strategies to maintain engagement among learners. Likewise, teachers' competence in handling physical space, technology, and social mechanisms displays a critical role in promoting inclusive involvement. Enhancing classroom design, incorporating assistive technologies, and using differentiated instruction strategies support an environment that motivates learning and inclusion [37]. Professional development that integrates hands-on application, mentoring, and collaboration is reported to improve teachers' abilities to establish such environments.

The Competency-Based Theory (CBT) is linked to the present study since it provides a wider understanding of teachers' competence in managing inclusive classrooms. By relating teachers' competence with CBT paradigm, this study analyzes and interprets teachers' competence in handling inclusive classrooms along noticing diversity, towards inclusive education specifically in terms of using inclusive instructions, quality of learner interaction, and creating a stimulating learning environment.

Vantieghem [38] developed and experimented an instrument crafted to measure teachers' competences for inclusive education among pre-service teachers. Their findings determined fundamental dimensions of competence which includes inclusive attitudes, differentiated instruction, classroom supervision, and collaboration with colleagues and families. The study emphasizes the significance of reliable tool in evaluating teachers' preparedness and even competence, recommending the development of targeted intervention for inclusive practices.

In the same way, Deniz and İliK[39] investigated the professional competence of teachers in inclusive practices through mixed methods that integrated interviews and surveys. The findings revealed that although teachers displayed positive attitude towards inclusion, they are also struggling with the implementation of adaptive teaching strategies and individualized assessment. The study further underscored the need for continuous training that increases teachers' ability to address learner diversity effectively, specifically in designing instructional adaptations and handling

classroom mechanisms. The findings also emphasized that competence in inclusive education stretches beyond positive beliefs. It needs concrete pedagogical skills based on inclusive values.

Another evidence from Llorent [40] showed that teachers' competence in inclusive practices is associated with social-emotional development. The study revealed that teachers who displayed higher levels of inclusive teaching practices like differentiated instruction, team collaboration, and emotional scaffold contributed to enhanced socio-emotional results among learners. Furthermore, it offered empirical evidence that teacher competence not only influences instructional quality but also promotes a more empathetic, emotionally safe classroom environment. The findings strengthen the idea that inclusive teaching competence is essential to both cognitive and affective learner development.

In the Philippines, Cañoso [41] investigated the relationship between and among teacher motivation, self-efficacy, and competence in inclusive classrooms through a descriptive-correlative method. The study revealed that teachers' professional development experiences, teaching exposure and confidence influences their skills in managing inclusive education environment. The study underscored the importance of maintained training programs and policy support that improves teachers' readiness to address diverse learning needs.

Furthermore, the **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** supports this study. This evidence-based educational framework, developed by Rose and Mayer encourages flexibility in teaching and learning to cater to varied learners. It works through three (3) basic principles – multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expression, and multiple means of engagement. What is emphasized in this principle is that curriculum should proactively erase learning barriers by expecting learner diversity rather than retroactively accommodating it.

Based on behavioral neuroscience, and inclusive education construct, UDL promotes accessibility and involvement for all learners, involving those with incapacities and other learning challenges. Previous studies confirm that UDL increases not only academic performance but also learners' motivation and involvement when implemented effectively. In inclusive classrooms, the UDL framework reinforces teachers in designing flexible learning environments that contemplate differences in learners' capabilities, inclinations, and cultural backgrounds, which promotes equitable learning opportunities.

Teachers' professional engagement serves a significant role in transforming UDL principles into classroom practice. Teachers who are engaged exhibit commitment to professional development, reflective teaching, and collaboration – together are necessary for inclusive practice effective implementation [42]. Professional development initiatives anchored on UDL principles have been revealed to increase teachers' capability to design adaptive lessons, incorporate assistive technologies, and use differentiated instructional techniques. This engagement promotes teachers' confidence and competence in responding to learners' diversity and upholding classroom environments.

Nonetheless, even though there is an increasing support for inclusive education, the extent to which teacher engagement in UDL implementation is concerned is still irregular. Studies reveal that inadequate training, insufficient support, and resource instability continue to hamper teachers' capacity to employ UDL habitually. This emphasizes the significance of analyzing how professional engagement impacts the implementation of inclusive practices and classroom management strategies.

In inclusive education, teachers' competence is important. Effective classroom management anchored on UDL concepts underscore proactive arrangement, positive behavior support, and the establishment of psychologically safe learning environment. Teachers who understand UDL constructs tend to be more equipped to expect behavioral challenges, employ preventive strategies, and encourage participation among diverse learners. In addition, UDL-anchored management

promotes independence, collaboration, and self-control among learners which are essential for inclusive learning environment.

Previous findings show that teachers' competence in handling inclusive classrooms strongly correlates with their comprehension and application of UDL concepts. Teachers who are involved in UDL-targeted professional development exhibited greater flexibility in handling learners' behavior and promoting engagement within ability levels. Likewise, continuous professional learning significantly increases teachers' competence to incorporate UDL principles that decrease behavioral and instructional challenges.

The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is linked to this study since its principles are to be applied in analyzing teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms.

Additionally, the **Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)** of Albert Bandura supports this study. This theory explains how individuals acquire and sustain behaviors while also bearing the social climate in which learning happens. SCT underscores that learning is an active and mutual interaction among personal factors, behavioral factors, and behavioral factors, a construct known as reciprocal determinism. This construct suggests that an individual is both a product and a producer of his/her environment, able to influence his/her own motivation and action through cognitive phases like attention, retention, reproduction and motivation.

Essential to SCT is the concept of self-efficacy which is explained as an individual's belief in their ability to carry out behaviors significant to create performance success. It is posited that self-efficacy influences peoples' choices, effort, persistence, and affective responses. In teaching, self-efficacy represents teachers' confidence in their ability to plan, establish, and implement activities that reinforce learning, handle classroom behavior, and respond to learners' varied needs. In inclusive classrooms, teachers' self-efficacy is an important factor inducing teachers' competence and engagement in handling diverse learners.

SCT also underscores observational learning or modeling through which individuals learn by perceiving others' behaviors and the results of those behaviors. In the case of the teachers, professional modeling happens when they observe workmates, mentors, or school leaders effectively handling inclusive environments. This unconscious experiences support teachers' self-efficacy and transform their teaching and management strategies. Besides, Social Cognitive Theory stresses out self-regulation which includes setting of goals, self-monitoring, self-assessment, and self-reflection. These mechanisms enable teachers to maintain professional engagement and enhance their competence.

The application of SCT to the study offers a significant framework for examining teachers develop professional engagement and competence in inclusive learning environments. Personal beliefs (e.g., self-efficacy), environmental supports (e.g., leadership and peer collaboration), and observable behaviors (teaching and management strategies) interact mutually. In inclusive context, teachers' belief in their competence to supervise varied learners is transformed not only by their experiences, but also by their professional surroundings and interactions with colleagues.

Teachers who have strong self-efficacy are likely to demonstrate higher professional engagement marked by vigor, dedication, and absorption [43]. They tend to employ inclusive teaching practices, become resilient in facing obstacles, and find professional learning opportunities. In contrast, teachers with low self-efficacy may lead to evading behaviors, decreased motivation, and difficulties handling diverse learners. Hence, SCT gives a clear perspective for examining how efficacy beliefs impacts teachers' competence and engagement in inclusive settings.

Furthermore, environment supports (e.g., administrative leadership, professional collaboration, and access to resources) play as an essential factors of teachers' perceived competence and engagement.

Previous studies have exhibited that schools which support team learning and shared practices have stronger collective efficacy and more constant inclusive practices. Similarly, collective efficacy has been shown to predict effective inclusive teaching at the school level. These results coincide with Bandura's concept that both individual and collective efficacy beliefs are essential factors of human activity.

Additionally, self-regulatory processes underscored by SCT are essential for maintaining teacher engagement. Teachers actively possessing professional goal setting, reflecting on their teaching, and adjusting their strategies exhibit higher resilience and dedication in supervising diverse classrooms. Teachers transform their knowledge and beliefs into maintained, adaptive practices that benefit all learners, particularly those with special educational needs through self-regulation.

Recent findings confirm the significance of SCT in comprehending teachers' professional behavior in inclusive education. One of which concluded that teachers with higher self-efficacy tend to use inclusive teaching techniques and participate actively in professional learning. Similarly, teachers' emotional competence, collaboration, and self-efficacy determine effective inclusion practices. Moreover, teacher competence and engagement in inclusive settings rely on efficacy-creation experiences like mentoring, collaborative inquiry and peer modeling.

Another findings revealed that professional learning communities and mentoring enhance teaching by giving teachers with avenues for observation and reflection, supporting STC's importance on learning and self-control. Likewise, collective teacher efficacy strongly determines school-wide implementation of inclusive practices, stressing the dynamics between individual beliefs and social structures explained in Bandura's theory.

The Social Cognitive Theory is linked to this previous study since it provides a theoretical basis for analyzing teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing classrooms.

Legal framework also support the study such as the **Republic Act No. 11650**, also known as *Inclusive Education Act*. This was signed into law on March 11, 2022 with the goal of promoting the right of learners' with disabilities to accessible, quality, and equitable education. It institutionalizes inclusive education in the Philippines by making sure that no learner is denied admittance to any public or private educational institutions because of disability (RA No. 11650, 2022). It directs the creation of inclusive learning resource centers in all municipalities and cities to assist support centers for learners with disabilities, their families, and teachers. The said centers are created to provide assistive devices, individualized learning materials, and professional support services such as therapies and assessments. Because of this legislation, the government upholds its commitment to creating a learning environment responsive to the varied needs of learners aligning with the global demand for educational inclusivity framed in the United Nations on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Sustainable Development Goal 4 which pertains to quality education.

Another legal basis that anchors the study is **Republic Act No. 7277** as amended by **RA 9442**, better known as the "*Magna Carta for Persons with Disability*," was signed into law in 1992 to maintain the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the Philippines. It helps as one of the foundational legal agenda for inclusive education in the country. The act asserts that persons with disabilities have the right to education, employment, health, and social services without judgement. Particularly, it orders that the country must be responsible in giving access to quality education and adequate chances for learners with disabilities, guaranteeing that they can improve their skills and contribute fully in society (RA 7277, 1992). This law aligns with the international promotion for inclusive and rightful education as specified in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and Sustainable Development Goal 4, which promote the inclusion of all learners despite ability or background.

In the context of education, RA 7277 directs both public and private schools to cater to learners with disabilities in the conventional school system. It underscores the utilization of inclusive and

adaptive teaching approaches, available amenities, and modified instructional provision to address diverse learning needs. The legislation also zeroes on the importance of teacher training and curriculum revision to make learning more approachable to learners with disabilities. It directs the Department of Education (DepEd) to devise and implement special education (SPED) agenda and services created to promote the full potential of learners with disabilities. Hence, RA 7277 creates the legal and ethical responsibility of educators and educational institutions to deliver inclusive learning opportunities that ascertain equality and involvement for all learners.

Moreover, another legal framework that anchors this study is **the Republic Act 10533** also known as the **“Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013**. This legislation was considered a milestone that restructured the national education system by implementing the K to 12 Basic Education Program. The law underscores the learner-centered, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate curriculum that accommodates diverse learners’ needs and reinforces lifelong learner (RA 10533, 2013).

The guiding principle of this legislation is alluded on the vision that every Filipino has the right to quality, equitable, culture-based, and complete based education. This principle acknowledges learner diversity and directly upholds inclusive education, making sure that learners coming from the marginalized groups and with disabilities are given proper support and learning opportunities (DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019). Hence, the laws not only re-explains curriculum and instruction but also supports teachers’ professional responsibility in delivering inclusive and differentiated learning efforts.

Republic Act 10533 stresses out on teacher quality and professional development as basic enablers of educational improvement. It is stipulated in the section 7 of this act that teachers must go through continuing professional education and trainings in consonance with the K to 12 curriculum and its inclusive and learner-focused principles. It directs the Department of Education to encourage teachers education programs that are responsive to current pedagogical and inclusive practices (RA No. 10533, s. 2013).

Applying to the context of inclusive education, this provision stresses out the need for educators to exhibit competence in responding to learners; diverse needs, including those with learning challenges, disabilities, and cultural differences. Scholars note that effective inclusion relies on teachers’ competence to adjust instruction, utilize differentiated strategies, and promotes supportive classroom environments [44]. This coincides with the law’s requirement that the curriculum shall be inclusive and responsive to the local needs, emphasizing teachers’ essential function in making sure that there is equity and accessibility in education in the Philippines.

Besides, the law acknowledges the significance of teacher engagement not just as a compliance with the rule, but as an active commitment to teaching, ongoing learning, and innovation. Findings note that when teachers are engaged professionally, they tend to engage in continuing professional development, cooperate with peers, and utilize inclusive teaching strategies. Hence, based on RA 10533, professional engagement serves both as a requisite and a tool for attaining quality and inclusive education.

Ultimately, **DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009** also known as the **“Inclusive Education as Strategy for Increasing Participation Rate of Children,”** supports the study which functions as a pivotal theoretical construct for examining teachers’ professional development engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms. This directive builds the framework for inclusive education in the Philippines, underscoring Department of Education’s commitment in ensuring that all learners irrespective of physical, intellectual, socio-economic, language, and cultural differences obtain quality education within the conventional classroom context. The order further states that inclusion is both a strategy and moral obligation, focusing the vital teachers’ role as a fundamental implementers of inclusive practices[45].

The policy emphasizes that the realization of inclusive education general relies on the teachers' preparedness and professional competence. It directs for the continuous capacity building and professional development of teachers to prepare them with necessary pedagogical skills, attitudes, and values essential to accommodate diverse learners. The order mandates the integration of inclusive education beliefs into teacher education and in-service training programs, acknowledging that teachers' engagement in continuous professional development improves their competence in addressing learners' differing needs.

Ideally, this order matches with human rights-based approach to education, which believes that inclusion is a process of responding to diversity by increasing participation and decreasing exclusion in the classroom. It strengthens the concept that professional development engagement is not solely an administrative requisite but a dynamic process of learning, reflection, and adaptation that enables teachers to handle inclusive classroom efficiently. By engaging in training, collaboration, and reflective practice, teachers develop the competence to differentiate lessons, adapt curricula, and use flexible learning assessments for all learners.

In addition, DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009 positions inclusive education within the wider objective of Education for All (EFA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[46]. Both of these support equitable access to quality education. This alignment emphasizes that teachers' professional development is necessary to attaining educational equity and inclusion. Hence, the directive offers a theoretical basis for seeing professional development as fundamental factor that reinforces teachers' competence, confidence, and commitment to inclusive education efforts.

RA 11650, RA 7277, RA 10533 and DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009 are relevant to the current study since it provides policy framework for inclusive education, but the success of its implementation relies on teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms which are critical in converting policy into meaningful inclusive practices.

Gal [47] in their study highlighted the critical role of professional engagement in shaping teachers' competence and attitude towards inclusive practices. After examining the core factors influencing teachers' readiness to embed learners with special needs in conventional classrooms, the study revealed that teachers' self-efficacy, pedagogical knowledge, and access to institutional scaffold are significant predictors of their attitudes and effectiveness in inclusive environment. The study stresses that continuous professional development improves teachers' confidence, consciousness, and ability to adapt teaching approaches to meet the varied needs of learners.

In a similar way, Abrenica and Cascolan [48] investigated the effects of action research as a model for teacher professional learning in inclusive practices. The study divulged that when teachers are actively engaged in practitioner-led research, they become more reflective and cooperative in addressing instructional challenges related to inclusion. As a professional development initiative, action research enables teachers to gain insights into differentiation and become empowered to explore classroom strategies that respond to learners' diverse abilities and needs. Their study, supports that professional development based on reflective practice fosters continuous improvement and reinforces teachers' competence in managing inclusive classrooms.

Supporting these findings, explored a professional development program based on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and found that the program significantly improves teachers' competence to establish accessible, learner-centered environments. The study underscored that regular exposure to UDL-based training empowers teachers to design flexible lessons and assessments fit for all learners, counting those with disabilities.

Together, the Experiential Learning Theory, Competency-Based Theory, RA 11650, RA 7277, RA 10533, and DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009 along with the corresponding related literature and studies are appropriate models and construct in understanding the teachers' professional development engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms.

## THE PROBLEM

### Statement of the Problem

This study examined teachers' demographic profile, professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms among basic education teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School during the school year 2025-2026 as basis for an action plan.

Specifically, it answered the following questions:

#### 1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents as to:

- 1.1.1. number of years of teaching experience;
- 1.1.2. number of learners handled in a class; and
- 1.1.3. number of inclusive education seminars or trainings attended?

#### 2. As perceived by the respondents, what is their professional engagement level in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of:

- 2.1. personalized instruction strategies;
- 2.2. communicative scaffolding strategies; and
- 2.3. collaboration strategies; and
- 2.4. assessment strategies?

#### 3. As perceived by the respondents, what is their competence level in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of:

- 3.1. noticing diversity;
- 3.2. quality of learner interaction; and
- 3.3. creating a stimulating learning environment?

#### 4. Are there significant relationships between:

- 4.1. respondents' demographic profile in terms of number of years of teaching experience and professional engagement level;
- 4.2. respondents' demographic profile in terms of number of learners handled in a class and professional engagement level;
- 4.3. respondents' demographic profile in terms of number of inclusive education seminars or trainings attended and professional engagement level;
- 4.4. respondents' demographic profile in terms of number of years of teaching experience and competence level;
- 4.5. respondents' demographic profile in terms of number of learners handled in a class and competence level;
- 4.6. respondents' demographic profile in terms of number of inclusive education seminars or trainings attended and competence level; and
- 4.7. respondents' professional engagement level and competence level?

#### 5. Based on the findings, what action plan can be made?

### Statement of Null Hypotheses

After coming up with the problem, this study was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

There is no significant relationship between respondents':

**HO1:** demographic profile in terms of number of years of teaching experience and professional engagement;

**HO2:** demographic profile in terms of number of learners handled in a class and professional engagement;

**HO3:** demographic profile in terms of number of number of inclusive education seminars or trainings attended and professional engagement;

**HO4:** demographic profile in terms of number of number of years of teaching experience and competence;

**HO5:** demographic profile in terms of number of number of learners handled in a class and competence;

**HO6:** demographic profile in terms of number of number of inclusive education seminars or trainings attended and competence;

**HO7:** professional engagement and competence?

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study were thought to be useful to those in the schools or who were concerned about the implementation of inclusive education and the needs of learners with special education needs in the following ways:

**Department of Education.** The findings of this study can offer scientific evidence that can direct the development and enhancement of educational laws and policies and professional development initiatives to reinforce inclusive education throughout the country.

**School Administrators.** The outcome of this study can be a tool for informed decision making, allowing them to apportion resources, implement support system, and highlight trainings and seminars that directly address teachers' needs in dealing with inclusive practices.

**Teachers.** The results of the study will focus on general inclusive education teachers' strengths and areas for growth along engagement and competence, enabling them to discern on their professional practice and encouraging them to continuously seek learning opportunities to enhance inclusive teaching practices.

**Parents.** The findings of the study will help parents understand the very nature of inclusive education which their children are recipients of. These will also enable them to better support their children at home and engage more actively with teachers to achieve better learning outcomes.

**Learners with Special Education Needs (LSENs).** The findings of the study benefit them by ensuring that their teachers are highly prepared and more confident to provide equitable, supportive, and adaptive learning experiences that promote academic and professional enhancement.

**Researcher.** The results of the study will extend professional understanding of inclusive education, contribute to academic and professional development, and accomplish the requirements of the graduate program while providing significant contribution to the field of special education.

**Future Researchers.** The study may serve as a reference and groundwork for future inquiry, offering both theoretical and practical orientations for analyzing inclusive education in other contexts or outspreading the scope to other relevant variables.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This part of the study presented the research design, the flow of the research study, the research environment, the research respondents, the research instrument used, data gathering procedure, the statistical treatment, and the scoring procedure.

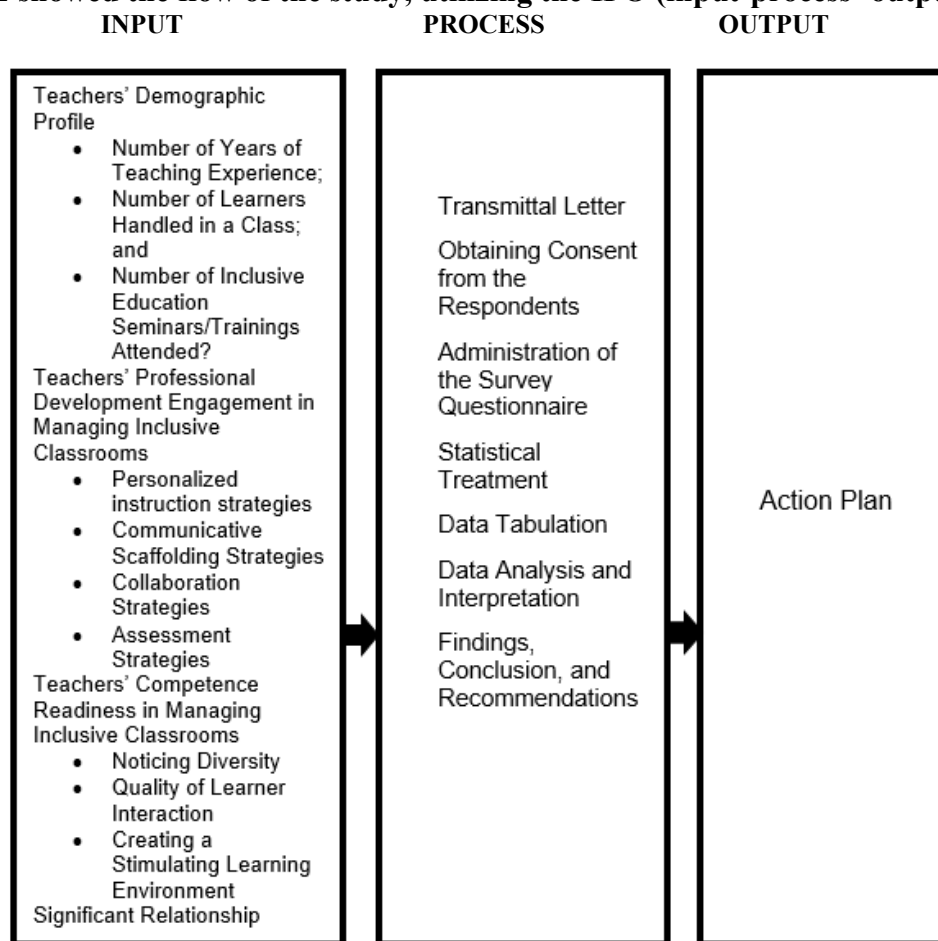
#### **Design**

This research employed the descriptive-correlational design to describe the teachers' demographic

profile, professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms, and determine the relationship between these variables. The descriptive component of the study allowed to explore the following: teachers' demographic profile in terms of number of years of teaching, number of learners in a class, and number of inclusive trainings/seminars attended; level of professional development engagement in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of personalized instruction strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, and collaboration and assessment strategies; and level of competence in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of noticing diversity, quality of learner interaction, and creating a stimulating learning environment [49], while the correlational aspect of the study enables to investigate the relationship between teachers' demographic profile, professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms [50].

### Flow of the Study

Figure 2 showed the flow of the study, utilizing the IPO (input-process- output) model.



**Figure 2.** Flow of the Study.

The Input phase included determining respondents' demographic profile as to years of teaching experience, number of learners handled in a class, and number of inclusive education seminars/trainings attended, assessing teachers' professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms along personalized instruction strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, collaboration strategies, and assessment strategies, competence in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of noticing diversity, quality of learner interaction, and creating a stimulating learning environment, as well as the significant relationship between these variables.

The Process phase of the study involved transmittal letter, obtaining consent from respondents, administration of the survey questionnaire, statistical treatment of data, data tabulation, presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data, findings, conclusion, and recommendation.

The Output phase of the study which was the development of an action plan served as a practical and strategic guide for strengthening inclusive classroom implementation in the school. It was crafted anchored on the findings of the study as to teacher's demographic profile, professional engagement, and competence in managing inclusive classrooms.

## Environment

The study was conducted at Tabunoc Central Elementary School located in Tabunok, Talisay City which is a component city of Cebu, Philippines. This school implements basic curriculum and inclusive education policies as what the Department of Education mandates. Moreover, it has special education center that caters to learners with special educational needs. The schools being considered as child-friendly, caters to diverse learners of varied socio-economic characteristics and learning needs, including those who are identified as learners with special educational needs. The school classifies learners into their learning styles such as the linguistic learners, bodily-kinesthetic learners, logical-mathematical learners, and spatial learners. Each adviser/teacher has learning profile copies of the learners for him/her to easily provide appropriate learning and assessment activities.



**Figure 2.** Location Map of the Research Environment.

This institution has been an advocate of differentiation which is a component of inclusive education practices. The administrators continue to encourage teachers in this school to engage in professional development opportunities relative to the implementation of inclusive education strategies. Hence, this depiction paved way for this research to assess teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms. For this study, data gathering, specifically assessing teachers' professional engagement and competence, took place on the aforementioned school with permission from the superintendent and school head. All participants gave their informed consent, and were assured that data obtained from them will be kept with utmost confidentiality.

Carrying out the study in this environment will offer significant insights into the current situation of inclusive education practices and the aspects influencing teachers' perceived professional engagement and competence to address the diverse educational needs of learners.

## Respondents

The teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School, during the school year 2025-2026 served as

the respondents of the study. These teachers were selected due to their accommodation of diverse learners in their learning environment. The school is currently supervised not just by teachers but also school administrator and non-teaching personnel who are considered to have a vital role in the implementation of inclusive education practices.

However, ethical concerns were considered in the study such as no forcing of teachers to become respondents of the study. Thus, Table 1 provides the distribution of respondents who willingly offer their time and effort to give their responses to the given survey questionnaire.

The purposive sampling method was used. It is a sampling method whereby a researcher intentionally selects respondents based on a specified characteristics relative to the research problem [51]. Also being called as “judgmental sampling,” this depends on the researcher’s judgment to select respondents who can provide information on the scope of the study. The sampling method is cost-effective and easy to use. In this study, respondents were chosen because of their engagement in inclusive teaching practices in their respective classrooms.

**Table 1.** Distribution of Respondents.

| <b>n = 30</b>   |                  |                   |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Teachers</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| Male            | 2                | 6.67              |
| Female          | 28               | 93.33             |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>30</b>        | <b>100.00</b>     |

## Instrument

The instrument used in the study was a survey questionnaire which contained three (3) parts. The first part asked the respondents’ profile, the second part let the respondents assess their professional engagement level in managing inclusive classrooms, and the third part enabled respondents to assess their perceived competence in managing inclusive

The first part of the instrument asked for the profile of the respondents such as name, age, sex, number of years of teaching, total number of learners in the class, and number of inclusive education seminars/trainings attended.

The second part of the instrument let the respondents assess their professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms through a survey questionnaire using 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1-Highly Engaged, 2-Engaged, 3-Less Engaged, and 4-Least Engaged, adopted from the study of Sharma [52] titled, “*Measuring the use of inclusive practices among pre-service educators: A multi-national study.*” The respondents rated themselves as to their professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of personalized instruction strategies (8 indicators), communicative scaffolding strategies (10 indicators), collaboration strategies (4 indicators), and assessment strategies (8 indicators).

The third part of the instrument let the respondents assess their perceived competence in managing inclusive classrooms through a questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1-Beginning, 2-Developing, 3-Proficient, 4-Highly Proficient, and 5-Distinguished, adopted from the study of Vantieghem titled “*Education for all in action: Measuring Teachers’ Competences for Inclusive Education.*” The respondents rated their perceived competence in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of the different dimensions: noticing diversity (6 indicators), quality of learner interaction (8 indicators), and creating a stimulating learning environment (13 indicators).

## Data Gathering Procedures

Careful and ethical procedures were followed during the conduct of this research:

- **Pre-Data Gathering Stage.** The pre-data gathering phase included writing a letter to the school heads, requesting permission to conduct the study. After obtaining the school heads' approval, another transmittal letter was sent to the teachers, requesting their full cooperation in the study. Teachers were not forced to participate in the study.
- **Data Gathering Stage.** In the data gathering phase, teachers were asked to answer the survey questionnaire examining their professional development engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms. The survey questionnaire was adopted from other published studies.
- **Post Data Gathering Stage.** In the post data gathering phase, all data were collected, collated and tabulated for analysis and interpretation. The findings of the study became the basis for the formulation of the conclusions and recommendations, and eventually, the action plan.

## Statistical Treatment of Data

Selection of statistical methods was carefully done in order to arrive valid results and interpretations. The frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's  $r$  were the statistical tools used in this study.

- **Frequency Count and Percentage.** This was used to summarize the respondents' demographic profile
- **Weighted Mean and Standard Deviation.** These tools were used to describe their professional development, and competence in managing inclusive classrooms.
- **Multiple Regression Analysis and Pearson's  $r$ .** This was utilized to test the relationship between respondents' demographic profile, professional engagement level, and competence level in managing inclusive classrooms.

## Scoring Procedure

To quantify and interpret the responses of teachers based on the research instrument employed, the scoring procedure outlined the systematic process being undertaken. Each item in the questionnaire is rated using a Likert scale assessing teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms. The obtained scores from the respondents were tabulated, computed, and classified as to the predetermined ranges to identify their corresponding levels of readiness and self-efficacy. This procedure assured objectivity, consistency, and accuracy in analyzing the data. Moreover, descriptive rating of the numerical data gathered is important in order to have clear interpretations. The teachers' professional development engagement and competence levels were given appropriate descriptions.

### For Professional Engagement

| Scale | Numerical Rating | Descriptive Rating    | Verbal Interpretation                                                                 |
|-------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4     | 3.25 – 4.00      | <b>Highly Engaged</b> | Teachers are highly engaged in professional efforts in managing inclusive classrooms. |
| 3     | 2.50 – 3.24      | <b>Engaged</b>        | Teachers are engaged in professional efforts in managing inclusive classrooms.        |
| 2     | 1.75 – 2.49      | <b>Less Engaged</b>   | Teachers are less engaged in professional efforts in managing inclusive classrooms.   |
| 1     | 1.00 – 1.74      | <b>Least Engaged</b>  | Teachers are least engaged in professional efforts in managing inclusive classrooms.  |

### For Competence

| Scale | Numerical Rating | Descriptive Rating       | Verbal Interpretation                                                                              |
|-------|------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5     | 4.21 – 5.00      | <b>Distinguished</b>     | The teachers display exemplary mastery and leadership competence in managing inclusive classrooms. |
| 4     | 3.41 – 4.20      | <b>Highly Proficient</b> | The teachers display advanced competence in managing inclusive classrooms.                         |
| 3     | 2.61 – 3.40      | <b>Proficient</b>        | The teachers display consistent competence in managing inclusive classrooms.                       |
| 2     | 1.81 – 2.60      | <b>Developing</b>        | The teachers display growing competence in managing inclusive classrooms.                          |
| 1     | 1.00 – 1.80      | <b>Beginning</b>         | The teachers display limited competence in managing inclusive classrooms.                          |

### DEFINITION OF TERMS

For better understanding, the words used in the study were defined operationally. The operational definitions gave specific meanings of each construct within the context of teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms.

**Action Plan.** This refers to a structured plan created based on the findings of the study with the goal of enhancing teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms.

**Assessment Strategies.** This dimension under professional engagement comprises adjusting testing strategies for varied needs, employing diverse methods to trace progress, handling classroom behavior positively, and adjusting instruction to match each learner's individual strength.

**Collaboration Strategies.** This professional engagement strategies refers to collaborating with other teachers or colleagues and learners' families to support learning among different learners

**Communicative Scaffolding Strategies.** This domain under professional development pertains to engagement in providing instructional support and interactional strategies that teachers use in facilitating understanding and engagement among learners with diverse abilities.

**Competence.** This variable refers to the teachers' perceived demonstrated knowledge, abilities, and skills in effectively handling inclusive classrooms.

**Creating a Stimulating Learning Environment.** This dimension under competence pertains to teachers' capability to create a learning atmosphere that encourages, engages, and supports varied learners.

**Demographic Profile.** This refers to the teachers' profile in terms of the number of years of teaching, number of learners in a class, and number of inclusive trainings/seminars attended.

**Inclusive Education.** This concept refers to the educational approach and undertakings in which learning institutions provide equal learning avenues to all learners irrespective of their physical, social, intellectual, emotional, and cultural variances.

**Inclusive Education Teacher.** This refers to the professional teacher in learning institution who manages learning in the classrooms that cater to learners with varied abilities, orientations/backgrounds, and learning needs.

**Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEs).** This pertains to the learners enrolled in any educational institutions who need supplementary support, accommodations, and interventions to attain maximum learning outcomes because of physical, behavioral, intellectual, sensory, emotional, or communication infirmities.

**Noticing Diversity.** This dimension of competence pertains to the teachers' ability to recognize, understand, and value learners' individual difference in ability, background, language, and learning style.

**Personalized Instruction Strategies.** This dimension under professional development engagement refers to the teachers' engagement in practices tailoring instruction to meet individual learning needs, and capabilities of diverse learners.

**Professional Engagement.** This pertains to the level to which teachers actively and deliberately engage in professional efforts that enhance their skills, knowledge, and practices related to managing inclusive classroom.

**Quality of Learner Interaction.** This domain under competence refers to the effectiveness and inclusivity of teachers' interactions and relationships with learners.

## **Chapter 2: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

To answer the five sub-problems raised in the research gathered through the statistical treatment, this chapter presented, analyzed, and interpreted the data gathered. This examined the dynamics of teachers' demographic profile, professional engagement, and competence in managing inclusive classrooms.

### **DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Exhibited in this section was the distribution of numerical data as to teachers' demographic profile in terms of number of years of teaching experience, number of learners handled in a class, and number of inclusive seminars/trainings attended.

#### **Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Number of Years of Teaching Experience**

This part displayed the data on the teachers' demographic profile in terms of number of years of teaching experience. This was vital in the study since it served as a substitute for pedagogical wisdom which can be gained through time being spent inside the classrooms.

**Table 2.** Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Number of Years of Teaching Experience.

| <b>Number of Years of Teaching Experience</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 0 – 3 Years                                   | 6                | 20.00             |
| 4 – 10 Years                                  | 8                | 26.67             |
| More than 10 Years                            | 16               | 53.33             |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>30</b>        | <b>100.00</b>     |

Shown in Table 2 was the distribution of teachers' number of years of teaching experience. It can be gleaned from the table that 6 or 20.00% of the respondents had 0-3 years, indicating that few teachers were in the beginning of their teaching career. Then, eight (8) or 26.67% of them, had a 4-10-year teaching experience, denoting that the school supervised teachers with strong teaching experience. Moreover, majority of the respondents, or 16 (53.33%) dominated the school with more than 10 years of experience, signifying that the school was occupied by teachers with very strong teaching experience, and could be considered as seasoned or veterans.

The findings displayed that teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School were highly experienced based on the dominance of teachers who had been teaching for more than 10 years, reflecting school's good retention practices, stable workforce, and hiring procedures. The small portion of the beginning teachers may indicate that the school had no need to hire more teachers.

It was shown in the findings that highly experienced teachers exhibited strong advantages in terms of teaching competence especially in managing diverse learners and inclusive classrooms. Several research have been conducted that teachers who have longer teaching experience possess deep understanding of diversity among learners, and improved competence to adapt to instructional strategies to respond to learners' needs even those having special educational needs. The teaching experience as revealed in the findings indicated that teachers were possibly strongly acquainted with school policies and aspirations which positively contributed to the inclusive education practices. Even though experience is an advantage, literature warns that without regular exposure to current policies, discoveries, innovations, and reforms, experienced teachers may become outdated in terms of new or innovative pedagogical dynamics. Thus, professional development is essential to address teachers' different needs regardless of the length of their teaching experience.

Few implications articulated that highly experienced teachers can be an avenue for strengthening mentorship activities in school. Seasoned teachers can be instructional leaders and mentors to beginning teachers who can reinforce collaboration culture and participatory expertise. Then, there was a need for different professional development initiatives targeted on honing advanced skills since teachers already passed their beginning teaching years. Lastly, the small percentage of teachers in the beginning stage necessitates for school leaders to encourage and support them by guiding and helping them adjust to teaching reforms especially in the public school setting whereby change is always existing.

Recent findings supported the pivotal role of teaching experience for effective implementation of inclusive practices in the classroom. Zulkarnain [53] underscored that teaching effectiveness significantly enhances as experience progresses as well. More experienced teachers become competent in classroom management, teaching delivery, and responding to diverse learners' needs. Likewise, Munna and Kalam [54] explained that in their review that teachers can continue to improve their effectiveness throughout their careers, particularly when they are in a supportive and collaborative context. Booth[55] discovered that teachers' professional enhancement needs vary according to their career phases with seasoned teachers partaking mentoring roles and offering assistance to school-wide professional development. It also stressed the need for continuous learning both for novice and seasoned teachers.

### **Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Number of Learners Handled in a Class**

This part displayed the data on the teachers' demographic profile as to the number of learners handled in a class. This was pivotal in the study since it revealed teachers' pressure in managing inclusive classrooms.

**Table 3.** Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Number of Learners Handled in a Class.

| <b>Number of Learners in a Class</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1 - 10                               | 0                | 0.00              |
| 11 – 20                              | 1                | 3.33              |
| 21 – 30                              | 3                | 10.00             |
| 31 – 40                              | 18               | 60.00             |
| 41 - 50                              | 5                | 16.67             |
| 51 - 60                              | 3                | 10.00             |

|              |           |               |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>30</b> | <b>100.00</b> |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|

Shown in Table 3 was teachers' demographic profile in terms of the number of learners handled in a class. It can be gleaned from the table that majority of the teacher-respondents (18 or 60.00%) were handling 31-40 learners. Other notable portions which were 5 or 16.67% and 3 or 10.00% were teaching larger classes of 41-50 and 51-60 respectively. Three teachers (10.00%) reported to teach 21-30 learners and one (3.33%) responded to have even smaller size of 11-20. No respondent handled a class of 1-10 learners. Collectively, it can be noted that most of the teachers supervised classrooms with more than 30 learners, suggesting that it is normal in the public Philippine schools to accommodate larger number of learners.

Collectively, teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School were leaning towards handling larger classes in which majority belonged in the 31-40 range. This indicated that with the given class size, it was more difficult to carry out individualized instruction. This large size may overwhelm teachers' mental, emotional, and instructional performance which can influence professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms.

The results indicated that teachers encountered regular challenges in terms of the practical application of inclusive practices in the classrooms. An inclusive learning environment necessitates differentiated learning activities, continuous formative assessment, behavioral support, and adaptive grouping techniques, and a large class size may decrease teachers' opportunity to give individualized support to diverse learning needs, and learners with disabilities.

The findings gave implications to higher authorities to provide additional staff such as co-teachers or teaching aids especially if a classroom has more learners with special educational needs. This enables main teachers to design more individualized learning activities intended for learners with specific needs. This additionally implies that learners with special needs should be distributed fairly across sections so that a teacher will not be burdened by making too many individualized learning activities and assessments. Professional development for teachers must also focus on time management and equipping themselves with supplementary higher skills to manage large number of learners in a class. Moreover, the need to revisit resource distribution is pivotal to make sure that classrooms are not burdened by a big number of enrollees.

These findings coincided with some studies. First, smaller class sizes can result in improved learning and socioemotional outcomes, especially for learners with specific needs because of increased teacher-learner contact or interaction [56]. Next, it was emphasized that with smaller class sizes, teachers enhanced their teaching competence to implement differentiated instructions which is a significant component of inclusive practice. Then, Gqwabaza[57] concluded that substantial demands which included overpopulated classes decreased teachers' engagement and probability to maintain high-quality teaching practices in inclusive environment.

#### **Demographic Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Number of Inclusive Education Seminars or Trainings Attended**

This part displayed the data on the teachers' demographic profile in terms of the number of inclusive education seminars or trainings attended. This was essential in the study since it identified teachers' strength in professional development efforts to effectively implement inclusive practices in the classrooms.

**Table 4.** Demographic Profile of the Respondents in Terms of the Number of Inclusive Education Seminars or Trainings Attended.

| <b>Number of Inclusive Education</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|

| <b>Seminars or Trainings Attended</b> |           |               |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| 0 – 3                                 | 0         | 0.00          |
| 4 – 10                                | 10        | 33.33         |
| More than 10                          | 20        | 66.67         |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>30</b> | <b>100.00</b> |

Table 4 displayed the number of inclusive seminars or trainings attended by the teacher-respondents. It can be gleaned from the table that majority of the teachers, 20 or 66.67% of them had more than 10 inclusive seminar or trainings attended, which signified that most of the teachers in the school were consistently exposed to seminars and trainings on inclusive education. This high exposure to professional development was justifiable, especially that the school had special education center which catered to learners with special educational needs. Along with special education teachers, regular education teachers were also given chances to be exposed to professional enhancements related to inclusive practices. Following were 10 teachers (33.33%) with 4-10 inclusive trainings or seminars attended, denoting that some of them were still in the mid years of their teaching career, and were or will be continuously attending inclusive seminars and trainings. No reported respondents to have attended 0-3 seminars or trainings.

The data divulged that teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School had a strong seminar or training engagement in inclusive education, inferring that professional development was one of the most priorities in the teaching job. This also suggested that teachers had been continuously implementing inclusive practices in their respective classrooms. However, even though teachers had strong engagement in inclusive seminars and trainings, there was still a need to further enhance this professional development attendance since the learners' needs are also evolving each time, and trends in education keep on emerging as well. Thus, teachers need to be equipped with more advanced training in order to effectively implement inclusive practices in the classroom.

Deducing the results, the high engagement in inclusive seminars and trainings indicated that there was a strong priority on teachers' professional development since teachers were expected to have a wide array of pedagogical, socioemotional, and behavioral skills in the implementation of inclusive practices. The presence of sufficient training may result in teachers' confidence to carryout empirical inclusive approaches, supervise behavioral difficulties, or design individualized instruction, and in contrast, limited professional development opportunities for teachers pose a problem in becoming skilled in inclusive practices.

The implication conveyed that schools and higher educational authorities should reinforce and institutionalize professional development undertakings targeted on inclusive practices. It will be beneficial for teachers to expose them to professional development undertakings in order to prepare them with abilities necessary in managing inclusive classrooms, which in turn can give benefits to diverse learners and institutional performance. Moreover, professional development must not be limited to irregular in-service trainings but should also involve mentoring, coaching, professional learning networks, and follow-ups to make sure that teachers can transform learning into application. The results noted the critical role of teachers' engagement in professional development to enhance educational equity whereby learners, including those who have disabilities or specific needs obtain due support.

The findings supported recent studies that training sufficiency is one of the advantages to successful inclusive education implementation. For instance, Donath [58] underscored that the attitude and competence of the teachers in inclusive practices are significantly associated with the degree and quality of the received professional development. Similarly, stressed that teachers' professional engagement and efficacy decrease when big demands such as managing inclusive classrooms does not correspond to sufficient training and school support. Moreover, Karaki [59] reported that

teachers' readiness or inclusive teaching develops through continuous professional development and not sporadic.

### Summary of Demographic Profile of the Respondents

This part exhibited the summary of teachers' demographic profile in terms of number of years of teaching experience, number of learners in a class, and number of inclusive seminars or trainings attended using the modal values.

**Table 5.** Summary of Demographic Profile of the Respondents.

| <b>Teachers' Demographic Profile</b>               | <b>Mode</b>  |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Number of Years of Teaching Experience             | More than 10 |
| Number of Learners in a Class                      | 31-40        |
| Number of Inclusive Seminars or Trainings Attended | More than 10 |

The summary of the prevalent demographic descriptions of the teachers through modes was shown in Table 5. The results exhibited that the usual teacher-respondent had teaching experience of more than 10 years, had 31-40 learners in a class, and had attended more than 10 seminars or trainings related to inclusive education. This collective profile creates a vivid scene of teachers implementing inclusive education practices in the professional context.

More than 10 years of experience in teaching suggested that most of the respondents were in the experienced phase of their career. Generally at this stage, teachers acquire strong competence and professional adjustment, but they may still be elevating this level into advanced in terms of inclusive teaching. Melzak [60] reported that teachers in their experienced career stage are highly driven and engaged, but still require advanced professional enhancement to fortify specialized skills. In this stage, they may also do mentoring and coaching support to neophytes or those who have less experience in inclusive teaching.

Moreover, the 31-40 common class size mirrored large and possibly crowded classrooms. This class size needed higher instructional supervision, differentiation, and behavioral reinforcement. Because teachers' attention and resources should be disseminated among learners, large class size can pose problems towards implementation of individualized and inclusive approaches. Recent study underscored that a large class size can decrease adaptive instruction effectiveness, weaken individual interaction with learners, and pose stress to teachers [61]. In this sense, teachers need to apply inclusive strategies under circumstances far from what is ideal.

More than 10 inclusive seminars or trainings attended which is the modal value, indicated that teachers had very high exposure to professional inclusive seminars or trainings. This result supported earlier table results noting that there was sufficient professional development for teachers. With strong professional development, teachers may have thorough understanding and application of specialized strategies such as differentiation, individualized activities, and behavior management, and universal design for learning for learners with special educational needs. reported that teachers having high engagement in trainings about inclusive practices are likely to be more confident and effective in inclusive practices implementation. Thus, the strong engagement in professional development poses an advantage for teachers for more effective inclusive practices in the classrooms.

Collectively, the demographic profile signified that a typical teacher at Tabunoc Central Elementary School was highly experienced, handled a large class, and had strong engagement in inclusive seminars or trainings. This profile characteristic posed strengths and weaknesses. First, having a

teaching experience more than 10 years and more than 10 inclusive seminars and trainings attended had earned more than enough classroom exposure to supervise learners effectively. Then, a large size classroom posed a challenge in inclusive classroom management.

The summary of this demographic profile pointed out implications for school leadership and policymakers. First, more than 10 years of teaching experience and more than 10 attended inclusive seminars and trainings note the importance of exposure to teaching and professional development engagement for effective inclusive education implementation. Next, the large class size signaled for a systematic and continuous professional development targeted on behavioral management among diverse learners. Then, schools needed to fortify support dynamics (peer coaching and mentoring and professional learning networks. Finally, school authorities needed to consider concerns such as class size reduction and distribution of support staff to better implement inclusive practices.

## **RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THEIR PROFFESIONAL ENGAGEMENT LEVEL IN MANAGING INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS**

This section presented the teachers' perceived professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of personalized instruction strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, collaboration strategies, and assessment strategies.

### **Respondents' Perception of Their Professional Engagement Level n Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Personalized Instruction Strategies**

This part displayed teachers' perceived professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of personalized instruction strategies.

This was an essential component of professional engagement since it looked for teachers' engagement in practices tailoring instruction to meet individual learning needs and capabilities of diverse learners such as ability to design and carryout differentiated lessons, accommodation, and modifications that promote learner participation which were necessary in carrying out effective instruction in inclusive classroom settings.

**Table 6.** Respondents' Perception of Their Professional Engagement Level n Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Personalized Instruction Strategies.

| <b>1. Personalized Instruction Strategies</b>                                                                         | <b>Mean</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>Interpretation</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| 1.1. modifying and differentiating instruction to meet the diverse learning needs of my learners.                     | 3.33        | 0.54      | Highly Engaged        |
| 1.2. preparing myself to effectively teach learners with special educational needs(LSEs) with behavioral competencies | 3.07        | 0.51      | Engaged               |
| 1.3. planning instruction to address the strengths of learners                                                        | 3.33        | 0.47      | Highly Engaged        |
| 1.4. relating learning activities to learners' personal and family experiences                                        | 3.47        | 0.50      | Highly Engaged        |
| 1.5. using a variety of instructional strategies within the learning activity to engage learners.                     | 3.23        | 0.42      | Engaged               |
| 1.6. planning instruction to address interests of learners.                                                           | 3.30        | 0.53      | Highly Engaged        |
| 1.7. adapting materials and resources to meet diverse learning needs                                                  | 3.20        | 0.40      | Engaged               |
| 1.8. designing learning experiences that connect prior content knowledge to new learning                              | 3.23        | 0.50      | Engaged               |
| 1.9. selecting curricular materials and resources that align with learning goals for varied learners                  | 3.23        | 0.50      | Engaged               |
| <b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>                                                                                          | <b>3.27</b> |           | <b>Highly Engaged</b> |

|                                   |      |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| <b>Overall Standard Deviation</b> | 0.48 |
|-----------------------------------|------|

*Legend: 3.25-4.00=Highly Engaged; 2.50-3.24=Engaged; 1.75-2.49=Less Engaged; 1.00-1.74=Least Engaged*

The teachers' professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of personalized instruction strategies was shown in Table 6 revealing an overall weighted mean of 3.27 (OSD=0.48), categorized as **Highly Engaged**. This suggested that teachers had high professional engagement and efforts in differentiating, designing, and delivering learning activities for diverse learners with different backgrounds, learning styles, and interests.

**Highly Engaged** ratings were recorded for indicators "*relating learning activities to learners' personal and family experiences*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.47$ ), "*modifying and differentiating instruction to meet the learners' diverse learning needs*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.33$ ), and "*planning instruction to address learners' strength*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.33$ ), and "*planning instruction to address learners' interest*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ). These suggested that teachers were highly professionally engaged in contextualizing, differentiating, and crafting lessons and activities that address learners' different needs. These teaching abilities are necessary so that learners stay involved and acquire better learning since their interest are tapped.

In contrast, **Engaged** ratings were obtained by "*designing learning experiences that connect prior content knowledge to new learning*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$ ), "*using a variety of instructional strategies within the learning activity to engage learners*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$ ), "*selecting curricular materials and resources that align with learning goals for varied learners*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$ ), "*adapting materials and resources to meet learning needs*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.20$ ), and "*preparing oneself to effectively teach learners with special educational needs with behavioral competencies*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.20$ ). These indicated that teachers were engaged in instructional planning and learning resource adaptation which show a strong foundation in responding to learners' needs. Nonetheless, there is a need to enhance these areas to further strengthen instructional strategies in dealing with learners with special educational needs.

Generally, the teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School possessed very strong engagement in utilizing personalized instruction strategies especially in varying and contextualizing learning materials, activities, and experiences for diverse learners including those with different characteristics and disabilities.

The findings implied a need for continuous and focused professional development among teachers. The engagement level possessed by teachers in differentiation and interest-focused strategies was already commendable, but still required further enhancements related to universal design for learning and behavior management to successfully manage inclusive classrooms.

Recent literature and studies supported the current findings on the significance, effectiveness, and even challenges of personalized instruction in inclusive practices. Anyichie[62] stressed that diverse and interest-based teaching strategies significantly improve inclusivity and engagement among learners, including those with special needs. Likewise, Goyibova [63] discovered instructional strategies which are geared towards learners' inclinations or interests improve their motivation and engagement, particularly for learners with varying needs. Liou[64] supported that differentiation, contextualizing learning materials and experiences are essential for successful inclusive practices implementation.

### **Respondents' Perception of Their Professional Engagement Level n Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Communicative Scaffolding Strategies**

This part displayed teachers' perceived professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of communicative scaffolding strategies.

This was assessed through teachers' degree of providing instructional support and interaction

strategies in facilitating understanding and participation among learners with diverse abilities. This included teachers' use of clear instructions, questioning strategies, feedback, and dialogue that connect learning gaps and promote inclusion. These areas were important as effective communicative strategies ignite participation among learners in an inclusive classroom and value each learners' strengths and weaknesses.

**Table 7.** Respondents' Perception of Their Professional Engagement Level n Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Communicative Scaffolding Strategies.

| 1. Communicative Scaffolding Strategies                                                | Mean | SD   | Interpretation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|----------------|
| 2.1. providing equal opportunities for diverse learners to ask questions               | 3.30 | 0.53 | Highly Engaged |
| 2.2. providing different learners with opportunities to interact with peers            | 3.37 | 0.55 | Highly Engaged |
| 2.3. asking effective and varied questions that match instructional goals              | 3.27 | 0.51 | Highly Engaged |
| 2.4. responding appropriately to varied learners' questions/comments                   | 3.23 | 0.56 | Engaged        |
| 2.5. articulating high expectations of learners                                        | 3.03 | 0.60 | Engaged        |
| 2.6. using differentiated strategies to motivate all types of learners                 | 3.30 | 0.46 | Highly Engaged |
| 2.7. providing regular opportunities for learners to collaborate with others           | 3.30 | 0.53 | Highly Engaged |
| 2.8. providing frequent and appropriate feedback during class activities.              | 3.20 | 0.54 | Engaged        |
| 2.9. creating a safe learning environment where learners feel encouraged to take risks | 3.27 | 0.51 | Highly Engaged |
| 2.10. establishing standards of conduct for varied learners                            | 3.20 | 0.65 | Engaged        |
| <b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>                                                           | 3.25 |      | Highly Engaged |
| <b>Overall Standard Deviation</b>                                                      | 0.54 |      |                |

Shown in Table 7 was the teachers' professional development in terms of communicative scaffolding strategies which received a mean of 3.25 (SD = 0.54), classified as **Highly Engaged**. This noted that teachers consistently used strategies that promoted learner motivation, involvement, and meaningful classroom communication.

Specifically, **Highly Engaged** ratings were given to indicators "*providing learners with different opportunities to interact with peers*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.37$ ), "*providing equal opportunities for diverse learners to ask questions*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ), "*using differentiated strategies to motivate all types of learners*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ), "*providing regular opportunities for collaboration*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ), and "*creating a safe learning environment*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.27$ ). These suggested that teachers gave emphasis and importance on equitable access to safe classroom interaction, cooperative learning tasks, and motivational support which were vital components in inclusive practices. These results implied that teachers put emphasis on inclusive classroom practices by promoting safe, collaborative, and interactive whereby learners were motivated to be involved. Teachers in this sense displayed commitment to building supportive environments that increased learners' engagement and participation.

There were indicators that obtained **Engaged** ratings. These were "*responding appropriately to varied learners' questions/comments*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$ ), "*providing frequent and appropriate feedback during class activities*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.20$ ), and "*articulating high expectations for learners*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.03$ ).

These ratings signified that teachers were consistent in responding to learners' needs by giving feedback and sustaining positive expectations. But, the slightly lower ratings necessitated for further improvement on feedback practices and clear communication of expectations to get the most out of learners' growth and participation.

The teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School were generally highly consistent in employing communicative scaffolding strategies emphasizing their effective interaction proficiency in dealing with diverse learners including those with special educational needs in their classrooms. However, further enhancement was still necessary to improve other areas particularly on clearly setting expectations for learners.

The findings' implications provided areas for development in inclusive classroom management. It was clearly shown that teachers were skilled in implementing interactive, supportive, communicative, and collaborative learning atmosphere for diverse learners' needs. Nevertheless, professional development was needed for the fostering a mature mindset and reasonable expectations for both the high performing learners and those with difficulties in behavior. By providing teachers with seminars, trainings, and workshops, schools can also benefit towards effective implementation of inclusive practices.

Studies reinforced the findings by emphasizing the important function of communicative scaffolding strategies in successful inclusive classroom implementation. Darling-Hammond[65] stressed that equal opportunities for classroom interaction such as questioning and effective dialogues are pivotal to culturally receptive pedagogy. Likewise, it was found out that peer interaction and collaborative learning significantly improves learners' academic engagement and social development[66]. Moreover, further explained that differentiated motivational approaches enhance the motivation of learners, including those with special educational needs.

### **Respondents' Perception of Their Professional Engagement Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Collaboration Strategies**

This part displayed teachers' perceived professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of collaboration strategies.

Moreover, collaboration strategies was assessed through collaborating with colleagues and learners' families to support learning among diverse learners, regularly sharing information and/or best practices with colleagues to improve inclusive practice, engaging with families to share information and strategies to enhance learning among learners, and encouraging varied learners to reflect on what they have learned. These were pivotal in the context of this study since collaboration with others (teachers and learners' families) is necessary towards successful inclusive classroom implementation.

**Table 8.** Respondents' Perception of Their Professional Engagement Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Collaboration Strategies.

| <b>1. Collaboration Strategies</b>                                                                     | <b>Mean</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>Interpretation</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| 3.1. collaborating with other teachers to support learning among different learners                    | 3.43        | 0.50      | Highly Engaged        |
| 3.2. regularly sharing information and/or best practices with colleagues to improve inclusive practice | 3.33        | 0.54      | Highly Engaged        |
| 3.3. engaging with families to share information and strategies to enhance learning among my learners  | 3.27        | 0.44      | Highly Engaged        |
| 3.4 encouraging varied learners to reflect on what they                                                | 3.30        | 0.46      | Highly Engaged        |

|                                   |      |                |
|-----------------------------------|------|----------------|
| have learned                      |      |                |
| <b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>      | 3.33 | Highly Engaged |
| <b>Overall Standard Deviation</b> | 0.48 |                |

Shown in Table 8 was the teachers' professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of collaboration strategies, generating an overall weighted mean of 3.33 (OSD = 0.48), interpreted as **Highly Engaged** noting that teachers were highly involved in collaborating with colleagues and families towards effective inclusive classroom implementation.

Surprisingly, all indicators attained **Highly Engaged**, specifically, "*collaborating with other teachers to support learning among different learners*," ( $\bar{x} = 3.43$ ) "*regularly sharing information and/or best practices with colleagues to improve inclusive practice*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.33$ ), "*encouraging varied learners to reflect on what they have learned*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ), and "*engaging with families to share information and strategies to enhance learning among my learners*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.27$ ). These indicated that teachers were highly engaged in collaboration with colleagues and encouraging diverse learners to make sense of their learning, disseminating best practices with other teachers and families towards the enhancement of learning.

Collectively, the teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School were highly collaboratively engaged with colleagues and their learners' families in the implementation of inclusive practices in their classrooms with the aim of supporting learners improve inclusive practices. Strengthening this area through professional development initiatives is necessary to further sustain more successful implementation of inclusive education.

These findings implied that teachers actively committed to implement inclusive environment through collaboration, reflective practice, and teaming with families. But they may benefit from supplemental aid and professional enhancement to get the best out of the impact of collaborative strategies.

Studies supported the findings of the study. Schnepel [67] underscored that collaboration plays a significant role in the success of inclusive education implementation, signifying that schools which have strong collaboration practices exhibit higher quality of implementation and healthier support for varying learners. Likewise, Paccaud [68] explained that constant communication with peers and learners' respective families improves confidence and efficiency in inclusive contexts. In addition, discovered that disseminating best practices and engaging in reflective communication significantly increase teachers' readiness and efficacy in inclusive classrooms.

### **Respondents' Perception of Their Professional Engagement Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Assessment Strategies**

This part displayed teachers' perceived professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of assessment strategies.

Moreover, assessment strategies was assessed through teachers' making of varied test accommodations to differing learners when necessary, using a variety of assessment strategies measure learning progress, using a number of strategies to prevent behavioral disruption in class, and making each learners' learn according to his/her ability and potential. These were relevant areas to explore among teachers since assessment gathers or documents learning. In this case, proper assessment among learners with diverse needs was thoroughly carried out.

**Table 9.** Respondents' Perception of Their Professional Engagement Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Assessment Strategies.

| 1. Assessment Strategies                                                    | Mean | SD   | Interpretation |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|----------------|
| 4.1. making varied test accommodations to varied learners when necessary    | 3.13 | 0.50 | Engaged        |
| 4.2. using a variety of assessment strategies to measure learning progress  | 3.27 | 0.51 | Highly Engaged |
| 4.3. using a number of strategies to prevent behavioral disruption in class | 3.20 | 0.54 | Engaged        |
| 4.4. making each learner's learn according to his/her ability and potential | 3.23 | 0.50 | Engaged        |
| <b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>                                                | 3.21 |      | Engaged        |
| <b>Overall Standard Deviation</b>                                           | 0.51 |      |                |

Table 9 disclosed teachers' professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of assessment strategies obtaining an overall weighted mean of 3.21 (OSD = 0.51) which was interpreted as **Engaged**. This noted that teachers were consistently engaged in providing diverse learners with diverse assessment strategies in order for learners to learn according to their style.

Among four indicators, one stood out to have the highest rating and this was "*using a variety of assessment strategies to measure learning progress*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.27$ ), which is interpreted as **Highly Engaged**. This signified that teachers were very consistent in employing differentiated assessment methods to check on learners' progress in school. This is important in the sense that in instruction, one of the main objectives of teachers is for their learners to grow academically.

The remaining three indicators were rated **Engaged**. These were "*making each learner's learn according to his/her ability and potential*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$ ), "*using a number of strategies to prevent behavioral disruption in class*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.20$ ), and "*making varied test accommodations to varied learners when necessary*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ). They implied that teachers were constantly practicing giving of varied assessment strategies for learners including those with special educational needs for effective learning and good behavior performance. However, these slightly lower ratings required further professional enhancements to sustain the competence in providing differentiation for learners.

Generally, the teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School were actively committed to providing diverse learners with varying assessment approaches as reflected in the "engaged" rating. However, this can still be further sustained with further administrative support, mentoring, coaching, and other professional development initiatives.

The findings implied the critical role of varying assessment strategies to cater to diverse learners' learning styles, abilities, and disabilities. But since assessment is an important component of teaching and learning process, teachers can benefit from continuous coaching, mentoring, and other professional development focusing on assessment differentiation in inclusive classrooms.

Relevant findings reinforced the results of the study as to the significance of assessment strategies. Rajak and Dey[69] gave emphasis that assessment differentiation is crucial in inclusive classrooms since it enables teachers to be responsive to the varied learning needs and learners' behavioral characteristics. emphasized that differentiating instructions according to diverse learning styles induce fairness and precision in learning assessments, specifically for learners with special educational needs. Lübke [70] informed that teachers who incorporate flexible and learner-focused assessment strategies exhibit high efficacy and proficiency in inclusive teaching.

### **Summary of the Respondents' Professional Engagement Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms**

This part exhibited the summary of teachers' professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms along the dimensions of personalized instruction strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, collaboration strategies, and assessment strategies.

**Table 10.** Summary of the Respondents' Professional Engagement Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms.

| <b>Dimensions of Professional Engagement in Managing Inclusive Classrooms</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>Interpretation</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Personalized Instruction Strategies                                           | 3.27        | 0.48      | Highly Engaged        |
| Communicative Scaffolding Strategies                                          | 3.25        | 0.54      | Highly Engaged        |
| Collaboration Strategies                                                      | 3.33        | 0.48      | Highly Engaged        |
| Assessment Strategies                                                         | 3.21        | 0.51      | Engaged               |
| <b>Grand Mean</b>                                                             | 3.27        |           |                       |
| <b>Grand Standard Deviation</b>                                               | 0.50        |           | Highly Engaged        |

Table 10 presented the summary of teachers' professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms obtaining a grand mean of 3.27 (GSD = 0.50), categorized as **Highly Engaged**, signifying that teachers were consistently engaged professionally in providing their diverse learners with personalized instruction, communicative scaffolding, and collaboration strategies.

Furthermore, three out of four dimensions under professional engagement were rated **Highly Engaged**. These dimensions encompassed collaboration strategies with the highest mean of 3.33 denoting teachers' competence and participatory engagement with other teachers and learners family members for successful implementation of inclusive education.

**Highly Engaged** was also received by personalized instruction strategies obtaining a mean of 3.27, suggesting that teachers had very high engagement in employing differentiated and contextualized learning materials, activities, and experiences for diverse learners including those with different characteristics and disabilities.

Still, obtaining a **Highly Engaged** rating, communicative scaffolding strategies followed with a mean of 3.25, indicating that teachers were highly professionally engaged in providing learners with effective communication or interaction strategies in their instructions, be it during learning activities, discussions, and assessments.

Conversely, assessment strategies obtained a lower mean of 3.21, and obtained an **Engaged** rating. This reflected teachers' professional engagement in providing learners with differentiated assessment methods to tap learners' diverse learning outcomes. However, professional development initiatives are required to enhance the aspect of providing differentiated assessments for diverse learners.

Interpreting the results, the teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School were consistently engaged professionally in managing inclusive classrooms as reflected in their "highly engaged" rating when it came to employing personalized instruction strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, and collaboration strategies and "engaged" rating in assessment strategies. However, this engagement can still be enhanced through targeted interventions such as continuous professional development specifically on differentiating assessment strategies is required to increase their engagement for a better inclusive classroom management.

The findings' implication divulged that school heads and teachers alike need to work hand-in-hand especially in equipping teachers with advanced skills or proficiency in managing learners in inclusive classrooms. They may engage themselves in mentoring, coaching, seminars, and training

sessions so that they will be more skilled and competent in handling diverse learners, including those with special educational needs and learning abilities and disabilities. Hence, administrators' support which includes funding teachers' professional development is deemed necessary to equip teachers with supplemental knowledge and skills.

Recent findings supported the implication of the study. Jiao [71] revealed that professional engagement of teachers is influenced by institutional support, indicating that school administrators should extend moral and financial support for teachers so that they are equipped with right competence in managing inclusive classrooms. asserted that teachers engaged in employing differentiation exhibit higher competence in responding to diverse learners' needs, including the needs of those with different abilities. Kurteshi and Rustemi[72] stressed that professional development plays a significant role in increasing teachers' work or professional engagement, including in managing inclusive classrooms.

## **RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THEIR COMPETENCE LEVEL IN MANAGING INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS**

This section displayed teachers' perceived competence in managing inclusive classrooms. Furthermore, competence was expounded into three (3) dimensions – noticing diversity, quality of learner interaction, and creating a stimulating learning environment.

### **Respondents' Perception of Their Competence Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Noticing Diversity**

This part displayed teachers' perceived competence in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of noticing diversity.

Moreover, noticing diversity was assessed through teachers' ability to recognize, understand, and value learners' individual difference in terms of ability, background, language, and learning style. It is relevant in the study since examining differences among learners is a crucial component of effective inclusive classroom implementation.

**Table 11.** Respondents' Perception of Their Competence Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Noticing Diversity.

| <b>1. Noticing Diversity</b>                                                                                                                                              | <b>Mean</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>Interpretation</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| 1.1. making time for in-depth individual conversations with all my learners in order to provide more effective support                                                    | 3.57        | 0.62      | Highly Proficient     |
| 1.2. gaining insights into the learning needs of an individual learner by consciously looking at how he/she responds to different tasks and works in different groupings. | 3.63        | 0.71      | Highly Proficient     |
| 1.3. gaining insights into a learner's plans and dreams for the future.                                                                                                   | 3.70        | 0.86      | Highly Proficient     |
| 1.4. starting a conversation with a learner who is not attentive or is having a difficult time outside of the classroom.                                                  | 3.70        | 0.64      | Highly Proficient     |
| 1.5. gaining insights into the social relationships among my learners.                                                                                                    | 3.70        | 0.64      | Highly Proficient     |
| 1.6. gaining insights into the learners' feelings about their family situation.                                                                                           | 3.83        | 0.73      | Highly Proficient     |
| <b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>                                                                                                                                              | 3.69        |           | Highly Proficient     |
| <b>Overall Standard Deviation</b>                                                                                                                                         | 0.70        |           |                       |

*Legend: 4.21-5.00=Distinguished; 3.41-4.20=Highly Proficient; 2.61-3.40=Proficient; 1.81-2.60=Developing; 1.00-1.80=Beginning*

Table 11 displays teachers' perceived competence in managing inclusive classroom as to noticing diversity, generating an overall weighted mean of 3.69 (OSD = 0.70), interpreted as **Highly Proficient**. This revealed that teachers were highly competent in recognizing and being sensitive on learners' diverse characteristics, behaviors, social backgrounds, and personal situations.

Remarkably, all indicators received **Highly Proficient** rating. These were in relation to "gaining insights into the learners' feelings about their family situation" ( $\bar{x} = 3.83$ ), "*gaining insights into a learner's plans and dreams for the future*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.70$ ), "*gaining insights into the social relationships among my learners*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.70$ ), "*starting a conversation with a learner who is not attentive or is having a difficult time outside of the classroom*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.70$ ), "*gaining insights into the learning needs of an individual learner by consciously looking at how he/she responds to different tasks and works in different groupings*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.63$ ), and "*making time for in-depth individual conversations with all my learners in order to provide more effective support*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.57$ ). These all suggested that teachers were highly thoughtful or perceptive towards the academic, emotional, social signs that form learners' classroom experiences. Moreover, teachers were excellent in engaging with learners in deep conversation, understanding learners' desires, and analyzing learners' social dynamics or relationships.

Generally, the teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School were highly competent in determining the differences in learners' needs and behaviors, allowing them to plan and implement sensitive instructional and support mechanics. Nonetheless, these areas can still be sustained through supplemental professional enhancements centered on interpreting varied learners' behaviors and situations.

Implication articulated the significance of improving teachers' competence in social-emotional learning, reflective teaching practice, and learner-focused communication strategies. Supporting professional development programs targeted on observational skills, emotional pain-informed practices, and differentiated scaffolding will increase teachers' competence to analyze learners' behaviors and situations which in turn contributes to effective management of inclusive classrooms.

These outcomes were reinforced by recent findings. Øen[73] asserted that teachers who observe learners' academic responses and social communication are more skilled in in terms of adjusting inclusive instructions and activities. Likewise, Denston[74] discovered that teachers who are regularly involved in one-on-one interaction and uphold emotional responsiveness tend to recognize learning needs and personal challenges. asserted that with strong observational skills, teachers can be competent in understanding learners' motives and aspirations, social collaboration, and home-related issues.

### **Respondents' Perception of Their Competence Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Quality of Learner Interaction**

This part displayed teachers' perceived competence in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of quality of learner interaction.

Moreover, quality of learner interaction' relevance centered on the appropriate and effective approaches in teaching diverse learners. It was assessed through teachers' interactions and relationships with learners which encompassed ability to establish positive, respectful, and supportive communication that promotes participation and collaboration among all learners.

**Table 12.** Respondents' Perception of Their Competence Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms

| 1.                                | Quality of Learner Interaction                                                                                                  | Mean | SD   | Interpretation    |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-------------------|
| 2.1.                              | allowing learners with learning difficulties to be helped by other learners                                                     | 3.80 | 0.75 | Highly Proficient |
| 2.2.                              | giving tasks where learners have to work together to complete the task successfully (for example, each having a different role) | 3.83 | 0.73 | Highly Proficient |
| 2.3.                              | providing feedback on how learners work together                                                                                | 3.83 | 0.82 | Highly Proficient |
| 2.4.                              | creating space in or outside the classroom to support learners in the resolution of conflicts                                   | 3.53 | 0.72 | Highly Proficient |
| 2.5.                              | coaching learners to give each other thorough and respectful feedback                                                           | 3.83 | 0.78 | Highly Proficient |
| 2.6.                              | ensuring that all learners get to work with others from all across the class in group work                                      | 3.63 | 0.84 | Highly Proficient |
| 2.7.                              | drawing up clear rules for the classroom together with the learners                                                             | 3.77 | 0.76 | Highly Proficient |
| 2.8.                              | discussing a plan of action with the learners involved in case of bullying                                                      | 3.80 | 0.83 | Highly Proficient |
| <b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>      |                                                                                                                                 | 3.75 |      | Highly Proficient |
| <b>Overall Standard Deviation</b> |                                                                                                                                 | 0.78 |      |                   |

Table 12 displayed the teachers' perceived competence in managing inclusive classrooms as to the quality learner interaction, yielding an overall weighted mean of 3.75 (OSD = 0.75), interpreted as **Highly Proficient**. This revealed teachers' very competent skills in facilitating positive, constructive, and collaborative interactions among learners, counting those with learning challenges and disabilities.

All indicators were rated **Highly Proficient**. These were "giving tasks where learners have to work together to complete the task successfully (for example, each having a different role" ( $\bar{x} = 3.83$ ), "providing feedback on how learners work together" ( $\bar{x} = 3.83$ ), "coaching learners to give each other thorough and respectful feedback" ( $\bar{x} = 3.83$ ), "allowing learners with learning difficulties to be helped by other learners" ( $\bar{x} = 3.80$ ), "discussing a plan of action with the learners involved in case of bullying" ( $\bar{x} = 3.80$ ), "drawing up clear rules for the classroom together with the learners" ( $\bar{x} = 3.77$ ), "ensuring that all learners get to work with others from all across the class in group work" ( $\bar{x} = 3.63$ ), and "creating spaces to address conflicts" ( $\bar{x} = 3.53$ ). These implied that teachers were highly competent in employing cooperative learning, addressing conflicts, and promoting communication skills and empathy in a positive and learner-centered ways.

Collectively, as reflected in the overall rating, the teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School were highly proficient in promoting interaction-based and inclusive classrooms whereby learners significantly cooperate, resolve conflicts, and support one another.

The findings implied that teachers were highly competent in terms of utilizing interaction-based strategies which are necessary in managing inclusive classrooms. However, continuous enhancement can further sustain teachers' competence in increasing learners' communication and social skills. Schools may intensify teachers' restorative strategies, peer mediation, and social-emotional learning through professional development in order to increase learners' interpersonal abilities. Moreover, there was a need to maintain seminars or trainings in peer teaching, differentiation, and positive behavior support to accommodate learners including those with disabilities, and eradicate bullying in schools.

These results were further reinforced by recent literature highlighting the significance of positive learner interaction in inclusive practices. Nguyen and Oanh [75] underscored that collaborative

learning significantly enhances academic engagement and social assimilation particularly when teachers vividly give roles and feedback on group mechanisms. In a similar way, Granizo and Del Barrio [76] discovered that peer-supported learning and conflict-resolution reinforcement contribute to inclusive effectiveness and safety for learners with disabilities. Dietrich [77] concluded that classrooms which have well-defined norms created both by teachers and learners exhibit stronger peer interactions, decreased bullying incidents, and enhanced collaborative conducts.

### **Respondents' Perception of Their Competence Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Quality of Creating a Stimulating Learning**

This part displayed teachers' perceived competence in managing inclusive classrooms in terms of creating a stimulating learning environment.

Moreover, creating a stimulating learning environment was assessed through teachers' capability to create a learning environment that encourages, engages, and supports varied learners and encompasses the effective use of classroom space, materials, and activities that promote active learning and inclusion. This was significant in the study since providing a positive learning environment to diverse learners may induce active involvement among learners in an inclusive classroom.

**Table 13.** Respondents' Perception of Their Competence Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Terms of Quality of Creating a Stimulating Learning Environment.

| <b>1. Creating a Stimulating Learning Environment</b>                                                                                                                         | <b>Mean</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>Interpretation</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| 3.1. ensuring that teaching materials reflect diversity in society                                                                                                            | 3.60        | 0.71      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.2. using a wide range of evaluation methods in order to evaluate learners in a broad way possible                                                                           | 3.63        | 0.71      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.3. specifically checking that learners with a language delay have understood a question                                                                                     | 3.47        | 0.67      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.4. entering into a dialogue with learners about their results.                                                                                                              | 3.57        | 0.84      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.5. occasionally using a short moment of evaluation (e.g., quiz) to tailor my lesson in a more nuanced way to the learners' needs                                            | 3.57        | 0.67      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.6. giving learners opportunities beyond traditional tests and exams to demonstrate their knowledge and skills (e.g., through portfolios, writing tasks, oral presentations) | 3.77        | 0.72      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.7. allowing learners to give input about content that they would like to cover in lessons                                                                                   | 3.63        | 0.60      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.8. letting my learners evaluate my lessons                                                                                                                                  | 3.37        | 0.71      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.9. taking account of learners who work faster/slower than the others when managing the pace of your lessons                                                                 | 3.50        | 0.56      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.10. offering a variety of activities so that learners can choose what to do themselves                                                                                      | 3.57        | 0.67      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.11. allowing learners to choose whether or not to use certain tools/support                                                                                                 | 3.53        | 0.81      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.12. using a variety of teaching materials and media which invite learners to draw on different sense                                                                        | 3.57        | 0.76      | Highly Proficient     |
| 3.13. adapting my learning objectives (knowledge and                                                                                                                          | 3.67        | 0.75      | Highly Proficient     |

|                                                                                                                                   |      |                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|
| skills) to take account of differences between learners<br>(e.g., by creating main and advanced learning goals) when<br>necessary |      |                   |
| <b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>                                                                                                      | 3.57 | Highly Proficient |
| <b>Overall Standard Deviation</b>                                                                                                 | 0.71 |                   |

Shown in Table 13 was the teachers' perceived competence in inclusive classroom management as to creating a stimulating learning environment, obtaining an overall weighted mean of 3.57 (OSD = 0.71), interpreted as **Highly Proficient**. This signified that teachers constantly exhibited high competence in establishing learning spaces that promoted engagement, catered to learner variances, and supported learners' diverse learning needs.

Surprisingly, all indicators received **Highly Proficient** rating especially "*giving learners opportunities beyond traditional tests and exams to demonstrate their knowledge and skills*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.77$ ) which obtained the highest mean. This noted that teachers were highly creative in designing assessments for diverse learners. Moreover, "*adapting my learning objectives (knowledge and skills) to take account of differences between learners when necessary*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.67$ ), "*using a wide range of evaluation methods in order to evaluate learners in a broad way possible*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.63$ ), "*allowing learners to give input about content that they would like to cover in lessons*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.63$ ), "*ensuring that teaching materials reflect diversity in society*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.73$ ), "*occasionally using a short moment of evaluation (e.g., quiz) to tailor my lesson in a more nuanced way to the learners' needs*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.57$ ), "*offering a variety of activities so that learners can choose what to do themselves*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.57$ ), "*using a variety of teaching materials and media which invite learners to draw on different sense*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.57$ ), "*allowing learners to choose whether or not to use certain tools/support*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.53$ ), "*taking account of learners who work faster/slower than the others when managing the pace of the lessons*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.50$ ), and "*specifically checking that learners with a language delay have understood a question*" ( $\bar{x} = 3.47$ ). They all indicated that teachers were highly competent in providing engaging and motivating learning environment where learners regardless of differences felt valued, involved, and secure.

Generally, the teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School were highly competent in creating an inviting learning spaces for learners that were adaptable, multisensory, and receptive to the differences of learners. Despite that, through further advanced professional enhancement, teachers can sustain this dimension to further sustainably foster learner engagement in designing and evaluating lessons.

The implications of the findings conveyed the significance of maintaining and reinforcing teachers' competence in employing differentiated instruction, formative assessment, and multisensory learning. School heads may prioritize supplemental training on universal design for learning (UDL) which is a learner-focused assessment approach, and culture-sustaining teaching to intensify inclusivity.

This implication coincided with recent findings which emphasized the role of inclusive environments in learner involvement and all-inclusive development. Nurjanah [78] reported that the presence of multisensory instructional in learning spaces significantly improved diverse learners' comprehension and participation. In addition, Julien [79] stated that creating an inviting learning environment for learners including those with different learning profiles provides safety and security which enable them to participate more in academic undertakings. Villanueva [80] asserted that learning environments which integrate learners' voice, varied cultural exemplification, and adaptive assessment approaches yield in better learner motivation and enhanced inclusivity.

## Summary of Respondents' Perception of Their Competence Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms

This part exhibited the summary of teachers' competence in managing inclusive classrooms along the dimensions of noticing diversity, quality of learner interaction, and creating a stimulating learning environment.

**Table 14.** Summary of Respondents' Perception of Their Competence Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms.

| Dimensions of Competence in Managing Inclusive Classrooms | Mean | SD   | Interpretation    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-------------------|
| Noticing Diversity                                        | 3.69 | 0.70 | Highly Proficient |
| Quality of Learner Interaction                            | 3.75 | 0.78 | Highly Proficient |
| Creating a Stimulating Learning Environment               | 3.57 | 0.71 | Highly Proficient |
| <b>Grand Weighted Mean</b>                                | 3.67 |      | Highly Proficient |
| <b>Grand Standard Deviation</b>                           | 0.73 |      |                   |

Table 14 showed the summary of teachers' competence in managing inclusive classrooms along the dimensions of noticing diversity, quality of learner interaction, and creating a stimulating learning environment. It can be gleaned from the table that teachers' overall competence received a **Highly Proficient** rating with a grand mean of 3.67 (GSD = 0.73), suggesting that teachers possessed high competence when it came to providing diverse learners with learning spaces that are motivating, safe, and secure.

*"Quality of Learner Interaction"* obtained the highest mean of 3.89, interpreted as **Highly Proficient**, showing teachers' high level of proficiency in providing effective communication or interaction with learners inside the classrooms.

*"Noticing Diversity"* came next with a mean of 3.83, interpreted as **Highly Proficient**, noting teachers' competence in observing the variances of learners and providing equitable learning activities depending on learners' varied profiles.

*"Creating a Stimulating Environment"* also received a **Highly Proficient** rating with a mean of 3.72, indicating teachers' impressive skill in creating a motivating and engaging learning environment for diverse learners for effective learning.

Generally, teachers at Tabunoc Central Elementary School were highly competent in managing inclusive classrooms particularly in noticing diversity, providing quality and effective interaction, and providing motivating learning environment for diverse learners with respect to their varying profiles such as learning abilities and disabilities. But these ratings entail additional professional development for sustainability in effectively implementing inclusive practices in schools.

Implications articulated that school heads and higher authorities should prioritize teachers' development of inclusive education competence. Providing teachers with professional enhancement enables them to be more engaged, responsive to learners' needs, and highly proficient in carrying out inclusive undertakings, which can contribute greatly to learners' welfare regardless of characteristics and disabilities.

Recent findings supported these implications. reported that well-tailored professional development significantly improves teachers' competence and frequency of using inclusive practices particularly if professional development is reinforced with mentoring, coaching, and institutional support. In similar vein, Montalbano[81] asserted that teachers' competence is influenced through continuous

professional enhancements anchored on classroom realities alter teachers' practice and competence. Ewe [82] focused on the effects of universal design for learning or UDL-based professional development, and they concluded that teachers' knowledge and skills significantly enhance particularly in lesson planning, and integrating consistent differentiation in their teaching.

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE, PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT LEVEL, AND COMPETENCE LEVEL IN MANAGING INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

This section presented the relationship between teachers' demographic profile, professional engagement, and competence in managing inclusive classrooms. The Multiple Regression Analysis and Pearson r correlation were utilized to test their correlation.

#### Relationship between Respondents' Demographic Profile and Professional Engagement Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms

This parts presented the relationship between respondents' demographic profile in terms of number of years of teaching experience, number of learners handled in a class, and number if inclusive education seminars or trainings attended, and professional engagement level in managing inclusive classrooms. The multiple regression analysis was the statistical tool used to test the relationship of the aforementioned concepts.

**Table 15.** Relationship between Respondents' Demographic Profile and Professional Engagement Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms.

| Variables   | Coefficient Value | p-value | Decision           | Interpretation              |
|-------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| NYTE & PE   | 0.20              | 0.04    | Reject Ho1         | Significant Relationship    |
| NLHC & PE   | -0.06             | 0.46    | Fail to Reject Ho2 | No Significant Relationship |
| NIESTA & PE | -0.04             | 0.29    | Fail to Reject Ho3 | No Significant Relationship |

*Legend: NYTE=Number of Years of Teaching Experience; PE=Professional Engagement; NLHC=Number of Learners Handled in a Class; NIESTA=Number of Inclusive Education Seminars or Trainings Attended*

Table 15 presented the relationship between respondents' demographic profile and professional engagement level in managing inclusive classrooms. It can be shown in the table that the number of years of teaching experience had **Significant Relationship** with professional engagement with coefficient value of -0.20 and a p-value of 0.04 (less than 0.05 which is the significant level), failing to reject the first null hypothesis (Ho1). This meant that teachers' length of teaching experience influences professional engagement in inclusive classroom management. Moreover, professional engagement is not stagnant across a teacher's career, rather, it evolves with earned classroom exposure. Very recent finding affirmed that the length of teaching experience had something to do with better engagement in work, and that a teacher became more effective professionally with accumulated years of teaching experience[83].

In contrast, the number of learners handled in a class had **No Significant Relationship** with professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms with a coefficient value of -0.06 and a p-value of 0.46 (greater than 0.05), failing to reject the second null hypothesis (Ho2). This suggested that the size of the class handled did not affect engagement level. This finding matched recent literature that workload of teachers (e.g., handling small or large class sizes) does not directly affect engagement in work, but teachers' coping mechanisms, access to resources, and school support do. Thus, even with a bigger class size, teachers can stay professionally engaged if there is enough support system taking place for them.

In addition, **No Significant Relationship** was also shown between number of inclusive education seminars or trainings attended and professional engagement ( $r=-0.04$ ,  $p=0.29$ ) which led to reject the third null hypothesis ( $H_03$ ). This result indicated that attendance in trainings or seminars did not directly improve teachers' professional engagement in inclusive classroom management. This weak correlation suggested that the workability of professional development initiatives relied more on the relevance, quality, and practicability of seminars or trainings rather than quantity. Professional development efforts that are irregular, contextualized, or aligned with teachers' real needs may have a little impact on engagement in inclusive context.

Generally, the findings noted that respondents' demographic profile in terms of number of years of teaching possessed a significant relationship with professional engagement in inclusive classroom management. However, the number of learners handled in a class, and number of inclusive education trainings or seminars did not have any influence on professional engagement in inclusive classroom practices. These signify that school leaders and policymakers need to look beyond demographic variables when making interventions to increase teachers' professional engagement and give importance on reinforcing schools' support dynamics, mentoring and coaching programs, needs-based professional enhancements to enable an effective inclusive practices.

### **Relationship between Respondents' Demographic Profile and Competence in Managing Inclusive Classrooms**

This part presented the relationship between respondents' demographic profile in terms of number of years of teaching experience, number of learners handled in a class, and number if inclusive education seminars or trainings attended, and competence level in managing inclusive classrooms. The multiple regression analysis was the statistical tool used to test the relationship of the aforementioned concepts.

**Table 16.** Relationship between Respondents' Demographic Profile and Competence Level in Managing Inclusive Classrooms.

| <b>Variables</b> | <b>Coefficient Value</b> | <b>p-value</b> | <b>Decision</b>       | <b>Interpretation</b>       |
|------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| NYTE & C         | 0.20                     | 0.04           | Reject $H_04$         | Significant Relationship    |
| NLHC & C         | -0.06                    | 0.46           | Fail to Reject $H_05$ | No Significant Relationship |
| NIESTA & C       | -0.04                    | 0.29           | Fail to Reject $H_06$ | No Significant Relationship |

*Legend: NYTE=Number of Years of Teaching Experience; C=Competence;; NLHC=Number of Learners Handled in a Class; NIESTA=Number of Inclusive Education Seminars or Trainings Attended*

Exhibited in Table 16 was the relationship between respondents' demographic profile and competence level in managing inclusive classrooms. It can be understood from the table that the number of years of teaching experience had **Slight Significant Relationship** with competence having coefficient value of 0.20 and a p-value of 0.04 (less than 0.05 which was the significant level), rejecting the fourth null hypothesis ( $H_04$ ), noting that teachers' length of teaching experience had a slight influence on their competence in managing inclusive classrooms. As number of years of experience accumulates, competence of teachers' in managing inclusive classrooms slowly strengthens. This finding was supported by Woodcock and Anderson [84] who emphasized that experiences of teachers through time contributes to their competence in inclusive context especially

if teachers are regularly exposed to diverse learners and classrooms challenges. However, this influence is considered modest. Thus, further investigation is necessary to validate the findings.

Then, the class size also had **No Significant Relationship** with competence in managing inclusive classrooms having a coefficient value of -0.06 and a p-value of 0.46 (greater than 0.05 which is the significant value). This resulted in the decision to fail to reject the fifth null hypothesis (Ho5), suggesting that the number of learners handled did not significantly affect teachers' capability in an inclusive setting. It can also be inferred that teachers obtained competence through other contextual aid or support. The findings of Florian confirmed that class size is not a significant determinant of inclusive teaching competence, rather, teachers' capacity is strongly influenced by school support, collaboration, and inclusive school policies and regulations.

Additionally, the attendance in inclusive education seminars or trainings attended exhibited a slightly negative but **Not Significant Relationship** ( $r = -0.04$ ,  $p = 0.29$ ) with competence. It led to a decision to fail to reject the sixth null hypothesis (Ho6). This suggested that simply attending trainings or seminars may not shape stronger competence particularly if these professional developments lack depth, monitoring, or practical application opportunities. Short-term, irrelevant, and fragmented seminars and trainings have very little impact on teaching competence. If schools hold professional development for teachers, they must be continuous, practical, and supported by mentoring and reflective engagement.

Overall, the results signified that there was no statistically significant relationships between demographic variables in terms of class size and attendance in inclusive education seminars or trainings, and competence in managing inclusive classrooms. However, a slight significant difference between teaching experience years and competence was noted. This outcome stressed the possibility that other dimensions of professional development such as relevance, applicability, support from administrators, and reflective practice may be more pivotal than the number of trainings or seminars attended. For future research, it can be suggested that there must be a further investigation of the possibility of other predictors such as attitude, efficacy, and school environment to influence competence.

### **Relationship between Respondents' Professional Engagement and Competence in Managing Inclusive Classrooms**

These parts presented the relationship between respondents' professional engagement level and competence level in managing inclusive classrooms. Pearson's  $r$  correlation was the statistical tool used to test the relationship of the aforementioned constructs.

**Table 17.** Relationship between Respondents' Professional Engagement and Competence in Managing Inclusive Classrooms.

| <b>Coefficient r</b> | <b>p-value</b> | <b>Decision</b> | <b>Interpretation</b>    |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 0.73                 | 0.00           | Reject Ho7      | Significant Relationship |

Table 17 revealed the data on the relationship between teachers' professional engagement level and competence level in managing inclusive classrooms. It can be gleaned from the table that these variables have a high and **Significant Relationship** obtaining a coefficient  $r$  of 0.73 with its p-value less than 0.05 which is the significant value. Thus the study rejected the seventh null hypothesis (Ho7). This implied that as teachers' engage professionally in inclusive practices, their competence tends to increase as well. High engagement in their work leads to utmost competence.

The implication pointed out that professional engagement must be sustained by teachers especially in the implementation of inclusive education to increase competence as well. Thus, school heads

need to strengthen this professional engagement by providing teachers with support such as supplemental professional enhancement targeted on reinforcing their engagement in instructional, communicative scaffolding, collaboration, and assessment strategies.

Relevant studies supported these findings and implication. asserted that teachers who undergo professional development related to inclusive practices possess increased inclusive competence and their inclusive practices implementation. Similarly, Chan and Uhlman [85] reported that professional development programs targeted on pedagogical enhancement for diverse learners improves teachers' instructional practices. Cris [86] conveyed that teachers who employ scaffolding strategies such as guidance practice, visual aids, questioning, and prompting in inclusive environments contribute significantly to learners' improved academic performance, efficacy, engagement, and confidence.

## **SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter displayed the summary, findings, conclusion and recommendations as to teachers' demographic profile, professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms at Tabunoc Central Elementary School, Talisay City Division during the school year 2025-2026. Moreover, the relationship between these variables was also examined to provide practical recommendations to enhance teachers' professional engagement and competence in employing inclusive strategies.

### **SUMMARY**

The study examined teacher-respondents' demographic profile, professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms, as well as the relationship between these variables at Tabunoc Central Elementary School, Talisay City Division during the school year 2025-2026. Using a descriptive-correlational design, the data were gathered through a survey questionnaire to examine teachers' demographic profile in terms of teaching experience, class size, and attended inclusive education seminars or trainings, perceived professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms along the dimensions of personalized instruction strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, collaboration strategies, and assessment strategies, competence in managing inclusive classrooms along the dimensions of noticing diversity, quality of learners interaction, and creating a stimulating learning environment, and the relationship between aforementioned variables. Anchored on the findings, the action plan was proposed with the goal to increase teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms.

### **FINDINGS**

It was revealed in the study that most of the teachers possessed a very strong teaching experience of more than 10 years, inclined towards handling a large class size of 31-40, and very strong engagement in inclusive trainings or seminars of more than 10. In terms of professional engagement, teachers perceived themselves as highly engaged along all dimensions - personalized instruction strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, collaboration strategies, and assessment strategies. Similarly, teachers viewed themselves to have a high proficient competence all dimensions such as noticing diversity, quality of learner interaction, and creating a stimulating environment.

In addition, it was found out that no significant relationship existed between teachers' demographic variables in terms of number of learners handled in a class and number of inclusive trainings or seminars attended, and professional engagement, while the number of years of teaching experience had slightly positive relationship with professional engagement in managing inclusive classrooms. Moreover, demographic profile in terms of number of learners handled in a class and number of inclusive education trainings or seminars had no significant relationship with competence, while there was relatively positive relationship between number of years of teaching experience and

competence in managing inclusive classrooms. A significant relationship between teachers' professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classroom was tested which suggested that as teachers' professionally engage in inclusive setting, their competence increases.

## CONCLUSION

Anchored on the findings, this study concluded that teachers exhibited very strong professional profile, were highly engaged professionally, and highly competent in employing inclusive practices in inclusive classroom setting which are necessary characteristics for a successful implementation of inclusive education. However, since there was a significant relationship between professional engagement and competence in managing inclusive classrooms, maintaining these values is critical for a more successful inclusive education implementation. Bridging this gap necessitates collaborative efforts between and among teachers, school heads, and other stakeholders under a structured plan to ensure that the diverse learners in the classroom receive quality and accessible education.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended that the proposed action plan for inclusive classroom management be adopted in the school level. The action plan mainly targeted on the teachers' engagement on continuous professional development efforts, collaboration, and resource allocation to ensure a sustained effective implementation of inclusive practices in the classrooms.

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