

# UNDERSTANDING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE GENERALIST TEACHERS IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

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## *Abstract*

*This study attempted to capture the lived experiences of generalist teachers in inclusive classrooms, shedding light on the challenges and strategies they employ to foster an environment of learning and growth for diverse student populations. The study involved eight (8) teachers from Tangub City Central School and Sumirap Central School, selected through purposive sampling. Utilizing qualitative data collection methods and Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis, four significant themes emerged: (1) Challenging and Rewarding Experiences, (2) Overcoming Communication Barriers, (3) Employing Inclusive Strategies and Classroom Management, and (4) Maintaining Professional Development. The findings underscore the need for comprehensive strategies to facilitate inclusive classrooms that cater to the needs of both students and educators. Recommendations include government-led training programs for teachers, fostering collaboration between teachers and parents, promoting peer support, and refining assessment methods to monitor student progress effectively. By implementing these suggestions, the research hopes to contribute to the development of more inclusive and effective learning environments.*

**Keywords:** *Inclusive Education, Generalist Teacher, Lived Experiences, Communication Barriers, Inclusive Strategy, Professional Development*

## **1.0 Introduction**

Inclusive education has become a priority in many educational settings around the world, to provide equitable education for all students, including those with disabilities Tomlinson, (2018). According to Quillen (2018), inclusion is a growing issue in schools today, inclusion affects teachers, administra-

tors, parents, and most significantly, students. Most countries across the world was adopted this curricular innovation. One of the problems they encountered was the deficiency of professional competence in teaching students with special needs in concurrence with the regular students (Allam, 2021). They asserted that they were not trained during their undergraduate years in the

pedagogical practices of handling special students. Also, providing differentiated instruction, varying visual materials, and assessing special students' learning caused them frustration. Their lack of skills added up to their burnout. Moreover, these inclusive education teachers also encountered problems in managing the class. They reported that the lack of background in special education greatly affects their performance and effectiveness as teachers. With these, they explained that their level of confidence as inclusive education teachers was low. It is for the shared sentiments and burnouts this study was carried out (Shani, 2016).

One study by Kavale and Mostert (2015) explored the perspectives of teachers in inclusive classrooms in South Africa. The study found that teachers experienced a range of emotions, including frustration, exhaustion, or burnout due to the demands of inclusive education, as they navigated the complexities of inclusive education (Kauffman, et al. 2019). In Sweden, inclusive classrooms promote collaboration and personalized support for students with diverse needs, leading to positive social interactions, academic success, and increased self-esteem for students with special needs (Gustavsson & Heimann, 2017). In Canada, inclusive classrooms value diversity and provide

various support services, such as assistive technologies, specialized teaching strategies, and professional development for teachers. This approach has resulted in improved academic performance and social integration for students with disabilities (Farrell & Ainscow, 2019). In New Zealand, inclusive education focuses on meeting the diverse needs of all students through collaboration between teachers, students, and families. This approach has resulted in improved educational outcomes, increased student engagement, and enhanced social relationships among students with disabilities (Mitchell & Wevers, 2017).

However, inclusive education in the Philippines is guided by the Saliksik Program, which is a government-mandated curriculum that emphasizes the integration of students with disabilities into regular classrooms. This program provides teachers with training and resources to create accessible and accommodating learning experiences for students with special needs (Buenaventura, 2019). The Department of Education is the implementing arm of all programs related to special education. "In line with the Department's thrust in providing quality and inclusive basic education for all, the Department of Education (DepEd) continues to provide the necessary educational interven-

tions for learners with certain exceptionalities through its Special Education (SpEd) program (Department of Education, 2022). To date, DepEd has recognized a total of 648 Sped Centers and regular schools offering the program, 471 of which are catering to elementary students and 177 are catering to High School students (Kenneth & Sales, 2019).

The Republic Act 11560, signed by President Duterte on March 11th, 2022, establishes that no student should be denied admission due to their disability. This legislation mandates that both public and private schools must guarantee equal access to high-quality education for every student with a disability (Bautista, 2021). It aims to safeguard, uphold, and enhance the rights of all disabled learners, including those belonging to ethnic, religious, linguistic minorities, or indigenous backgrounds, by ensuring that no student with a disability is deprived of their right to accessible, inclusive, and quality education throughout their lives and promoting learning opportunities for them (Senate of the Philippines, 2021). Following the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), there has been persistent advocacy for inclusion and a global commitment to enhance

and promote education for everyone (Ainscow, 2020). Endorsed by 92 governments and 25 international organizations, this Statement asserts that every individual has the right to education and the opportunity to reach their full learning potential within mainstream educational settings. To ensure comprehensive understanding and effective implementation of inclusive education, it is imperative to bridge the gap between local practices, such as those outlined in the Philippines' Saliksik Program, and international frameworks like the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action. By aligning local initiatives with global standards, educators can leverage diverse perspectives and best practices to create inclusive environments that cater to the needs of all students, regardless of geographical location. According to (McManis, 2017), inclusive education operates because students with disabilities are as competent as students without disabilities. Therefore, these students can be full members of their classrooms and the local school community. Moreover, Delgado (2021) says that increasing the inclusiveness of the school and classroom involves active attempts to develop a culture where educators not only accept student differences and diversity, but they celebrate such differences. Also, Gokbulut et al. (2020) further state that in an inclusive education

setting, the main aim is to improve the efficiency of the students with special needs and their peers in their courses by developing adaptations to the teaching materials, teaching methods, and teaching guidelines.

With full inclusion, Tomlinson (2019) states that students with disabilities can go into the regular education classroom with or without an aide in the room to give more one-on-one support to students with disabilities. The aide often helps the student with reading assignments, math skills, written language components, listening skills, focusing, and providing encouragement for the student (Lewis, 2016). Accommodations that the student with disabilities may need are provided in the regular education classroom. While in the regular education classroom, the student with disabilities may be motivated to perform at the pace of the rest of the students and fit in as much as possible (Grandin, 2014). However, West (2016) states that students with learning disabilities may experience frustration due to the content of the material and fast-paced expectations in the regular education classroom. For example, in some schools, a child was placed in an inclusive setting who had a very explosive personality. Noises, changes in routine (Osmond Cook, 2019), and other various classroom activities could lead to an instant

breakdown of this child's behaviors. He would explode into tantrums and become fiercely defiant at any given minute (Greene, 2014). Another example is a school for students with disabilities in my area that has a practice in which students with disabilities are combined with normal students in a regular classroom. As a result, it leads to students with disabilities seeming to be neglected in supporting them to reach their full potential and fostering academic, social, and emotional growth. This was a complicated situation where full inclusion was questionable. The landscape for inclusive education does not only challenge academic institutions, it demands more from teachers at the forefront of an inclusive educational system (Dela Fuente, 2021). Yet there is a lack of understanding about their experiences in creating and maintaining inclusive educational settings.

Therefore, this research aimed to explore the lived experiences of generalist teachers in an inclusive classroom using phenomenological theory or approach. It may uncover the unique challenges that teachers face, such as adapting instructional materials, addressing diverse learning needs, fostering a positive classroom climate, collaborating with support staff and families, and promoting inclusive values and attitudes among students.

Statement of the Problem

This study was conducted to explore the lived experiences of generalist teachers in an inclusive classroom. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What experiences do generalist teachers face in an inclusive classroom?
2. What strategies do generalist teachers use to cope with the challenges they face in an inclusive classroom?

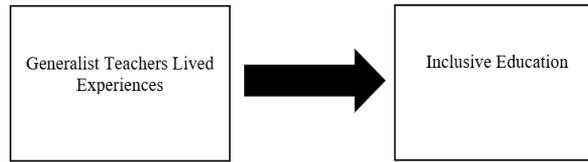
## 2.0 Conceptual Framework

Inclusion in education has transcended the assumption that inclusion is about students with special needs. It concerns the inclusion of all children. With systems theory as a framework, Slee & Allan (2015) states that it examines the interrelationships and interactions between various components within a system. In the context of inclusive education, system theory can be applied to understand the complex dynamics involved in creating inclusive learning environments where all students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally (Smith & Johnson, 2018).

Inclusive education has been the trend in special education all over

the world. Most countries across the world are adopting this move in education. The Philippines is one of those countries that adopted this curricular innovation. One of the problems they encountered was the deficiency of professional competence in teaching students with special needs in concurrence with the regular students (Allam, 2021). They asserted that they were not trained during their undergraduate years in the pedagogical practices of handling special students. Also, providing differentiated instruction, varying visual materials, and assessing special students' learning caused them frustration. Their lack of skills added up to their burnout. Moreover, these inclusive education teachers also encountered problems in managing the class. They reported that the lack of background in special education greatly affects their performance and effectiveness as teachers. With these, they explained that their level of confidence as inclusive education teachers was low. It is for the shared sentiments and burnouts this study was carried out (Shani, 2016).

Figure 1 Schematic Diagram of the Study



### 3.0 Method

#### *Design*

The researchers used a qualitative method specifically a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of the generalist teachers in an inclusive classroom. Teherani et al. (2015) defined phenomenology as a research approach that aims to describe the essence of a phenomenon through the point of view of individuals who have experienced it. This approach is used to understand people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behavior, and interactions. Also, qualitative research represents an approach known as interpretivism (Žukauskas, et al 2018). Ahmed (2017) also discusses that this approach focuses on subjective experiences, perceptions, and interpretations, aiming to uncover the essence of a phenomenon. It involves a suspension of preconceived notions and a focus on the lived experiences of individuals, aiming to uncover the underlying meanings and patterns that emerge from any experiences (Van Manen,

2014). The purpose of phenomenology is to convey the significance of this experience—both what was experienced and how it was experienced (Teherani, et al 2015). Therefore, phenomenology is a suitable research scheme for this study because it consents the investigator to explore the lived experiences of the teachers who experienced teaching in inclusive classrooms.

#### Locale

This study was conducted in the Tangub City Division, particularly at Tangub City Central School and Sumirap Central School. Tangub City Central School has 7.8 hectares and is located in Mantic, Tangub City, Misamis Occidental. Sumirap Central School is also located in Sumirap, Tangub City, Misamis Occidental. These schools allow students with special needs to receive a free and appropriate education along with general education students in the regular classroom, where they still meet their individual needs.

## Participants

In this study, participants were selected based on specific inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure alignment with the research objectives. Inclusion criteria encompassed generalist teachers with experience in inclusive educational settings, particularly those who had worked directly with students with disabilities, ensuring firsthand knowledge of inclusive practices and challenges. The participants who met this criteria were chosen using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling, according to Creswell (2014), allows researchers to select cases based on specific characteristics or criteria that are relevant to the research question, rather than relying on chance or probability. Exclusion criteria included non-teaching staff and individuals lacking experience in inclusive settings or unwilling to participate. In this study, a maximum of 10 participants were invited however, only 8 participants agreed to undertake the research. According to Patton (2015), it is not necessary to comply with the desired participants as long as the researchers ensure that the data is of high quality and provides a deep understanding of the research topic. By employing these criteria, the study aimed to gather insights from educators with relevant experience, fostering a comprehensive understanding of teaching practices

in inclusive environments, particularly regarding the integration of students with disabilities. The study was conducted in the province of Misamis Occidental, Northern Mindanao.

## Instrument

In this study, the principal instrument was the researchers. Creswell (2013) emphasized that the researcher was expected to serve as the primary data collector and analyst in qualitative research. This study used semi-structured interviews. Magaldi and Berler (2020) outlined a semi-structured conference as a probing strategy grounded on guide questions and customized to the primary subject that provided a broad pattern. Gaytos, et al., (2020) noted that phenomenological research generally used semi-structured in-depth interviews with small groups. Researchers may learn what it was like to witness phenomena from various people's viewpoints.

## Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher conducted an in-depth interview with the teachers in the Tangub City Division, particularly at Tangub City Central School and Sumirap Central School. According to Smith (2017), in-depth interviews provide researchers with the opportunity to delve into the

personal experiences, thoughts, and attitudes of participants. Additionally, researchers must be mindful of their own biases and avoid leading questions that may influence the responses of participants (Clark, 2021). In this study, the question that is being used in the interview is a researcher-made guide question. These questions are a crucial component of qualitative research as they help in identifying and unfolding key themes, concepts, and patterns in the data by providing a framework for organizing and analyzing the information gathered during the research process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), as well as determining the experiences of the teachers in inclusive education.

### *Data Analysis*

The data collected from the interviews was analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the process of identifying and interpreting patterns or themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2014) and this method involves reading through a set of data and looking for patterns in the meaning of the data to find themes (Hennick, 2018). This analysis will consist of a thorough evaluation of the interview transcripts to discover general patterns and themes connected to the research topics. In this study, the use of thematic analysis will en-

able the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences and perspectives of the study participants and identify any emerging themes. Additionally, the researcher's reflexivity was integral to the study design, ensuring self-awareness and acknowledging personal biases throughout the research process (Brown, 2019).

### *Trustworthiness*

To maintain the study's credibility, Lincoln and Guba's (1981) criteria were employed. This involved selecting appropriate methods for participant choice and data analysis. Additionally, researchers provided participants with their interview transliterations for review and verification (Stahl & King, 2020). Furthermore, peer debriefing was utilized to confirm the study's findings.

### *Ethical Considerations*

The principles of ethical considerations outlined by Bell and Bryman (2007) were complied with in this study. The research participants were not subjected to harm in any way. The dignity and well-being of research participants must be prioritized at all times (Liamputtong & Dunn, 2018). Before the study began, the participants provided informed consent, as it is one of the critical components of respecting

the research participants (Kimmel & Creswell, 2015). Moreover, deception and exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the study were avoided (McNutt, 2019).

**4.0 Results and Discussion**

Table 1

Themes	Subthemes
1. Challenging and Rewarding Experiences	1.1 Emotional Roller-coaster 1.2 Motivation as a Driving Factor
2. Overcoming Communication Barriers	2.1: Communication Challenges with Learners with Disabilities
3. Employing Inclusive Strategies and Classroom Management	3.1: Tailoring Instruction to Individual Needs
4. Maintaining Professional Development	4.1: Monitoring and Measurement of Success

Four themes emerged after analyzing the data: (a) Challenging and Rewarding Experiences; (b) Overcoming Communication Barriers; (c) Employing Inclusive Strategies and Classroom Management; (d) Professional Development.

***Challenging and Rewarding Experiences***

This theme elicits that teachers in inclusive educational settings encounter many challenges as they work in a classroom with a wide range of abilities and disabilities, yet, it is also rewarding to them knowing that the students meet the needs of the teachers, especially those students with disabilities.

*“Teaching in inclusive settings is like a bittersweet journey. The challenges sometimes lead to frustration, especially when trying to meet the diverse needs of students. It takes time and patience.” (P1)*  
*“Yes, it can be hard. There are moments when the diverse behaviors and needs of students can be overwhelming. I feel frustrated, particularly when dealing with behavioral challenges that disrupt the learning environment.” (P3)*

These responses represent that being a teacher in an inclusive classroom can be challenging, particularly when it comes to managing the behavioral needs of students with diverse learning

that leads to destruction if it is not quickly addressed by the teacher (Tomlinson 2014). Teaching in an inclusive classroom can be difficult and requires a significant amount of preparation and planning, which requires the teachers to be flexible, creative, and willing to learn new strategies (Thomas, 2016). Despite those challenges, participants 1 and 3 felt overwhelmed after seeing their students' progress. It is also incredibly rewarding to the teachers to see students with diverse learning needs succeed and grow in an inclusive environment (Hemmeter, 2017, p. 24). These responses above are living proof that in inclusive education, "No one is left behind".

Interestingly, Participant One (1) and Participant Four (4) share various techniques or strategies that they have used while teaching in inclusive classrooms.

*"To manage frustration, I've learned to be resourceful. I use localized materials and contextualize them for better understanding. Patience is key, and sincerity in teaching helps build confidence." (P1)* *"Patience is my go-to strategy. Dealing with the behavior and different needs of learners requires a lot of it. But at the end of the year, seeing progress, especially in reading, brings a sense of accomplishment." (P4)*

These statements show that challenges require effort, skills, and often creativity to overcome. Frustration is a natural part of learning, but it should not be allowed to escalate to the point where it becomes debilitating (Dinovitzer, 2021). Inclusive education requires teachers to adopt a range of strategies that promote success for all students (Harris & Harris, 2016). These strategies include understanding and accommodating diverse learners, creating a positive learning environment, and providing differentiated instruction (Lee, 2021). *Participant 1 and Participant 4* reported that they can manage frustration in inclusive classrooms by having patience in dealing with the diverse needs of students, being resourceful, and applying strategies such as localizing materials and conceptualizing for better understanding. At the individual level, Rosa and Brown (2014) argue that teachers can provide students with disabilities with accommodations and modifications that match their learning styles and abilities.

Fortunately, inclusive teachers take great joy in witnessing their students' progress because they see the impact of their hard work and dedication. Teachers must also understand that every student has the potential to learn and grow (Wynns, 2021), regardless of their abilities or

disabilities. By providing and giving extra time, effort, and accommodations, inclusive teachers help students overcome the barriers and achieve their full potential (Douglas, 2021).

*“It’s not easy, but it’s enjoyable, especially when you see your students improve. I had a slow learner, and witnessing their progress after giving extra time and effort is truly satisfying.” (P5)*

Participant Eight (8) also feels pride when their students achieve academic goals. As Wynns (2021) said, it is a testament to their hard work and dedication that Gross (2021) has invested a lot of time, effort, patience, and resources into planning and delivering effective lessons. Truly, teachers take pride in seeing their students grow academically, as it validates their teaching practices and reinforces their commitment to helping students reach their full potential.

*“Yes, there are times of frustration, but there’s also pride, especially when 90% of the learners can read at the end of the year. Continuous effort pays off.” (P8)*

Their statements explicitly recognize the importance of promoting efforts and accessibility in education and strive to create inclusive

learning environments that foster academic success and personal growth for all students, as Participant 8 stated that 90% of the learners can read at the end of the year. This means that students with disabilities who can access and participate in the learning environment are more likely to achieve academic success. This success can bring a sense of pride and satisfaction to teachers, as it is a testament to the effectiveness of inclusive teaching practices and the commitment of the teacher to providing equitable opportunities for all learners (Burgstahler & Meter, 2018). Generally, this success provides practical and effective strategies for creating an inclusive learning environment that supports all students in achieving academic goals.

### ***Overcoming Communication Barriers***

Overcoming communication barriers refers to the challenges that teachers face when working with students who have communication barriers due to disabilities, language differences, or cultural backgrounds. However, inclusive teachers who work with students with communication barriers must be flexible, patient, and creative in finding ways to overcome these barriers.

*“Engaging with different be-*

*haviors and needs can be challenging. Especially when some students face difficulty in verbal expression, it disrupts the learning environment. (P3).*

Basically, in one classroom, it is uncommon for kids to display differing behaviors and requirements. According to Johnson and Brown (2019), there may be disturbances in the classroom when students struggle with verbal expressiveness. These interruptions might manifest in several ways, including disobedient conduct, a lack of involvement, or annoyance from other students. For instance, when a student struggles with verbal expression, they could get angry or unruly if they can't properly convey their demands or thoughts. Other students may become sidetracked or lose focus as a result, which could negatively affect the learning environment (Brown & Jones, 2020).

However, Participant 3 added:

*“To overcome this, I use alternative means like one-on-one reading sessions. Sometimes writing or drawing helps them express themselves.” (P3)*

This response highlights the importance of providing alternative avenues for communication to overcome challenges and facilitate effective expression. One-on-one

reading sessions are mentioned as an effective method to overcome communication barriers. Research conducted by Smith and Johnson (2018) demonstrated that one-on-one reading sessions significantly improve vocabulary and language skills, particularly in individuals with limited language proficiency. Thompson (2020), added that one-on-one reading sessions can greatly boost confidence and self-esteem in individuals struggling with communication barriers. Participant 3 also emphasizes the use of writing as an alternative means to overcome communication barriers. Writing allows individuals to express their thoughts and emotions. Similarly, writing is a powerful tool that enables individuals to express their thoughts, emotions, and ideas. Individuals with hearing impairments can engage in written conversations or utilize assistive technologies such as speech-to-text (Smith, 2019). It provides them with the opportunity to take their time, reflect, and organize their ideas before communicating them. This positive reinforcement contributes to the development of effective communication skills.

Participant Seven (7) unfolds the idea that group activities play a crucial role in enhancing teamwork, collaboration, and overall productivity within a group setting.

*Teaching in an inclusive*

*classroom involves evaluating frustrations, especially in the behavior of students. Group activities help foster camaraderie and address challenges like differing learning speeds. (P7)*

Group activities have proven to be an effective strategy for addressing challenges posed by differing learning speeds and fostering camaraderie in an inclusive classroom. According to Johnson and Johnson (2019), cooperative learning activities encourage students to work together, allowing them to support each other so they can learn from each other. This approach not only enhances academic achievement but also promotes social interaction, empathy, and collaboration among students with diverse abilities, as suggested by Tomlinson and Allan (2019).

Participant seven (7) added:

*“Interactive tasks are essential. By addressing gaps in social relationships, we can create a more inclusive classroom environment.” (P7)*

The responses provided succinctly capture the essence of the importance of interactive tasks in creating a more inclusive classroom environment. It highlights the significance of addressing gaps in social relationships through the implementation of

interactive tasks. In traditional classroom settings, certain students may dominate discussions, while others may feel marginalized or unheard. However, interactive tasks provide an equal platform for all students to contribute their thoughts and ideas, regardless of their background or abilities (Balli & Sandra, 2019).

### **Employing Inclusive Strategies and Classroom Management**

This theme presents the strategies used by teachers to maintain order in the classroom, knowing that all students have unique learning needs, various styles, and different challenges that they are facing. Therefore, it is the responsibility of teachers to provide different strategies to meet the various needs of the students.

Participant 8 says that:

*“I use a Buddy-System, where learners with difficulties have a partner. This way, they can seek help and work more efficiently. Consent from both parents and pupils is crucial. It ensures that everyone is comfortable with this approach.” (P8)*

This Buddy-System mentioned above has proven to Participant 8 to be beneficial in promoting social interaction, academic support, and overall inclusivity as they can

seek help and work more efficiently with their peers. According to a study by Puspasari (2018), students who participated in the buddy-system strategy showed significant improvements in their academic skills, such as reading, writing, and math. While doing this unique strategy, Participant added that consent from both parents and pupils is crucial. It ensures that everyone is comfortable with this approach. This means that teachers must work collaboratively with families and communities to support student learning, including communicating regularly with parents about student progress and building partnerships with the schools' organizations to provide additional resources and support. By implementing the Buddy-System in a classroom, participant 8 adapts tasks to be more practical and attainable for all the students, more specifically those who struggle.

*"We modify activities to make them more realistic and achievable for learners with difficulties. It's about adapting to their needs. Learners with difficulties get more time during quizzes or exams. This helps ensure they have a fair chance to showcase their knowledge." (P8)*

In the field of education, it is crucial to ensure that learning activities are appropriately modified to meet

the needs and abilities of students. Other literature shows that a solution for better learning outcomes is often associated with time management; and effort. This modified activity is a way to achieve and adapt to their needs by reducing test anxiety, increasing comprehension and understanding, enhancing critical thinking skills, improving knowledge retention, and extending time allocation as it creates a more favorable environment for students to showcase their true abilities. According to Chen & Lee (2021) says that longer time allocations, such as 60 or 90 minutes, can provide students with more opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and critical thinking abilities. This means that by allowing more time, students can take a more strategic approach to the activity, to express their thoughts and focus on the tasks they are most confident in.

### ***Maintaining Professional Development***

Theme four focuses on how educators assess their student's performance in an inclusive classroom using assessment and evaluation to determine each student's strengths and shortcomings including those students with disabilities or unique learning needs. By understanding where students are starting from, teachers can tailor instruction to

meet their individual needs and provide appropriate accommodations or modifications.

*“Monitoring class targets and objectives is crucial. It helps me assess the success of my efforts and make adjustments when needed.” (P8)*

Based on this statement, by monitoring and ensuring class targets and objectives teachers can track student progress and identify areas where students may be struggling. Participant 8 also says that this ensures students receive the necessary support and resources to stay on track and achieve their learning goals, Friend (2018) receives appropriate instruction and support in inclusive classrooms.

However, participant 4 used different techniques to assess the student’s progress which also allowed teachers to measure the effectiveness of their teaching practices.

*“I use Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) to assess progress. Assessment is key in evaluating the effectiveness of my teaching methods.” (P4)*

The above statement about the idea of using Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) is also an effective way to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching methods and to

assess the progress of the students as Participant 4 says. This information also enables the teachers to tailor their teaching methods and interventions to meet the individual needs of each child, (Yan, 2013) enabling them to refine their approach and enhance student learning outcomes ensuring that they receive appropriate support and guidance. Teachers may grasp new ideas and strategies by joining the workshop, as Participant 8 said,

*“I completed a 5-day training on Special Education. Seminars contribute significantly to professional development and understanding of inclusive education. Seminars enhance teaching strategies and the understanding of learners. They provide insights into handling diverse needs in an inclusive setting.” (P8)*

The above responses indicate the importance of attending trainings and workshops as it helps teachers on dealing and understand inclusive classrooms and provides them with the needed skills and knowledge where it contribute to high and significant professional development that can benefit every student’s academic performance and social-emotional growth.

## 5.0 Conclusion

The study has provided

valuable insights into the experiences of teachers working in inclusive classrooms with learners with disabilities. The participants shared a range of challenges related to behavior management, different learning styles and abilities, communication difficulties, and academic performance. However, they also highlighted the importance of providing alternative avenues such as differentiated instruction, modified activities, buddy systems, and evaluation methods to foster inclusivity to overcome challenges and facilitate effective expression in their classroom. By implementing these strategies consistently and collaboratively across all aspects of the educational system, teachers can promote academic success, social skills, and positive behavior for all students in their classrooms and ensure that all students have equal opportunities for learning and growth in inclusive classrooms. To enhance the quality of education for learners with disabilities, several recommendations are proposed. Teachers should actively participate in professional development opportunities, while schools must invest in continuous training and resource allocation. Encouraging collaboration and appreciation among students can break down barriers and promote mutual understanding. Parents should support their children's participation in school activities to

boost confidence and social skills. Lastly, future researchers are encouraged to build upon this study, further exploring the lived experiences of generalist teachers in inclusive educational settings, ultimately aiming to improve the overall effectiveness of inclusive education.

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