



Teaching in Two Worlds: The Lived Experiences of Receiving Teachers Teaching Learners in a Mainstreamed Classroom

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ABSTRACT :

Despite growing recognition of inclusive education, teachers face significant challenges in balancing the needs of students with disabilities alongside their peers in both self-contained and regular classrooms, leading to potential burnout and inconsistencies in educational delivery. This study aims to explore the experiences of teachers in these dual roles, focusing on how various factors influence their teaching approaches and effectiveness. Employing a qualitative research design, data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with eight teachers from the Municipality of Caraga. The findings reveal that teachers' strategies are heavily influenced by their interactions with students, colleagues, and parents, and their methods are adjusted based on classroom environments and available resources. To support the sustainable implementation of inclusive practices, it is recommended that schools enhance professional development opportunities tailored to inclusive education and improve resource allocation to better support both teachers and students.

Keywords: Inclusive education, teacher experiences phenomenological approach, classroom management

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Its Setting

Poor teaching support remains a critical issue for educators teaching learner with disabilities and regular classrooms. Despite the demands of this dual role—which requires specialized skills, adaptability, and emotional resilience—many teachers receive limited guidance, resources, or professional development to navigate the complexities of inclusive teaching. This lack of support contributes to increased stress, emotional fatigue, and professional burnout, posing a persistent challenge in the field of inclusive education (Forlin & Chambers, 2019; Jennings & Greenberg, 2019).

Poor teaching support is a widespread issue affecting teachers of learners with disabilities across various countries. In the United States, poor teaching support is evident in the lack of assistance for managing behavioral challenges and special education demands (Hirsch et al., 2022). In India, poor teaching support is reflected in the limited professional training and institutional backing for inclusive education (Reiner, 2018). In several European countries, poor teaching support arises from inconsistent policies and unequal resource allocation, which place added pressure on special education teachers (Jones, Kensil, Peltzman, & Petru, 2019).

In the Philippines, poor teaching support continues to hinder the effective implementation of inclusive education. Despite the Department of Education's policy efforts and training initiatives (DepEd, 2019), many teachers still lack adequate preparation in special needs education, limiting their ability to manage inclusive classrooms (Maligalig, 2020). This lack of training, combined with insufficient resources and support, leaves both teachers and learners with disabilities at a disadvantage (Manalo, 2019).

If left unaddressed, these multifaceted challenges may lead to more incredible teacher burnout, reduced instructional quality, and disrupted learning experiences for students with and without disabilities. The lack of in-depth, context-specific research, particularly in the Philippines, on how teachers navigate their dual roles highlights a critical gap in the literature. This study aims to explore the interplay of teachers' knowledge, social interactions, cultural contexts, and physical environments in shaping their pedagogical practices. Insights from this research will help design targeted support systems and training programs to enhance teachers' capacity to create inclusive and effective learning spaces.

Significance of the Study

This study aims to enhance the understanding of how educators can effectively integrate students with disabilities in diverse learning environments, providing crucial insights for developing targeted training programs and resources that support teachers in managing complex classroom dynamics. By exploring the cultural and social dynamics of inclusion, the research also contributes to aligning educational practices with communities' cultural values and expectations, fostering inclusive, respectful, and responsive environments for all students of diverse backgrounds. Additionally, the insights gained

can inform policy-making and strategic planning in education sectors worldwide, guiding infrastructure development to ensure that educational facilities are designed to support the needs of all learners, thereby improving educational outcomes for students with disabilities.

Moreover, this research directly contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. By addressing the specific challenges teachers face in inclusive settings, the study supports the goal's targets, particularly those aimed at eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring access for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities. Lastly, this research contributes to academic knowledge and plays a vital role in driving practical improvements in educational practice. It fosters a more equitable and empowering learning landscape, paving the way for a more inclusive society where everyone can thrive.

Statement of the Problem

Specifically, the study will address the following questions:

1. What are the behavioral characteristics shared by receiving teachers to effect learning in a mainstreamed classroom?
2. What are the personal attributes of receiving teachers that affect learning in a mainstreamed classroom?
3. What are the environmental conditions undertaken by receiving teachers that affect learning in a mainstreamed classroom?

Assumptions

This study operates under key assumptions emphasizing the interconnectedness of personal, environmental, and behavioral factors. Ontologically, it assumes that teachers' realities are actively constructed through ongoing interactions between their knowledge, beliefs, and the educational contexts they navigate, specifically self-contained and regular classrooms. Their experiences and instructional practices evolve as they interpret and respond to varying demands within these distinct classroom settings. Epistemologically, the study assumes that valuable insights into inclusive teaching are best uncovered through teachers' reflective narratives. These narratives capture teachers' perceptions of their instructional roles, responsibilities, and pedagogical choices, deeply influenced by personal cognition, classroom environments, and social interactions.

Methodologically, it assumes that employing a qualitative phenomenological approach, primarily through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, is effective in illuminating the complexities of teachers' lived experiences. This approach rests on the premise that teachers can articulate how their instructional behaviors develop in response to environmental contexts, particularly physical classroom arrangements, resources, and the social dynamics within classrooms. Theoretically, the research posits that learning and teaching behaviors are shaped by reciprocal interactions among personal cognitive factors, environmental influences, and behavioral practices. Thus, the study assumes personal knowledge and self-efficacy significantly influence teachers' instructional decision-making, adaptation, and resilience across both self-contained and regular classroom contexts. Furthermore, physical environments, including classroom layouts and resource availability, directly shape instructional practices, affecting teacher confidence and effectiveness in managing diverse student needs. Additionally, social interactions within classroom environments profoundly influence teachers' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities, shaping their professional behaviors and instructional approaches. Collectively, these assumptions guide the investigation of how teachers navigate the complexities inherent in teaching learners with disabilities across diverse educational contexts.

Theoretical Lens

Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) will serve as an integral theoretical framework in the study, by examining how teachers' personal, environmental, and behavioral factors dynamically interact in shaping the instructional experiences and practices of receiving teachers teaching learners in a mainstreamed classroom. Specifically, the personal factors will address teachers' knowledge about teaching in both self-contained and regular classrooms, influencing their instructional decisions and strategies. Environmental factors will focus on teachers' experiences related to the physical contexts, examining how the arrangement, resources, and overall classroom environment influence their teaching effectiveness and instructional adaptation. Lastly, behavioral factors will explore teachers' experiences concerning social interactions within classrooms, particularly emphasizing how relationships with learners, colleagues, and administrators shape their perceptions of their roles and responsibilities. Through this triadic interaction, this study will illuminate how teachers construct and adapt their teaching practices in response to the complexities of handling learners with disabilities across diverse educational settings.

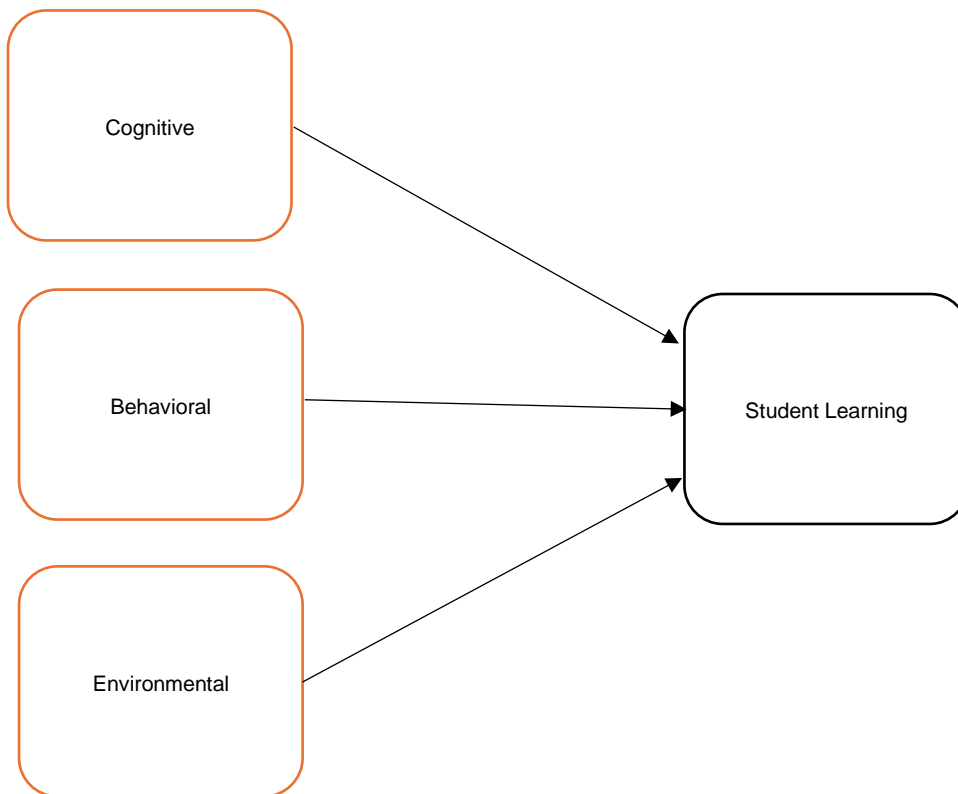
Paradigm

The paradigm of this study, as illustrated, reflects Bandura's reciprocal determinism concept, highlighting the dynamic interplay between personal factors, environmental factors, and behavior. Personal factors encompass teachers' knowledge, beliefs, self-efficacy, and instructional decision-making abilities. These factors significantly influence how teachers perceive their roles, respond to instructional challenges, and adapt their strategies across both self-contained and regular classrooms. Teachers' personal cognition serves as an internal driving force guiding their pedagogical choices and professional growth.

Environmental factors pertain to the physical context, such as classroom arrangements, availability of resources, and the overall instructional environment. These external elements significantly shape the teaching process by either facilitating or hindering effective instructional delivery. Classroom layouts and resources directly impact teachers' confidence levels, influencing their ability to effectively manage diverse student needs and implement adaptive teaching strategies.

Behavior, represented by teachers' actions and professional practices, is influenced by both personal and environmental factors, and simultaneously influences these factors. The social interactions and dynamics within the classroom are critical behavioral aspects, affecting teachers' perceptions of their roles, responsibilities, and overall instructional effectiveness. The reciprocal relationship among these three dimensions—personal cognition,

environmental conditions, and instructional behavior—forms the core of this study's theoretical framework, guiding the exploration of teachers' experiences in managing learners with disabilities in varied educational contexts.



CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

This chapter comprised the research methods which included the research design, locale of the study, sample sampling, interview guide questions, data gathering technique, data analysis, and trustworthiness of the study.

Research Design

In this study, I employed a phenomenological approach. As Umanailo (2019) emphasized, phenomenology is effective in capturing the depth of personal realities, which enriched my understanding of how inclusive education unfolds within the contextual challenges of mainstream classrooms

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the Schools Division of Davao Oriental, which comprises 17 school districts. Specifically, the research took place in the Caraga North and South District, providing a localized perspective on implementing inclusive education among Special Needs Education (SNED) teachers and receiving teachers within this area.

Sample and Sampling

Using purposive sampling, eight teachers who had experience teaching mainstreamed class, were selected based on specific inclusion criteria. As Campbell et al. (2020) emphasized, purposive sampling is ideal for capturing rich, context-specific insights from individuals with direct experience of the phenomenon under investigation.

Interview Guide Questions

The semi-structured interview guide, reviewed by two graduate school experts and one external specialist in Special Needs Education, was translated into the local dialect. This adaptation ensured culturally meaningful responses, allowing participants to share in-depth insights about their inclusive teaching experiences and challenges.

Data Gathering Technique

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Society for Moral Integrity and Legal Ethics (SMILE), along with a dean's endorsement, followed by official permission from the Schools Division of Davao Oriental. Prior to data collection, informed consent was secured and Focus Group Discussions were conducted in private settings on weekends, with sessions recorded and transcribed—meals, transport, and tokens were also provided to ensure ethical and convenient participation.

Data Analysis

Guided by Colaizzi's (1978) descriptive phenomenological method as outlined by Allman et al. (2024), I followed a structured approach to analyze the data. This process included immersing in the transcripts, extracting significant statements, formulating meanings, clustering themes, and validating the findings with the participants to ensure accuracy and authenticity.

Trustworthiness

I ensured the study's trustworthiness through strategies aligned with Creswell and Poth (2018), focusing on credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

- ***On Credibility.*** To ensure credibility, I used prolonged engagement, member checking, and triangulation across interviews, notes, and observations for deeper understanding. As Shufutinsky (2020) emphasized, transparency and self-reflection are key to maintaining trustworthiness in qualitative research.
- ***On Transferability.*** To support transferability, I offered comprehensive and vivid descriptions of the study's context, participants, and methods, enabling readers to assess the relevance of the findings to their own settings. As Ahmed (2024) notes, providing thick description is essential in qualitative research as it allows others to draw meaningful connections between study and their educational environments.
- ***On Dependability.*** To ensure dependability, I followed a consistent and well-documented research process, detailing each step of data collection and analysis. I also incorporated peer debriefing and maintained audit trails to enhance transparency and ensure that the findings could be replicated in similar contexts. As Haq, Rasheed, Rashid, and Akhter (2023) assert, audit trails are vital for establishing trustworthiness by allowing others to trace the progression and decisions made throughout the research.
- ***On Confirmability.*** To ensure confirmability, I engaged in continuous reflexivity and maintained an audit trail to record all research decisions and interpretations. Peer debriefing and member checking were also applied to reduce personal bias and confirm that the findings authentically represented the participants' lived experiences. As Ahmed (2024) emphasizes, such practices are essential for maintaining objectivity and trustworthiness in qualitative research.

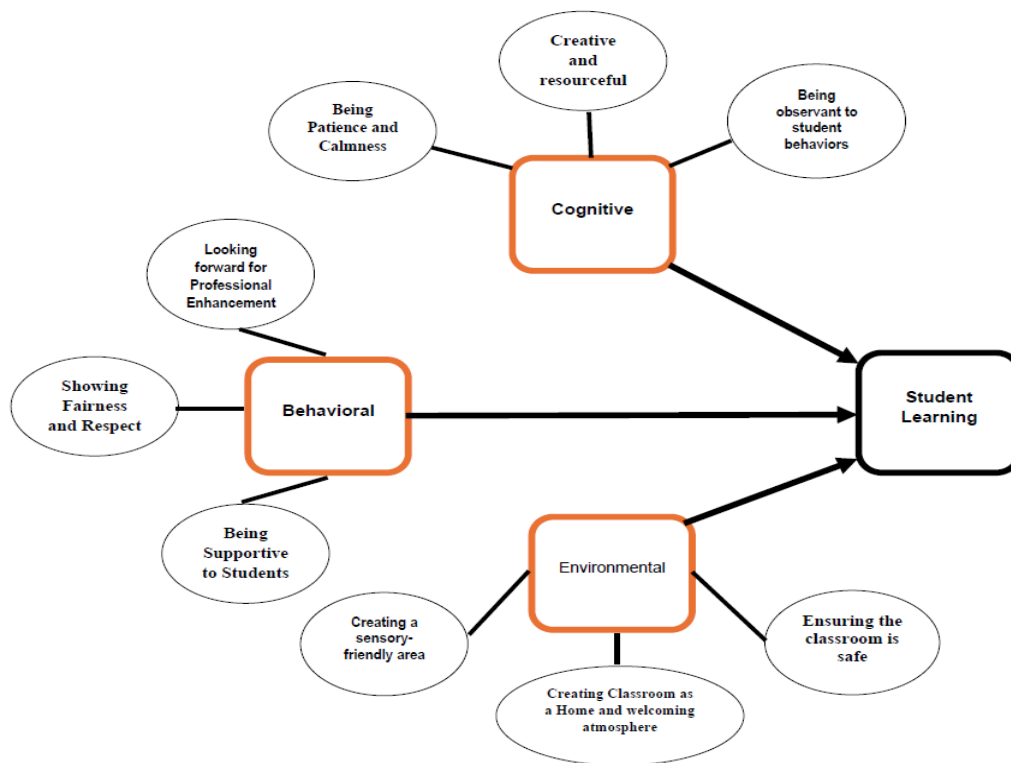
Chapter 3

RESULTS

As I explored the lived experiences of receiving teachers living with the challenges of teaching in mainstream classroom, their stories revealed the complex experiences of working in two educational worlds. From these insights, I restructured the original theoretical framework to reflect the themes that truly captured their dual-role journeys.

Modified Paradigm

The visual representation captures the core of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), showing the interaction of cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors in mainstream classrooms. (1) Cognitive attributes like creativity, observance, and resourcefulness reflect how teachers respond to student needs using internal strategies. (2) Behavioral traits such as fairness, supportiveness, and professional growth demonstrate consistent actions that enhance learning. (3) Environmental elements, including classroom safety and sensory-friendly spaces, illustrate how teachers shape supportive settings, while patience and calmness appear across all domains, highlighting their central role in inclusive teaching..



Themes and Corresponding Emerging Sub themes

This study explored the lived experiences of receiving teachers in mainstreamed classroom through the lens of Social Cognitive Theory. It revealed that amidst personal and environmental challenges, such as behavioral demands and classroom limitations, teachers exercised creativity, patience, and professional commitment to foster inclusive student learning.

Cognitive Attributes of Receiving Teachers

After analyzing the responses of the participants responses about cognitive attributes of receiving teachers that affect learning in a mainstream classroom, these are the following themes formed: (1) being patience and calmness, (2) creative and resourceful, and (3) being observant to student behaviors.

On Being Patience and Calmness. Among all the virtues a teacher must carry into the classroom, patience is perhaps the most silent yet most powerful. It is not written on our lesson plans, and it garners no applause—but it holds the classroom together like invisible thread. As I listened to the stories of the teachers, I felt something shift inside me. Their calmness was not indifference; it was a choice—an act of quiet defiance in the face of daily storms.

Teacher 2's words stayed with me long after our conversation ended. She leaned back slightly, her eyes scanning the distance as though recalling a specific student. Her voice was steady, her tone tender.

Kailangan gyud og taas nga pasensya, labi na kung ang bata mag-sige og sigeg likoy o dili mosunod. Dili man pwede kasab-an lang diretso. Ako, muhilom ra ko, hunahunaon sa nako unsay maayo buhaton, kay basin ug naa ra pud siyay giagian."

You really need a lot of patience, especially when the child keeps misbehaving or does not follow instructions. You can't just scold them immediately. As for me, I just stay quiet first and think carefully about what the best thing to do is, because maybe the child is going through something. (T2-L-550-553-Pg.14)

I watched her as she spoke—her hands clasped gently together; her brows slightly furrowed. Her posture mirrored the very lesson she was trying to teach me: respond not with noise, but with stillness. And as she reflected on her students, I could see the gentleness in her eyes. I could feel the weight of what it means to pause, to reflect, to choose compassion when frustration is the easier path. I felt humbled—because I, too, have raised my voice when silence might have done more.

Then there was Teacher 6, who chuckled softly before she spoke, as though laughing at how much restraint the job really demands.

"While in the regular classrooms, naa gyud time nga maglagot ka pero kalma lang gyud, kay dili pareha tanan og learning capacity. Kung dili makasabot, balik-balikan lang nako, bisag kapila."

In the regular class, there are really times you get frustrated but you just need to stay calm, because not all students have the same learning capacity. If they don't understand, I just repeat the lesson, even if it takes a lot of times. (T6-L-575-578-Pg.15)

Her words were not merely repetition, they were about endurance. The kind that requires emotional muscle. I smiled and nodded as she shared, recalling my own days of re-teaching a single concept more times than I could count, my voice growing hoarse but my heart refusing to give up. Her story reminded me that learning is not a race, and calmness is not weakness, it's strength cloaked in grace.

Teacher 3 offered a perspective that felt like a warm embrace. She spoke of emotional control not as a skill, but as a responsibility.

“Ang kalma nga teacher, mas sayon duolon sa mga bata. Mao nang bisan unsa pa kabug-at sa akong gibati, kalma lang gihapon ko. Dili gyud ko musungka og kasuko sa mga bata.”

A calm teacher is easier for the students to approach. That's why no matter how heavy I feel emotionally, I remain calm. I never take out my anger on the students. (T3-L-1187-1188-Pg.31)

Her voice lowered, and I could sense her pain—the unspoken emotional battles fought alone. The way she spoke of heaviness made me want to reach across the table and say, *“You are seen.”* Because I knew that weight. I carried it too. But the way she turned her burden into a soft tone and open arms—it felt heroic. I saw in her the kind of teacher I wanted to become: one whose calm invites healing.

And then, softly, with eyes full of understanding, Teacher 8 added her truth.

“Kalma ug pasensyosa gyud ko nga teacher. Di man gud parehas ang mga bata sa ilang kinaiya. So ako, maghulat lang gyud ko kung kanus-a sila ready. Dili nako pugson.”

I really am a calm and patient teacher. Each child is different in behavior. So I just wait until they are ready. I don't force them. (T3-L-719-720-Pg.19)

She smiled as she said this, a gentle curve that said more than her words. Her calmness wasn't just a classroom strategy, it was a way of life. Her body language was loose, her shoulders relaxed, her voice like a quiet stream. I saw wisdom in her presence, the kind that comes from years of waiting—not just for students to learn, but for them to bloom.

Listening to them felt like being in a room filled with quiet power. Their patience wasn't passive. It was deeply intentional. It was a shield against burnout, a balm for anxious hearts, and a bridge toward truly inclusive education. These stories taught me that patience is not about enduring chaos—it is about transforming it, moment by moment, with steady hands and a calm heart.

On Being Creative and Resourceful. There is a quiet genius in every teacher who walks into a classroom armed with nothing but heart and a handful of discarded materials. Listening to these educators, I began to understand that creativity and resourcefulness are not just traits, they are lifelines. They are the whispered truths of teachers who have turned scarcity into opportunity, and limitations into inspiration. This wasn't an innovation born out of convenience; it was a necessity transformed into art.

Teacher 1 spoke with the kind of honesty that disarms you. There was no pretense in her voice, only pride layered with vulnerability.

So dapat ang teacher, resourceful, yes. Resourceful si teacher para if ever naglisod siya or unsa ba... unya mangutana sa mga kauban, dili kay magpa-bright-bright nga kabalo mag-handle pero naglisod diay. So mao to, nagbuhat ko og mga materials gikan ra sa recycled nga mga papel, kanang walay gasto pero makahatag og impact sa bata.”

“So the teacher must be resourceful, yes. A resourceful teacher will ask colleagues for help when struggling, rather than pretending to know everything but actually having a hard time. So what I did was create materials out of recycled paper—no cost, but impactful for the learners. (T1-L-886-890-Pg.23)

I could see her in that moment—scissors in hand, surrounded by scraps of colored paper, piecing together learning one cut at a time. I imagined the soft rustle of recycled pages transforming into flashcards, charts, and games. Her story hit close to home. I remembered the nights I spent printing worksheets on a secondhand printer, praying it wouldn't jam. Her laughter, laced with humility, reminded me that true brilliance often hides behind simplicity.

Teacher 4's voice carried a quiet kind of power. There was no resentment, only resolve.

“Kami sa SPED, dili gyud pwede na walay gamit. Mao nga bisan walay budget, mangita gyud ko og paagi. Usahay maghimo ko og flashcards gamit ra mga lumang kartolina ug markers. Importante kaayo nga naa silay makita og magunitan.”

In SPED, you cannot teach without materials. So even without a budget, I always find a way. Sometimes, I make flashcards using old cartolinas and markers. It's very important that they can see and touch something. (T4-L-637-639-Pg.17)

As she spoke, I noticed her fingers unconsciously miming the act of cutting paper. Her hands, perhaps calloused from crafting, carried stories of creation. I felt my heart stir at the thought of her rummaging through old supplies, turning faded cartolinas into vibrant tools for learning. What she lacked in funding, she made up for in faith—faith that something made with love can still light a child's mind.

And then there was Teacher 7—unapologetically raw and refreshingly real. She smiled sheepishly, almost embarrassed by her “ugly” drawings.

“Ang akong creativity, mugawas kung walay gamit. Pananglitan, wala koy visual aids, magdrawing lang ko sa whiteboard bisag bati. Basta makasabot ang bata, okay na ko. Ingon ana ko ka-resourceful.”

My creativity comes out when there are no materials. For example, if I don't have visual aids, I'll just draw on the whiteboard even if it's not good. As long as the child understands, I'm okay with that. That's how resourceful I am. (T7-L-660-662-Pg.17)

Her laugh filled the room, contagious and warm. I chuckled with her, picturing lopsided trees and stick figures drawn with urgency but filled with intention. What she painted on the whiteboard may not have been perfect—but it worked. It connected. Her story reminded me that education is not about polished visuals—it's about understanding, about reaching a learner where they are with whatever tools are at hand. Teacher 3 brought in another layer—the need for personalization, especially in sensory learning.

“Dili pareha sa ubang klase nga kompleto ug gamit. Kami, kung unsa ra ang naa, amo ra gyud gamiton. Usahay maghimo mi og educational toys gikan sa cardboard. Labi na sa mga sensory activities, kinahanglan gyud i-personalize ang materials.”

Unlike other classes that have complete materials, we just make use of what we have. Sometimes we create educational toys out of cardboard. Especially for sensory activities, materials really need to be personalized. (T3-L-692-694-Pg.18)

There was care in every word she said. I could see her kneeling beside a child, holding a cardboard shape she had crafted the night before. There was something sacred in that scene. Personalized materials are not just tools, they are extensions of love, patience, and a deep understanding of each learner's world. Her words reminded me that teaching is also about crafting experiences that feel tailor-made, even when made from scraps. Lastly, Teacher 2 shared her quiet determination. Her tone was low, reflective, as if unveiling a truth too long kept in the shadows.

“Nakat-on na gyud ko og pangita og paagi maski walay support. Ako mismo ang nag-print og mga learning materials sa balay. Usahay, ako pa mag-cut and paste para lang naa mi gamiton sa klase.”

I've really learned how to find ways even without support. I print learning materials at home myself. Sometimes, I even cut and paste just so we'll have something to use in class. (T2-L-991-993-Pgs.25-26)

I felt a lump in my throat. The image of her cutting, pasting, printing under the dim light of her living room—while others rested, she prepared. For every child who walked into her classroom, she had something to offer, even if it came at the cost of her own rest. Her story was not just about resourcefulness. It was about sacrifice, about doing what needs to be done because children cannot wait.

These teachers are not merely inventive, they are creators of possibility. Their classrooms may lack fancy tools, but they overflow with heart. They do not wait for resources to come, they build with their hands, their time, their souls. As I listened to them, I realized: creativity in education is not about aesthetics. It is about intention. It is about making learning happen even when the world says it cannot. And that, to me, is the truest form of brilliance.

On Being Observant to Student Behaviors. There is a language that speaks louder than words, and every seasoned teacher learns to hear it—not with their ears, but with their eyes, with their gut, with their heart. As I listened to the stories unfold, I felt a deep resonance—this was not just about classroom management. This was a discipline of empathy, a habit of love. To observe is to care. And in their testimonies, I saw educators who have learned to read silence as clearly as speech.

Teacher 6 began with quiet certainty, her voice steady and eyes reflective.

“Makaingon ko nga importante gyud nga mahibalo ka mobasa sa body language sa bata. Usahay, dili na sila musulti pero makita nimo sa ilang nawong kung okay ba sila or naa silay problema. Kana nga pagtan-aw, mao nay mu-guide nako unsaon nako pag-approach nila.”

I can really say it's important to know how to read a student's body language. Sometimes, they don't speak, but you can see from their faces whether they're okay or if something's wrong. That observation guides me on how to approach them. (T6-L-818-821-Pg.21)

As she spoke, I imagined her standing at the front of her class, scanning the room—not just for behavior, but for unspoken stories. I pictured her pausing by a child's desk, crouching low, asking softly, *“Are you okay?”* Her words reminded me that teaching is often a dance of subtle movements, where a single glance or slouch of the shoulders can speak volumes. And it made me reflect on the times I, too, have caught a tear before it fell, simply by watching closely enough.

Teacher 2 shared her insight with urgency, her body slightly leaning forward, as if mimicking the ever-alert stance she described.

“Kung sa self-contained class, dapat alert ka pirmi. Dili man ka pwede maglingkod lang. Imong mata, dapat naglibot kay naa gyud tendency nga ang bata kalit lang mubuhay og something nga delikado. Mao nang mo-observe gyud ko pirmi.”

In a self-contained class, you always have to be alert. You can't just sit there. Your eyes need to keep scanning because there's really a tendency for a child to suddenly do something risky. That's why I constantly observe them. (T2-L-684-687-Pg.18)

I felt the intensity in her tone—like a mother hawk watching over her young. The mental and emotional labor of this kind of vigilance is not often spoken about, yet it is constant. I saw her eyes darting across the room, not in panic, but in protection. Her words carried a weight that only those who have lived the unpredictability of a self-contained classroom could understand. Her vigilance was love in motion.

Then came Teacher 5, her approach gentler, more paced.

“Sa akong regular class, dali ra nako makabantay kinsa ang dili attentive. Naay uban magtan-aw sa gawas, ang uban magdula sa desk. So ako, dili ko diretso magbadlong. Tan-awon nako kung kanus-a sila ready, unya adto ko magsugod og sulti.”

In my regular class, I can quickly notice who’s not paying attention. Some stare outside, others play with their desks. But I don’t scold them right away. I observe when they’re ready, and then I start talking to them. (T5-L-704-707-Pg.18)

There was such patience in her presence. Her voice was like a soft breeze, never rushing to correct but waiting to understand. I found myself smiling. Her strategy wasn’t just about discipline, it was about respect. She honored the readiness of her students, timing her interventions not with frustration, but with grace. It was a lesson in waiting—not passively, but attentively.

Teacher 7 leaned in as she spoke, as if revealing a precious routine she’d built over time.

“Ang ako, sa pirmiro pa lang sa klase, mo-observe na ko sa ilang routine og reaction. Kay sa tinood lang, lahi-lahi gyud silag triggers. So tan-awon nako kung unsa ilang behavior matag adlaw aron masabtan nako unsay angay buhaton.”

“For me, even at the start of class, I already observe their routines and reactions. Honestly, they have different triggers. So I observe their behavior every day to understand what actions I need to take. (T7-L-714-717-Pgs.18-19)

I nodded deeply at her words. There was wisdom there—an understanding that behavior is not random, but rooted in patterns, in causes unseen. I felt her dedication, the way she adjusted her teaching not just daily, but minute by minute. Her insight echoed what I’ve felt so often: that to teach well is to know your students deeply, to anticipate storms before they come, and to gently steer them back to calm.

Finally, Teacher 1’s reflection struck a personal chord. Her voice softened, her eyes narrowing as though recalling a moment of quiet heartbreak.

“Importante kaayo nga kabalo ka mo-observe labi na kung ang bata hilum ra. Usahay ang mga hilum, mao pa diay to ang naay gibati. Mao nga ako, mu-observe gyud ko sa ilang mata, sa ilang lihok, kung normal ba o lahi ra ilang binuhatan.”

It’s very important to be observant, especially when a student is just quiet. Sometimes, the quiet ones are actually the ones going through something. That’s why I really observe their eyes, their movements, to see if their behavior is normal or different. (T1-L-673-675-Pg.17)

Behavioral Characteristics Undertaken By Receiving Teachers

After analyzing the responses of the participants responses about behavioral characteristics undertaken by receiving teachers to effect learning in a mainstream classroom, these are the following themes formed: (1) looking forward for professional enhancement, (2) showing fairness and respect, and (3) being supportive to students.

On Looking Forward for Professional Enhancement. Growth, for a teacher, is not a destination, it is a continuous unfolding. It is a hunger that doesn’t quiet with years of service but deepens with every learner’s struggle, every lesson gone awry, every breakthrough that took too long to come. As I listened to the voices of these teachers, I felt the pull of something familiar yearning not just to teach, but to teach better. Their stories were filled with hope, with honesty, and with a fierce dedication to becoming more than what yesterday allowed.

Teacher 4’s words struck me with their sincerity. There was no defensiveness in her admission—only courage.

“Actually, ganahan gyud ko mo-attend og mga training. Labi na kung SPED-related. Kay sa tinuod lang, kulang pa gyud ko og knowledge. Gusto ko makakat-on pa og daghan, aron mas ma-improve nako akong pagtudlo.”

Actually, I really want to attend more trainings, especially those related to SPED. Honestly, I still lack a lot of knowledge. I want to learn more so I can improve my teaching. (T4-L-163-165-Pg.4)

As she spoke, she lowered her voice, almost shyly, as if afraid her vulnerability might be mistaken for weakness. But to me, it was strength—raw and inspiring. Her hands lightly clasped together, her face hopeful, she embodied the kind of humility that makes a teacher unforgettable. I nodded with her words, reminded of how often I, too, have whispered “I need to know more” in the quiet moments after a hard day in class. Her desire to grow wasn’t ambition, it was devotion.

Teacher 3’s voice, on the other hand, rang with boldness. She laughed a little, waving off the idea of compensation.

“Ako, open kaayo ko og mga seminars. In fact, bisan wala pa bayad, muapil ko basta makatabang sa akong professional growth. Kay dili baya static ang teaching, pirmi siya nag-usab.”

I'm very open to seminars. In fact, even if there's no compensation, I'll still join as long as it helps with my professional growth. Teaching isn't static—it always changes. (T3-L-227-229-Pg.6)

There was fire in her eyes, the kind that glows from years of staying curious. She spoke of growth not as an obligation, but as a joy. I admired her tenacity—her willingness to chase knowledge not for recognition, but for relevance. Her words echoed something I've often felt in the core of my being: that to teach is to evolve, to remain ever in motion, no matter how long you've worn the title "teacher."

Teacher 5 brought in a grounded realism; her tone more reflective.

"Makaingon ko nga kinahanglan gyud mi og refresher courses. Kay usahay, ang style nga imong gigamit sauna, dili na effective karon. So para nako, importanteng mag-upgrade pud mi."

I can say that we really need refresher courses. Sometimes, the teaching style that worked before is no longer effective now. So for me, it's important that we also upgrade ourselves. (T5-L-241-243-Pg.6)

She wasn't nostalgic. She was honest. Her words reminded me that experience alone is never enough; what worked yesterday might only confuse today's learners. She didn't say it with bitterness, but with maturity. I saw in her a teacher who respects the craft enough to reshape it again and again, like a potter returning to the wheel with each new batch of clay.

And then there was Teacher 2, who reflected not just on herself, but on a system that had grown more inclusive. Her eyes brightened as she recalled the shift.

Long ago (char) Una, ang ano sa SNED.. ang implementation kay sa una man gud kay ano lang.. ginapili ang mag-attend sa training .Dili pareha karon na tanan.. Mostly sa mga receiving teachers ..Oo, naka-attend ug trainings so we are very thankful

Long ago... the implementation of SNED training was selective. Only a few were chosen to attend. But now, it's different—mostly all receiving teachers get to attend trainings, and we are very thankful. (T2 – L129-132 Pg.4)

Her tone was light, a gentle humor tucked between gratitude and memory. I could feel her relief—like someone who had waited a long time to be included. Her story was not just personal; it was collective. It marked progress, however slow. I saw in her the gratitude of a teacher who knows that every training she attends is not just for her, but for every child who will benefit from her expanded skillset.

Listening to them, I felt my heart swell—not with pity or admiration, but with kinship. These teachers are seekers. They do not sit still. They do not claim to know it all. They walk into classrooms with open minds and leave each day with open hearts, always wondering, how can I do this better tomorrow? Their hunger to grow is not rooted in ego, but in empathy. They are learners just as much as they are teachers—and that, to me, is what makes them great.

On Showing Fairness and Respect. Fairness and respect are not simply values posted on classroom walls—they are practiced, chosen, and upheld every day in the quiet decisions teachers make when no one is watching. In the stories of these teachers, I found something powerful: the deliberate refusal to let any child feel lesser. Their narratives were not loud or boastful. They were humble, honest, and grounded in the belief that dignity belongs to every learner—no exceptions.

Teacher 2's voice was gentle, but her conviction ran deep. Her eyes, steady and kind, spoke before her words did.

"Bisan lahi-lahi sila og panginahanglan, parehas ra gyud ang akong pagtagad sa ila. Wala koy ginapaboran. Kay para nako, tanan bata deserve og respeto ug equal na oportunidad sa pagkat-on."

Even if they have different needs, I treat them all the same. I don't show favoritism. For me, all children deserve respect and equal opportunities to learn. (T2 – L218-220 Pg.6)

She spoke with the calm of someone who has lived this principle for years. Her face didn't show pride, only peacefully, like someone who sleeps soundly knowing every child in her class has been seen and valued. I felt the truth of her words press gently against my chest. How often have we unconsciously gravitated to the child who is easier to teach, quicker to understand? But her fairness was intentional, anchored in empathy. She treated equity not as an ideal, but as daily practice.

Teacher 4 shared a similar heart, but with an urgency in her tone, as if she had witnessed what happens when fairness is withheld.

"Importante sa ako nga ang mga bata sa regular ug SPED pareho og chance sa classroom. Dili nako ginapabati nga lahi ang usa. Kay kung mo-feel sila nga lahi sila, mawala ilang gana."

It's important for me that both regular and SPED learners have the same chance in the classroom. I don't make anyone feel different. Because if they feel like they don't belong, they lose their motivation. (T4 – L234-237- Pg.6)

I could see the emotion in her hands—clasped together, fingers fidgeting as she recalled moments of exclusion, she had tried so hard to undo. Her words reminded me of the fragile thread that ties a child's sense of self to their learning experience. To feel different in a space meant for growth can break something inside. And so, she makes it her mission to weave inclusion into every instruction, every grouping, every glance. Her fairness is not about sameness, it is about making sure everyone feels they belong.

Then there was Teacher 1, who brought the value of respect to a deep personal level. Her tone was firm, protective, as if guarding the emotional space of her students.

“Kung naa koy ginacorrect nga bata, dili ko magpakaulaw sa ilang atubangan. Istoryahon lang nako in private. Kay para nako, importante nga dili nimo tapakan ilang pride.”

"When I correct a child, I don't embarrass them in front of others. I talk to them privately. For me, it's important not to hurt their pride. (T1 – L261-2262-Pg.7)

Her words hit me like quiet thunder. I could picture her gently pulling a student aside, lowering herself to their eye level, speaking in tones too soft for others to hear. She was not only correcting behaviors, but she was also preserving dignity. That kind of emotional safety is rare, and precious. Her classroom, I imagined, must feel like a refuge—a place where mistakes are met with guidance, not shame. Her fairness was not loud, but it was fiercely protective.

Listening to them, I felt a deep admiration swell within me. These teachers do not only teach—they honor. They choose fairness over favoritism, respect over control. Their behavioral discipline is not about compliance, it is about connection. And in their classrooms, every child is given a place not just to learn, but to be respected, to be valued, and to be whole.

I carry their stories with me now, like quiet lessons etched in my heart: to look each student in the eye with equality, to speak with kindness even in correction, and to build a classroom not just with structure—but with soul.

On Being Supportive to Students. Support, in the hands of a compassionate teacher, becomes more than assistance, it becomes a lifeline. As I listened to the stories of these educators, my heart stirred with the kind of warmth that only sincerity can spark. Their words were soft, but they bore the weight of deep intention. To be supportive, they showed, is not just about answering questions or correcting mistakes. It's about showing up—again and again—with presence, patience, and a heart that never gives up on any child.

Teacher 3's words came with the kind of quiet conviction that only lived experience can bring. There was no grandeur in her tone, just deep care.

“Ako gyud, pirmi ko mutapad sa bata nga naglisod. Dili nako siya pasagdan nga siya ra usa. Bisan pag balik-balikon pa ang explanation, buhaton nako para lang makasabot siya.”

I always sit beside the child who is struggling. I don't leave them alone. Even if I have to repeat the explanation many times, I'll do it just so they can understand. (T3 – L-861-863- Pg.22)

As she spoke, I imagined her pulling a chair beside a student's desk, her voice gentle and reassuring. There was something sacred in that gesture, the teacher becoming a companion, not just a figure of authority. Her eyes, I noticed, softened as she recounted those moments, and I felt the fullness of her care. Her kind of support was relentless—not flashy, but faithful. It reminded me of the quiet mornings I've spent sitting beside a learner, whispering the same words over and over, until their eyes lit up in understanding.

Then there was Teacher 6, whose words glowed with affirmation. Her voice was bright, hopeful, as if carrying the echoes of encouragement she had given countless times.

“Mufocus gyud ko sa bata nga naay difficulty. Ginapadasig nako sila pirmi. Kay usahay, gamay lang nga 'kaya nimo na' nga words, makahatag na og dako nga impact sa ilaha.”

I really focus on the child who has difficulty. I always encourage them. Sometimes, just saying 'you can do it' already makes a big impact on them. (T6 – L-654-656- Pg.17)

There was magic in her simplicity. I could almost hear her voice in the classroom, lifting a discouraged child with just a few words. I saw her leaning slightly forward, eyes locked with a learner's, saying "You can do it!" not as a routine phrase, but as a genuine gift of belief. Her support was not loud—but it was lasting. And in her story, I was reminded of the power of words—how even the smallest ones, when said with heart, can build confidence where there once was doubt.

Teacher 1, calm and reflective, brought forward the emotional core of being a supportive teacher. Her words flowed slowly, like someone holding something precious.

“Ako, ginapaminaw nako ang mga bata. Kung naay problema, ako silang istoryahon. Kay kung kabalo sila nga naa silay teacher nga maminaw, mas musalig sila nimo.”

"I listen to the students. If they have problems, I talk to them. Because if they know they have a teacher who listens, they will trust you more. (T1 – L-982-984- Pg.25)

Her statement wasn't just about support, it was about relationships. She spoke of listening not as a strategy, but as a posture of the heart. I saw her pausing at recess, crouching beside a student with downcast eyes, simply saying, "Tell me what's wrong." In that image, I saw the teacher I strive to be—one who makes time, one who hears the unspoken, one who creates a space safe enough for trust to grow.

As their stories settled into me, I realized that support in teaching isn't always about solving problems. Sometimes, it's about sitting beside a child who's struggling. Sometimes, it's about saying "you matter" without ever using those words. And sometimes, it's simply about being there—not to fix, but to stay.

These teachers are not only instructors, they are allies, nurturers, but quiet anchors in the storm of also growing up. They don't just teach the mind; they tend the spirit. And in their hands, support becomes a living promise: *You are not alone. I am with you. I believe in you.*

Environmental Conditions Undertaken By Receiving Teachers

After analyzing the responses of the participants about environmental conditions of receiving teachers that affect learning in a mainstream classroom, these are the following themes formed: (1) Creating a sensory-friendly area, (2) creating classroom as a home, and (3) ensuring the classroom is safe.

On Creating a Sensory-Friendly Area. Some classrooms hum with order, others with color and creativity—but there are rooms, quiet and thoughtful, crafted not just for learning but for feeling. As I sat with the teachers and listened to them speak about their classroom environments, I was drawn into a world where every texture, every corner, every curtain is chosen with care. These are not just places of instruction, they are sanctuaries of calm, especially for learners whose senses absorb the world differently. And in those spaces, I felt the tender art of teaching unfold.

Teacher 4 spoke first, her tone soft, almost maternal. As she described her "sensory corner," I could imagine it instantly—a small, gentle refuge tucked in one corner of her classroom, humble in design but powerful in purpose.

"Nag-set up ko og sensory corner sa among classroom. Gikan ra sa recycled materials pero naa siya mga textures nga ginahikap sa bata. Effective siya kay kung stressed na sila, adto sila muadto para kalma sila."

I set up a sensory corner in our classroom. It's made from recycled materials, but it has different textures for the children to touch. It's effective because when they're stressed, they go there to calm down. (T4 – L-1513-1515- Pg.39)

She smiled as she shared, the kind of smile that comes from witnessing transformation—the shift in a child's eyes when anxiety gives way to peace. Her fingers traced the air as she described the textures—rough, soft, bumpy—each one chosen with love. I could almost feel the warmth of that corner, the safety it offered, the gentle invitation it extended to children who needed a moment to breathe. Her voice lingered in my mind, a quiet echo of the idea that healing doesn't need to be grand—it just needs to be offered.

Teacher 6 entered the conversation with practical wisdom etched in her voice. Her years of experience had trained her to anticipate the unseen—noise, light, overstimulation.

"Ang mga bata sa self-contained, lahi og response sa noise ug light. So gibutangan nako og curtain ang bintana, then naa koy mga soft pillows og quiet space. Dako kaayo og tabang para dili sila ma-overwhelm."

The children in the self-contained class respond differently to noise and light. So I put curtains on the windows and added soft pillows and a quiet space. It really helps prevent them from feeling overwhelmed. (T6 – L-1572-1574- Pg.41)

Her words painted a picture of intentionality. I saw the soft flow of curtains muting the harshness of sunlight, the hush that blankets a classroom made just a little quieter, a little safer. Her voice steadied as she described the soft pillows, a small but mighty tool of comfort. It moved me deeply to think of her students walking into a space that embraced them with softness, a space designed not just to teach but to understand. Her classroom is not just inclusive, it's intuitive.

Then there was Teacher 3—methodical, focused, her approach shaped by observation and need.

"Dili ni pareha sa regular classroom. Diri, kinahanglan nga ma-consider nimo ilang sensory needs. Mao nang akong mga learning stations kay dili siya cluttered, organized gyud, para dili sila ma-distract."

This isn't like a regular classroom. Here, you have to consider their sensory needs. That's why my learning stations are not cluttered—they're really organized so the kids don't get distracted. (T3 – L-1502-1504- Pg.39)

There was a firm grace in her disciplined but not rigid. I imagined her classroom: spaces breathing with clarity, free of visual chaos, each learning station whispering *focus here, you're safe here*. Her eyes lit up as she described how even arrangement—the simple act of spatial order—could help her students learn better. Her story reminded me that creating a sensory-friendly space isn't always about adding more; sometimes, it's about subtracting the noise. These teachers don't merely decorate their classrooms, they *curate* them, like caregivers preparing a room for someone who hurts easily and deeply. They do so quietly, without expecting recognition, yet with full awareness of the powerful difference it makes. In their hands, the environment becomes a teacher itself—offering calm, balance, and safety when words fall short.

As I left these conversations, I carried with me a new understanding. That the best classrooms are not the most colorful, or the most high-tech, they are the ones that *feel right*. The ones that hold space for every child, especially those whose world becomes too loud, too bright, too much. And in that holding, they say: *You are safe. You belong. You can rest here—and then you can learn.*

On Creating Classroom as a Home. Some classrooms echo with the rustle of paper, the click of pens, the hum of instruction. But others, the most special ones—echo with something deeper: laughter, warmth, trust. These are the classrooms that feel less like rooms and more like homes. As I listened to the stories of these teachers, my chest grew warm with the familiarity of their words. They weren't just managing classrooms, they were mothering hearts, nurturing spirits, and creating spaces where every child, no matter their story, could feel safe enough to simply be. Teacher 5 spoke with the kind of gentleness that immediately settled the soul. Her eyes shone as she described her students not as learners, but as family.

“Ang akong classroom, ginahimo nako nga mura gyud og balay. Dapat ang bata mubati nga safe siya, nga pwede siya muexpress sa iyang kaugalingon. Mao nang akong style kay murag motherly, kay gusto nako nga ang mga bata mubati nga naa silay pamilya sa klase.”

I make my classroom feel like a home. The child must feel safe, and that they can express themselves. My style is motherly because I want the students to feel like they have a family in the classroom. (T5 – L-644-647- Pg.39)

As she spoke, I could almost see her—offering warm greetings at the door, placing a gentle hand on a student's shoulder, listening with her full heart. Her classroom wasn't just about lessons, it was about belonging. Her words reminded me of my own quiet hopes for my students: that they would walk into my room not with fear, but with relief. That they would know they mattered, even before they said a word. Her motherly approach wasn't just a style, it was a sanctuary.

Teacher 3, though quieter in tone, echoed that same desire for peace. Her voice was firm, her face serious as she shared:

“Importante kaayo nako nga ang classroom dili intimidating. Dili kinahanglan nga permi mahadlok ang bata.”

It's very important for me that the classroom is not intimidating. Children shouldn't always feel scared. (T3 – L-631-632- Pg.16)

There was an ache in her words, as if she had seen too many children shrink into their seats, silenced by fear. And so, she became a gentle rebel against intimidation. I imagined her choosing her words with care, softening her tone when correction was needed, kneeling to a child's level when eye contact was hard to hold. She taught not through power, but through presence. In her classroom, fear had no home—only comfort did.

Then Teacher 2 added her voice, grounded and vibrant, like someone who had fought for inclusion and seen its power.

“Bisan naa sila'y special needs, gusto nako nga mubati sila nga normal lang sila. Mao nga ang akong approach kay inclusive, supportive, ug puno og encouragement. Wala'y discrimination sa among classroom.”

Even if they have special needs, I want them to feel that they are normal. That's why my approach is inclusive, supportive, and full of encouragement. There's no discrimination in our classroom. (T2 – L-737-740- Pg.19)

Her words stirred something deep within me. I could hear the pride in her voice, but also the unspoken battles she had to face to make that dream real. Her classroom was not just inclusive in structure, it was inclusive in spirit. She wasn't just teaching; she was affirming dignity, honoring differences, making sure every child felt seen as they were. In her eyes, normal wasn't about being the same as being accepted.

Listening to them, I was overcome with emotion—not sadness, not joy, but something in between: reverence. These teachers were not building classrooms. They were building homes—one desk, one gesture, one word of encouragement at a time. Their walls may be made of concrete, but their foundations were trust, empathy, and unconditional welcome.

In their classrooms, children don't just learn math or reading. They learn that it's okay to be different. They learn that love doesn't need to be earned. They learn that every single part of them is welcome. And in a world that so often demands conformity, their classrooms whisper a sacred truth: You belong, exactly as you are.

On Ensuring the Classroom Is Safe. There is a kind of vigilance that never tires—a quiet watchfulness carried by every teacher whose heart beats not just for learning, but for protection. As I listened to the voices of these educators, I was moved not by grand declarations, but by the small, consistent choices they made to turn their classrooms into sanctuaries. Their stories reminded me: before we can teach minds, we must first protect bodies. Before children can trust us with their learning, they must feel secure in our presence.

Teacher 2's voice was firm but layered with concern, the kind that only comes from lived experience. Her eyes darted slightly as she recounted situations where a moment of distraction could mean danger.

“Sa self-contained class, pirmi ko nag-monitor sa mga kalihokan sa bata. Dili pwede nga magpasagad kay usahay ang bata kalit lang mudagan. Mao nga akong gibutangan og safety lock ang pultahan para walay makagawas nga walay bantay.”

In the self-contained class, I constantly monitor the children's movements. You can't be careless because sometimes they suddenly run or get agitated. That's why I placed a safety lock on the door so no one can go out without supervision. (T2 – L-789-791-Pg.20)

I felt the tension in her memory—an echo of those moments when instinct kicks in faster than thought. I imagined her always half-standing, with one eye on the lesson, the other scanning the room. The safety lock on her door wasn't just hardware—it was her promise to every parent that their child would not just be taught but kept safe. Her words reminded me that in self-contained classrooms, security isn't a secondary concern, it's a foundational one.

Teacher 4, calm and practical, shared her routine with a sense of quiet determination.

“Gibutang gyud nako sa pinakailawom ang mga sharp materials ug gamit nga delikado. Kabalo ko nga curious kaayo ang mga bata, so kinahanglan gyud nga ang environment safe para sa ilaha.”

"I make sure to place all sharp materials and dangerous tools in the lowest and safest storage. I know the kids are very curious, so the environment must be safe for them. (T4 – L-803-805-Pg.21)

Her words were careful, much like her actions. I pictured her crouching to store scissors in locked drawers, lifting cords out of reach, checking every edge for risk. There was something sacred in the way she described it—like preparing a space for someone beloved. Her classroom wasn't just a place for learning; it was a space for trust to grow. And her simple act of storing things properly became an act of love.

Then came Teacher 5, whose routine felt like a ritual daily act of devotion.

“Bisan unsa pa kabisi ang adlaw, akong routine gyud kay mutan-aw ko sa corners, sa mga gamit, kung safe ba tanan. Dili ko gusto nga makasamad ang classroom sa bata.”

No matter how busy the day is, part of my routine is to check every corner and material to see if everything is safe. I don't want the classroom to cause harm to any child. (T5 – L-810-812-Pg.21)

Her tone carried both exhaustion and unwavering commitment. I imagined her sweeping her eyes over shelves, under tables, through every quiet corner before class began—not as a chore, but as a mother would check a crib, ensuring every small detail spoke safely. Her words reminded me that true care is found in consistency. In her classroom, no hazard is too small, no risk left to chance—because for her, safety is the soil where trust is planted.

As I reflected on their stories, I found myself humbled. These teachers are not only educators, but they are also protectors, quiet sentinels of childhood. They do not wear armor, but they stand guard. Every locked drawer, every scanned corner, every precaution taken without applause—these are their shields.

In their classrooms, safety is not a rule posted on the wall—it is a promise honored every day. A promise that says, *Before I teach you letters and numbers, I will make sure you are safe to sit, safe to breathe, safe to be safe to be.* And in that kind of space, learning doesn't just happen.

Viewpoint and Standpoint

As a teacher in a mainstream classroom, I have come to understand that behavioral characteristics are more than just routines—they are intentional acts of care. Whether it's staying calm amidst chaos, showing fairness in every interaction, or providing unwavering support to struggling learners, these behaviors become the invisible threads that hold learning together. Every time I sit beside a child who feels left behind or speaks gently to one who needs redirection, I'm reminded that my presence and consistency are as crucial as any lesson I deliver. These small yet powerful actions build trust, spark engagement, and create the emotional safety necessary for real learning to happen.

In this same space, my personal attributes—such as patience, resourcefulness, and an openness to grow—shape the atmosphere where students can thrive. I've learned that how I carry myself deeply affects how learners perceive their own capabilities. Likewise, the physical and emotional environment I create—through sensory corners, organized learning stations, and safety-conscious decisions—transforms the classroom into more than a place of instruction; it becomes a home. This holistic role of a teacher—being emotionally present, behaviorally consistent, and environmentally intentional—is what truly breathes life into inclusive education.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of themes and corresponding emerging sub-themes, linking the experiential insights shared by teachers in self-contained and regular classrooms.

Elaboration of Themes and Corresponding Emerging Sub themes

This section presents the elaboration of themes and sub-themes drawn from the lived experiences of receiving teachers in mainstreamed classroom through the lens of Social Cognitive Theory. The study revealed cognitive attributes such as being patient and calm, creative and resourceful, and observant of student behaviors; behavioral characteristics including a drive for professional growth, fairness and respect, and student support; and environmental conditions like creating sensory-friendly areas, a home-like classroom atmosphere, and ensuring classroom safety.

Cognitive Attributes of Receiving Teachers

After analyzing the responses of the participants responses about cognitive attributes of receiving teachers that affect learning in a mainstream classroom, these are the following themes formed: (1) being patience and calmness, (2) creative and resourceful, and (3) being observant to student behaviors.

The cognitive attributes of receiving teachers in mainstreamed classroom play a vital role in fostering inclusive learning environments. One core attribute is being patient and calm, especially when addressing the diverse and often unpredictable behaviors of learners with special needs. Teachers who exhibit patience provide students with the emotional space to regulate themselves, while calmness diffuses tension and model's emotional control. Leggio and Terras (2019) emphasized that teachers working with students with emotional and behavioral disorders recognize patience and emotional stability as

foundational traits for effective teaching. Similarly, Ziaian-Ghafari and Berg (2019) revealed that patience mitigates compassion fatigue, allowing teachers to consistently meet learners' needs with empathy and composure.

Another essential cognitive quality is being creative and resourceful, especially in low-resource or high-demand classroom settings. Creativity empowers teachers to adapt lessons, modify materials, and maintain engagement despite environmental or institutional limitations. As noted by Rahmi (2020), teachers often develop classroom strategies based on available materials, transforming simple objects into effective teaching tools. Wilkerson (2023) further supported this, citing creativity as central to the success of inclusive practices, enabling teachers to connect with students across varying ability levels. This ties directly with being observant to student behaviors, which helps teachers detect subtle cues indicating emotional distress or cognitive overload. Catoto, Mantawil, and Doroluman (2023) highlighted that observation allows for timely and appropriate intervention, while Ajoc (2019) emphasized that constant student monitoring in SPED settings prevents behavioral escalations and supports safety. Together, these sub-themes illustrate how cognitive attributes—rooted in calm awareness, adaptive thinking, and perceptiveness—are indispensable to inclusive and responsive teaching.

Behavioral Characteristics Undertaken by Receiving Teachers

After analyzing the responses of the participants about behavioral characteristics undertaken by receiving teachers to effect learning in a mainstream classroom, these are the following themes formed: (1) looking forward for professional enhancement, (2) showing fairness and respect, and (3) being supportive to students.

The behavioral characteristics undertaken by receiving teachers in mainstream classrooms are essential to cultivating inclusive, supportive, and effective learning environments. One key behavior is looking forward to professional enhancement, where teachers actively seek growth opportunities to better address diverse learner needs. This drive reflects an understanding that teaching strategies must evolve with student diversity and changing classroom dynamics. Byrd and Alexander (2020) highlighted the importance of equipping educators with continued professional development to strengthen their competence in handling special education needs. Similarly, Gyasi, Okrah, and Anku (2020) emphasized that teachers with greater knowledge and training in special education are better equipped to manage inclusive classrooms, reinforcing the value of proactive learning and self-improvement among receiving teachers.

Equally important are the behaviors of showing fairness and respect and being supportive to students. Teachers in inclusive settings must maintain equitable treatment and foster trust, especially when managing varying levels of student ability and behavior. Bolinger, Mucherah, and Markelz (2020) found that respectful classroom practices, including private correction and consistent expectations, help minimize disruptive behaviors and support student dignity. This is echoed by Riden, Markelz, and Randolph (2019), who noted that supportive environments reduce anxiety and foster positive student outcomes. Furthermore, Simó-Pinatella et al. (2022) observed that during high-stress periods like the pandemic, teachers who maintained calm, supportive relationships with their students helped them adapt better to challenging changes. These behavioral characteristics—commitment to growth, fairness, and emotional support—are not just actions, but reflections of a deeply held commitment to inclusive education and student well-being.

Environmental Conditions Undertaken by Receiving Teachers

After analyzing the responses of the participants about environmental conditions of receiving teachers that affect learning in a mainstream classroom, these are the following themes formed: (1) Creating a sensory-friendly area, (2) creating classroom as a home, and (3) ensuring the classroom is safe.

The environmental conditions cultivated by receiving teachers play a pivotal role in shaping inclusive mainstream classrooms. One of the key themes is the creation of sensory-friendly areas, which provides students, especially those with sensory sensitivities, a space to regulate their emotions and behaviors. This aligns with Adigun et al. (2021), who emphasized the importance of adjusting environmental factors to reduce stress among learners with special needs. Providing soft textures, calming visuals, or quiet zones can alleviate sensory overload and enhance emotional safety. Similarly, Moustakas and Mania (2021) noted that the classroom environment must adapt to student needs, suggesting that a responsive setup encourages participation and emotional stability for children with diverse needs.

Additionally, teachers foster inclusivity by creating classrooms that feel like home and ensuring the classroom is safe. When classrooms are warm, familiar, and non-intimidating, students feel emotionally secure, leading to greater confidence and academic engagement. Ahmad, Sewani, and Akram (2024) emphasized that supportive classroom atmospheres enhance the quality of work life for teachers and emotional comfort for students. Teachers who reduce clutter, arrange furniture intentionally, and maintain consistent routines contribute to this “home-like” stability. Moreover, the theme of ensuring safety—both physical and emotional—underscores the need for continuous monitoring and risk prevention, a responsibility that, while demanding, is fundamental in inclusive classrooms (Gilmour & Webby, 2020; Boon et al., 2021). These environmental conditions not only reduce behavioral challenges but also create a nurturing ground where all learners can grow with dignity and assurance.

Implication to Practice

The findings of this study carry profound implications for my practice as a receiving teacher in a mainstreamed classroom. They affirm that beyond instructional delivery, my role demands deep emotional intelligence, adaptability, and intentional environmental design. The themes of patience, creativity, and observance remind me that teaching is as much about how I relate to students as it is about what I teach. I am called to continually seek professional growth, uphold fairness and empathy, and be a consistent support system for my learners, especially those with diverse needs. Moreover, the emphasis on creating a safe, sensory-aware, and home-like classroom environment urges me to rethink how physical spaces and routines can nurture emotional well-being and learning readiness. These insights empower me to be more reflective and responsive in my teaching, transforming challenges into opportunities for inclusive, compassionate education.

Future Directions of the Study

This study uncovers complex dimensions of inclusive teaching that extend beyond the theory's core constructs of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors. The lived experiences of receiving teachers highlight emotionally demanding roles, the exercise of professional self-efficacy, and the constant negotiation between internal beliefs and external demands. Themes such as being observant, supportive, fair, and adaptive suggest that inclusive pedagogy is not a fixed framework but an evolving practice shaped by context. These findings suggest the need to refine SCT by incorporating more context-specific indicators that reflect the everyday realities of teaching in mainstream settings.

In light of this, future research should consider operationalizing the themes—such as patience, resourcefulness, and environmental sensitivity—as measurable variables that can inform the effectiveness of inclusive strategies. A mixed-methods design would allow researchers to capture both the depth of teacher experiences and the breadth of their impact on student outcomes. This would bridge the gap between SCT's theoretical simplicity and the complicated, emotionally rich world of inclusive education. Doing so not only enhances our theoretical understanding but also supports evidence-based practices that align with the lived experiences of teachers navigating the "two worlds" of self-contained and regular classrooms.

Challenges

This study serves as both a mirror and a challenge—not only to fellow educators, administrators, and policymakers, but most especially to myself, as a teacher navigating the dual realities of self-contained and regular classrooms. It compels me to reflect deeply on my own practices and ask whether I am truly meeting the diverse needs of my learners with the patience, creativity, and attentiveness they deserve. It challenges all beneficiaries of this study to move beyond compliance and toward commitment—to ensure that inclusive education is not merely a policy but a lived practice, shaped by compassion and constant self-evaluation. For me, the real test lies in how I transform these insights into action: by becoming more responsive, more intentional, and more resolute in creating classrooms where every child not only learns, but feels safe, valued, and seen.

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