Inclusive Teaching Strategies and School System Support as Predictors of Academic Performance among Learners with Special Educational Needs

Loriemar Baguio Villariza

Cebu Technological University-Main Campus, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the relationship between inclusive teaching strategies, school system support, and the academic performance of Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSENs) in Cordova District, Division of Cebu Province, for School Year 2025-2026, serving as a basis for a proposed training plan. Employing a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design, the study surveyed 142 inclusive education teachers and analyzed the academic records of 51 LSENs. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies, percentages) and inferential statistics (Spearman rho),. Results revealed that teachers' use of inclusive strategies was rated "Often" with Collaborative and Peer Learning and Scaffolding as strengths, while Assistive Tools and Technology was the lowest. School system support was rated "Agree". All LSENs achieved passing grades, but most were clustered in the Satisfactory and Fairly Satisfactory ranges. No significant correlation was found between inclusive teaching strategies and LSEN academic performance, nor between school system support and LSEN academic performance. However, a significant correlation existed between school system support and teachers' use of inclusive strategies. The study concluded that current inclusive practices and support systems are not significant direct predictors of LSEN academic performance, necessitating a comprehensive training plan addressing assistive technology, tiered assignments, inclusive assessment, fading supports, peer tutoring, and systemic advocacy.

Keywords: Special Education, Inclusive Teaching Strategies, School System Support, Academic Performance, Training Plan, Cordova, Cebu, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education represents a fundamental shift in educational philosophy, ensuring that learners with Special Educational Needs (LSENs) are integrated into mainstream classrooms rather than segregated into separate learning environments (Vistar et al., 2024). This paradigm emphasizes the principles of diversity, equity, and participation, aiming to create learning environments that accommodate the unique needs of every student (Garg, 2024). Central to this vision is the preparedness of teachers, as their ability to adapt instructional methods and classroom management practices to accommodate diverse needs determines the success of inclusive education (Savior et al., 2025). Despite the global push for inclusivity, the educational landscape for students with special educational needs continues to face significant challenges in creating effective learning environments, particularly regarding the adequacy of pedagogical strategies and support mechanisms (Damyanov, 2024).

Globally, the implementation of inclusive education is recognized as a vital approach to serving children with educational needs within mainstream classrooms, yet it necessitates a comprehensive curriculum and specialized teaching strategies to address learning, physical, and developmental abilities effectively (Catoto & Mantawil, 2023). However, research indicates that mere physical integration without adequate pedagogical preparation can lead to exclusion, as mainstream schools often lack the specific resources and teacher training required to provide a truly inclusive response (Rodríguez-Oramas et al., 2021). Inclusive education has become

a cornerstone of educational reforms, yet schools frequently encounter barriers such as inadequate resources and limited parental involvement that impede the full realization of this goal (Beltran et al., 2025).

In the Philippine context, the Department of Education has institutionalized inclusive education through policies that mandate the accommodation of learners with disabilities in regular schools, yet the practical execution of these mandates often encounters systemic hurdles such as resource constraints and varying levels of teacher preparedness (Beltran et al., 2025). The enactment of Republic Act 11650 in March 2022 marks a significant legislative advancement by mandating that no learner be denied admission on the basis of disability and establishing Inclusive Learning Resource Centers in all school districts to ensure reasonable accommodations and individualized educational programs (Factor & Saenz, 2025). However, the operationalization of this law faces significant delays, as the Implementing Rules and Regulations were only signed approximately two years later, leaving many of its detailed provisions inoperative for several school years (Aquino et al., 2026). This implementation gap has resulted in uneven support mechanisms across divisions, with the Special Education Fund remaining underutilized and many schools lacking functioning SPED programs or trained personnel to address the specific needs of learners with disabilities (Aquino et al., 2026).

At the local level, the Cordova District within the Division of Cebu Province mirrors these national and global challenges, as the increasing enrollment of LSENs necessitates a rigorous examination of current instructional practices. The district's current educational landscape reveals a critical need to understand how teachers navigate the requirements of inclusive classrooms, particularly given the reported disparities in resource allocation and professional development opportunities that affect the delivery of specialized instruction. Prevailing concerns from teachers' experiences include heavy class sizes with multiple disability categories in a single classroom, lack of structured co-teaching models, minimal access to adapted learning materials, and insufficient time to prepare individualized education plans (IEPs). Many general education teachers express feeling unprepared and unsupported, often resorting to trial-and-error methods rather than evidence-based inclusive teaching strategies.

Compounding these teacher-related difficulties are prevailing issues of regressive academic performance among LSENs. Despite physical inclusion in regular classrooms, anecdotal and preliminary school-level data from Cordova District suggest that LSENs consistently score below mastery level in core subjects, have higher rates of repetition and absenteeism, and demonstrate minimal academic gains compared to their peers without disabilities. This stagnation in performance raises a critical question: does current inclusive practice merely constitute "placement without progress," where LSENs are present in the classroom but not genuinely learning?

Given these intersecting challenges, a clear research gap emerges. While existing literature has separately examined inclusive teaching strategies, school system support, or academic performance of LSENs, very few studies have quantitatively investigated the *combined predictive power* of these two variables—teaching strategies and system support—on LSEN academic outcomes within a single district in the Philippines. Moreover, the persistent systemic issues (delayed policy implementation, underutilized SPED funds, lack of structured monitoring mechanisms, and absence of a localized training framework) have created a situation where no empirical model exists to guide Cordova District on which specific strategies or support components most strongly predict LSEN academic success. Without such evidence, interventions remain fragmented and ineffective.

Therefore, this study intends to determine the inclusive teaching strategies and school system support as predictors of academic performance among LSENs at Cordova District, Division of Cebu Province for School Year 2025–2026, and to use these findings as the basis for a proposed, context-responsive Training Plan for teachers and school leaders.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the inclusive teaching strategies and school system support as predictors of

academic performance among Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSENs) at Cordova District, Division of Cebu Province, for School Year 2025-2026, as a basis for a proposed Training Plan.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What are the levels of teachers' use of inclusive teaching strategies in terms of the following:

1.1. differentiated instruction;

1.2. multisensory and active learning;

1.3. scaffolding and task simplification;

1.4 collaborative and peer learning;

1.5 use of assistive tools and technology; and

1.6. inclusive assessment practices?

2. What is the level of school system support as perceived by teachers?

3. What is the academic performance level of Learners with Special Educational Needs?

4. Is there a significant relationship between the:

4.1 teachers' use of inclusive teaching strategies and school system support;

4.2 teachers' use of inclusive teaching strategies and the academic performance of LSENs; and

4.3 school system support and academic performance of LSENs?

METHODOLOGY

This part showed the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select processes, and analyze information. It includes the research method, the environment, the respondents, and the instruments used.

This study employed a mixed-methods research design utilizing a sequential explanatory approach, beginning with quantitative data collection and analysis followed by qualitative exploration to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The quantitative component used a descriptive-correlational design to describe the demographic profile of teachers, their level of use of inclusive teaching strategies across six domains (Differentiated Instruction, Multisensory and Active Learning, Scaffolding and Task Simplification, Collaborative and Peer Learning, Use of Assistive Tools and Technology, and Inclusive Assessment Practices), the academic performance of learners with SEN, and the level of school support, while also determining the significance of the relationship between the use of inclusive strategies and learner academic performance. The qualitative component employed a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences, insights, challenges, and reflections of teachers regarding the implementation of inclusive education through their responses to open-ended questions, and the integration of these methods ensured that the statistical findings were enriched and explained by the personal narratives of teachers, leading to a more holistic and contextualized understanding that served as a robust foundation for the proposed training plan.

This study was conducted in the schools of Cordova District under the Division of Cebu Province. These schools are located within the Municipality of Cordova with one Integrated school located on Gilutongan Island. The topography of the schools is generally plain and rocky. Tricycles and motorcycles serve as the primary means of transportation for reaching the schools. The Cordova District Office shares its location with Cordova Central School in Poblacion, Cordova, Cebu, which serves as the administrative center of the district.

The study involves the public elementary and secondary schools in the district, including Cordova Central School; Alegria Elementary School; Bangbang Elementary School; Buagsong Elementary School; Catarman Elementary School; Cogon Elementary School; Day-as Elementary School; Gabi Elementary School; Ibabao Elementary School; Pilipog Elementary School; San Migiuel Elementary School; Alegria National High School; Ibabao National High School; Pilipog National High School; Cordova National High School; and Gilutongan Integrated School.

The respondents of this study were one hundred forty-two (142) inclusive education receiving teachers from Cordova District, Division of Cebu Province for School Year 2025-2026. They were selected using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique where participants were chosen based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The primary criterion for inclusion in this study was that the teacher must have at least one learner with special educational needs (SEN) in their current class, ensuring that they had direct experience in implementing inclusive teaching strategies. This purposive selection was essential to guarantee that the data gathered on the use of inclusive strategies, the academic performance of learners with SEN, and the teachers' personal insights and reflections came from individuals who were actively engaged in inclusive education practices. The sample of 142 teachers represented a significant portion of the total teacher population of 472, providing a comprehensive and representative perspective on the state of inclusive education within the district.

However, out of the 142 collected teacher responses, only 51 were found to contain complete information for all variables required for the correlational analyses. Specifically, some teacher respondents provided their survey responses on inclusive teaching strategies and school system support but did not supply complete academic grade data for their identified LSENs, while others supplied grade data that could not be reliably matched to specific teacher responses due to the anonymous data collection protocol. The remaining responses were excluded from the paired correlational analyses due to incomplete or insufficiently filled data, which could compromise the validity, reliability, and integrity of statistical findings when examining relationships between variables. This decision to exclude incomplete responses is a standard data-cleaning procedure in research to ensure that only high-quality and usable data are subjected to statistical analysis.

The primary data-gathering instrument for this study was a questionnaire adapted from the research of Sharma et al., (2021) titled "Measuring the use of inclusive practices among pre-service educators: A multi-national study," published in Teaching and Teacher Education. The original instrument was designed to measure pre-service teachers' use of inclusive practices across multiple countries, consisting of 30 items that assessed four key constructs: differentiated instruction, collaboration, classroom management, and assessment accommodations. For this study, the items were modified to fit the local context of Cordova District and the specific needs of the research.

The questionnaire was designed to gather data on the teachers' use of inclusive teaching strategies, the academic performance of learners with SEN, and the level of school support. It was composed of five (5) parts:

Part 1 focused on the demographic profile of the teacher-respondents, including age, sex, grade level handled, position title, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, number of learners with SEN in class, and formal training background.

Part 2 assessed the levels of teachers' use of inclusive teaching strategies. This part was adapted from the instrument developed by Sharma et al. (2021). The adapted version consisted of thirty (30) statements grouped into six (6) subscales: (1) Differentiated Instruction, (2) Multisensory and Active Learning, (3) Scaffolding and Task Simplification, (4) Collaborative and Peer Learning, (5) Use of Assistive Tools and Technology, and (6) Inclusive Assessment Practices. Respondents rated their frequency of use on a 5-point Likert scale, where 5 = Always, 4 = Often, 3 = Sometimes, 2 = Rarely, and 1 = Never.

Part 3 measured the level of school and system support as perceived by the teachers. This part consisted of ten (10) statements that described the availability of resources, professional development, and administrative

support for inclusive education. Respondents rated their agreement on a 5-point Likert scale, where 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, and 1 = Strongly Disagree.

Part 4 gathered the academic performance level of learners with SEN. Teachers were asked to provide the average grades of their learners with SEN in the subjects of English, Filipino, Mathematics, Science, EsP/Values Education, Araling Panlipunan, MAPEH, TLE, and their General Average.

Part 5 contained open-ended questions designed to gather qualitative insights from teachers regarding their experiences, the strategies they found most effective, and the challenges they faced in implementing inclusive education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered from respondents, following the sequential order of the specific sub-problems.

Levels Of Teachers' Use Of Inclusive Teaching Strategies

The six dimensions of inclusive teaching strategies, differentiated instruction, multisensory and active learning, scaffolding and task simplification, collaborative and peer learning, assistive tools and technology, and inclusive assessment practices were deliberately identified for empirical scrutiny in this study because they represent the most empirically supported, classroom-level pedagogical practices that directly address the diverse learning needs of LSENs.

Table 1 Differentiated Instruction

Indicators	Mean	SD	VD
I provide different versions of tasks (e.g. simpler vs. more complex) to match students' abilities.	3.90	0.78	OFT
I assign varied activities based on students' readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles.	3.92	0.82	OFT
I adjust the amount of work or difficulty of tasks for students with educational needs.	4.02	0.84	OFT
I use tiered assignments so that all students work on the same concept but at different levels	3.61	0.83	OFT
I allow students to choose how they demonstrate their learning (e.g., written, oral, project).	4.00	0.69	OFT
Overall	3.89	0.80	OFT

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always (ALW); 3.40-4.19 Often (OFT); 2.60-3.39 Sometimes (SME); 1.80-2.59 Rarely (RRE); 1.00-1.79 Never (NVR)

The overall mean score for differentiated instruction is 3.89 (SD = 0.80), which falls within the descriptive range of "Often" (OFT). Among the five indicators, the highest mean is for "I adjust the amount of work or difficulty of tasks for students with educational needs" (M = 4.02, SD = 0.84), followed closely by "I allow students to choose how they demonstrate their learning" (M = 4.00, SD = 0.69). The lowest mean among the indicators is for "I use tiered assignments so that all students work on the same concept but at different levels" (M = 3.61, SD = 0.83), though this still falls within the "Often" range. The relatively moderate standard deviations (ranging from 0.69 to 0.84) indicate a reasonable consensus among teacher respondents regarding their practices.

This finding is further supported by the high mean for allowing students to choose how they demonstrate learning, suggesting a flexible approach to assessment responsive to diverse learning styles and needs (Yessa

et al., 2023), while the relatively lower mean for tiered assignments points to a potential area for professional development requiring more sophisticated understanding of curriculum scaffolding (Tupiño et al., 2023). Although teachers "often" implement differentiated instruction, this nuanced understanding highlights that while teachers are confident in providing individualized assistance, challenges persist in systematically aligning lessons with individual learning needs (Calumpang, 2025). This suggests a need for targeted professional development focusing on advanced differentiation techniques, particularly tiered assignments, to enhance instructional precision and cater more effectively to varied learning profiles within inclusive classrooms (Factor & Saenz, 2025). This aligns with findings that while many teachers understand differentiation as adapting material to student needs, the application of multi-level tasks requires additional methodological support and deeper pedagogical insight (Yessingeldinov et al., 2022). Moreover, the actual depth and systematic integration of strategies like tiered assignments can vary, often correlating with teachers' self-efficacy and access to sustained professional learning opportunities (Pozas et al., 2022; Ünal et al., 2022).

Table 2 Multisensory and Active Learning

Indicators	Mean	SD	VD
I use visual aids (e.g., charts, diagrams, graphic organizers) to support understanding.	4.47	0.70	ALW
I include hands-on activities or manipulatives to help learners with educational needs grasp concepts.	4.06	0.88	OFT
I integrate movement or physical activities into lessons to maintain engagement.	4.04	0.80	OFT
I use audio materials (e.g., recorded instructions, audio books) to support students with reading difficulties.	3.76	1.05	OFT
I encourage students to draw, act-out, or build models to represent their understanding.	4.00	0.89	OFT
Overall	4.07	0.90	OFT

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always (ALW); 3.40-4.19 Often (OFT); 2.60-3.39 Sometimes (SME); 1.80-2.59 Rarely (RRE); 1.00-1.79 Never (NVR)

The overall mean score for multisensory and active learning is 4.07 (SD = 0.90), which falls within the descriptive range of “Often” (OFT). Notably, Indicator 1—“I use visual aids (e.g., charts, diagrams, graphic organizers) to support understanding”—obtained the highest mean of 4.47, which is the only indicator in this table that falls under “Always” (ALW). In contrast, Indicator 4—“I use audio materials (e.g., recorded instructions, audio books) to support students with reading difficulties”—received the lowest mean of 3.76 (SD = 1.05), which, while still within the “Often” range, also shows the largest standard deviation among all indicators. This relatively high standard deviation (1.05) suggests considerable variability among teacher respondents, with some teachers frequently using audio supports while others rarely or only sometimes do so. The remaining indicators—hands-on activities (M = 4.06), movement integration (M = 4.04), and student representation through drawing or acting (M = 4.00)—all cluster closely around the overall mean.

The observed variance in multisensory strategy implementation, particularly the discrepancy between high visual aid usage and lower audio material integration, suggests that while teachers are adept at readily available visual supports, there is a clear need for enhanced professional development in diversifying sensory modalities to cater to heterogeneous learning profiles of students with SEN (Torregosa et al., 2024). This finding underscores the importance of a systematic, multifaceted approach integrating pedagogical innovation with adequate support mechanisms, including necessary resources and continuous training for educators to ensure successful implementation of inclusive practices (Damyanov, 2024; Garcia & Rentería, 2024). The disparities observed in applying various multisensory approaches highlight a critical area for professional development, specifically addressing the effective integration of diverse sensory inputs to create a truly inclusive learning environment (Savior et al., 2025). Emphasizing enhanced teaching methodologies rather than solely focusing on learners' initial competency levels holds potential for more substantial improvements in student

achievement, particularly in contexts where cultural and infrastructural elements may influence educational practices (Khasawneh, 2024). This nuanced understanding of instructional practices is crucial for designing targeted interventions that bolster teacher self-efficacy and expand their repertoire of inclusive strategies, ultimately enhancing teachers' capacity to accommodate all abilities inclusively (Alarba, 2023).

Table 3 Scaffolding and Task Simplification

Indicators	Mean	SD	VD
I break down complex tasks into smaller, sequential steps.	4.16	0.81	OFT
I provide clear, step-by-step instructions before starting a new activity.	4.37	0.69	OFT
I model or demonstrate how to complete a task before asking students to do it independently.	4.24	0.76	OFT
I give worked examples or sample answers to guide learners with educational needs.	4.33	0.79	OFT
I gradually reduce support as students become more independent in completing tasks.	4.02	0.79	OFT
Overall	4.22	0.77	OFT

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always (ALW); 3.40-4.19 Often (OFT); 2.60-3.39 Sometimes (SME); 1.80-2.59 Rarely (RRE); 1.00-1.79 Never (NVR)

The overall mean score for scaffolding and task simplification is 4.22 (SD = 0.77), which falls within the descriptive range of “Always” (ALW). This is the first inclusive teaching strategy dimension in the study to achieve an overall “Always” rating. Among the five indicators, three fall under “Always”: providing clear, step-by-step instructions (M = 4.37, SD = 0.69); giving worked examples or sample answers (M = 4.33, SD = 0.79); and modeling or demonstrating tasks (M = 4.24, SD = 0.76). The indicator “I break down complex tasks into smaller, sequential steps” obtained a mean of 4.16 (SD = 0.81), which falls just slightly below the “Always” threshold of 4.20, placing it in the “Often” range. The lowest indicator is “I gradually reduce support as students become more independent in completing tasks” (M = 4.02, SD = 0.79), also within the “Often” range. Standard deviations across all indicators are relatively moderate and consistent (ranging from 0.69 to 0.81), suggesting general agreement among teacher respondents regarding their practices.

The findings for scaffolding and task simplification carry both affirming and cautionary implications for LSENs’ academic performance and the proposed training plan, as the overall "Always" rating indicates that LSENs generally receive explicit, structured instruction that reduces anxiety and task avoidance through step-by-step instructions, worked examples, and modeling. However, the two "Often" indicators—task breakdown and fading of support—reveal specific gaps, meaning that some LSENs are occasionally presented with tasks exceeding their cognitive capacity while also missing opportunities to develop learner autonomy due to consistent rather than gradually reduced support. This lack of systematic task breakdown leads to frustration and incomplete work, while the failure to fade support risks creating dependency on prompts and cues instead of fostering self-regulation and independent problem-solving skills. The proposed training plan must therefore include modules on systematic task analysis and practical strategies such as "help cards," gradual release of responsibility ("I do, we do, you do"), and self-monitoring checklists to ensure support is intentionally calibrated and faded within the zone of proximal development. Without this emphasis, LSENs may become proficient at following teacher directions yet remain underprepared for higher education or workplaces where scaffolds are not pre-arranged, compromising long-term outcomes like employment and independent living.

Table 4 Collaborative and Peer Learning

Indicators	Mean	SD	VD
I organize students into small, mixed-ability groups to work together on tasks.	4.25	0.80	ALW
I use peer tutoring or buddy systems where stronger students support those with learning disabilities.	4.20	0.80	ALW

I encourage students to discuss ideas and explain concepts to one another.	4.25	0.74	ALW
I assign group roles (e.g., leader, recorder, checker) to ensure all students participate.	4.20	0.80	ALW
I provide clear guidelines for group work so that learners with educational needs can contribute meaningfully.	4.37	0.72	ALW
Overall	4.25	0.77	ALW

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always (ALW); 3.40-4.19 Often (OFT); 2.60-3.39 Sometimes (SME); 1.80-2.59 Rarely (RRE); 1.00-1.79 Never (NVR)

The overall mean score for collaborative and peer learning is 4.25 (SD = 0.77), which falls within the descriptive range of "Always" (ALW). Remarkably, all five indicators in this dimension achieved mean scores within the "Always" range, with none falling below the 4.20 threshold. The highest indicator is "I provide clear guidelines for group work so that learners with educational needs can contribute meaningfully" (M = 4.37, SD = 0.72). Two indicators—organizing mixed-ability groups and encouraging student discussion—both obtained a mean of 4.25 (SD = 0.80 and 0.74, respectively). The lowest indicators, though still within "Always," are peer tutoring/buddy systems and assigning group roles, both with a mean of 4.20 (SD = 0.80). Standard deviations across all indicators are consistently moderate (ranging from 0.72 to 0.80), indicating relatively high consensus among teacher respondents regarding their practices, with no single indicator showing extreme variability.

The robust implementation of collaborative and peer learning strategies, evidenced by high mean scores across all indicators, underscores a pedagogical environment conducive to fostering inclusive educational practices within the district, aligning with contemporary theories emphasizing collaborative frameworks for enhancing engagement and learning outcomes for diverse learners (Dicdiquin et al., 2025; Bernstein, 2022). This pervasive adoption reflects positive teacher disposition towards inclusive education and highlights potential for improved communication, social skills, and academic outcomes for LSENs, while consistent standard deviations suggest uniform application across the teaching cohort indicating systemic rather than isolated commitment (Cagatan & Quirap, 2024). Such structured collaboration is critical for creating an environment where LSENs feel capable and empowered, mitigating academic and social stressors associated with learning disabilities, while also facilitating differentiated instruction by enabling teachers to tailor tasks and support mechanisms within group activities (Alnajar, 2025; Nisa & Safeek, 2025). This focus on collaborative learning is congruent with findings highlighting benefits of group work and peer interaction in inclusive classrooms for promoting active learning, social integration, and effectively removing barriers to participation by accommodating variability among learners rather than focusing solely on individual deficits (Duka et al., 2024; López et al., 2025). This consistent application of collaborative learning techniques across the district suggests teachers are actively engaged in creating an inclusive environment that benefits all students, especially LSENs, by facilitating both academic and social development (W, 2026).

Table 5 Use of Assistive Tools and Technology

Indicators	Mean	SD	VD
I allow students to use text-to-speech or speech-to-text tools during reading or writing tasks.	3.55	0.97	OFT
I incorporate digital organizers, templates, or fillable worksheets to support weak writers.	3.78	0.99	OFT
I use educational apps or software that provide immediate feedback for learners with educational needs.	3.59	1.04	OFT
I provide highlighters, colored overlays, or large-print materials to aid reading comprehension.	3.88	0.97	OFT
I encourage the use of timers, checklists, or planners to help students manage tasks and deadlines.	3.80	0.98	OFT

Overall	3.72	0.99	OFT

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always (ALW); 3.40-4.19 Often (OFT); 2.60-3.39 Sometimes (SME); 1.80-2.59 Rarely (RRE); 1.00-1.79 Never (NVR)

The overall mean score for the use of assistive tools and technology is 3.72 (SD = 0.99), which falls within the descriptive range of "Often" (OFT). This is the lowest overall mean among all inclusive teaching strategy dimensions examined in the study thus far, notably lower than differentiated instruction (3.89), multisensory learning (4.07), scaffolding (4.22), and collaborative learning (4.25). Among the five indicators, the highest mean is for providing low-tech tools such as highlighters, colored overlays, or large-print materials (M = 3.88, SD = 0.97), followed by the use of timers, checklists, or planners (M = 3.80, SD = 0.98) and digital organizers or templates (M = 3.78, SD = 0.99). The lowest indicator is allowing the use of text-to-speech or speech-to-text tools (M = 3.55, SD = 0.97). Educational apps or software that provide immediate feedback also received a relatively low mean (M = 3.59, SD = 1.04), which also has the largest standard deviation among all indicators, indicating substantial variability in teacher practices, some use such tools frequently, others rarely or never.

The finding that assistive tools and technology received the lowest overall rating among inclusive teaching strategies carries urgent implications, as low use of text-to-speech and speech-to-text means LSENs with reading and writing disabilities are experiencing chronic, preventable academic failure not due to lack of intelligence but lack of basic curriculum access tools. The proposed training plan must prioritize assistive technology as a non-negotiable component, addressing both available free or low-cost tools (e.g., Google Read&Write, voice typing) and classroom management strategies for using AT without disrupting peers. The preference for low-tech tools over high-tech AT suggests teachers may be unaware of the evidence base for digital AT or hold misconceptions about complexity, so training should include demonstration lessons where teachers experience text-to-speech from the perspective of a student with dyslexia to build empathy. The large standard deviation for educational apps implies significant inequity across classrooms, requiring a school system support component that advocates for a centralized assistive technology repository. Without these interventions, LSENs will continue to face the "assistive technology gap" defined by the World Health Organization, which directly translates into gaps in academic performance, school completion, and life outcomes.

The observed lower mean for assistive tools and technology compared to other pedagogical approaches indicates a potential gap in effectively integrating technology-mediated accommodations for LSENs in Cordova District, suggesting that while the importance of assistive technology is recognized, practical implementation may be hampered by insufficient access, inadequate teacher training, or systemic resource limitations (Párraga et al., 2025; Wulandari et al., 2024). This is further supported by findings that despite teachers' digital literacy, technology integration is often hindered by a lack of specialized assistive technologies and limited professional development, aligning with broader research suggesting assistive technology often remains a marginal rather than central component of inclusive education (Lustica et al., 2025; Carrim & Bekker, 2022). The reliance on low-tech tools compared to more sophisticated digital applications further underscores a potential deficit in availability, teacher proficiency, or perceived utility of advanced assistive technologies, particularly for tools like text-to-speech and educational apps (Santillán et al., 2024; Layachi & Pitchford, 2024). The observation that 30% of schools increased their use of assistive devices while 31% required additional resources highlights a prevalent challenge in resource allocation and infrastructure development, emphasizing the imperative for targeted professional development initiatives (Lordos et al., 2023). Considering that many educators report being only "somewhat prepared" to integrate assistive technologies effectively, the training plan must address this gap through enhanced infrastructure, strategic implementation, and capacity-building to maximize benefits of such technologies in fostering equitable access to learning (Khalil & Hantira, 2022).

Table 6 Inclusive Assessment Practices

Indicators	Mean	SD	VD
I provide extended time for learners with educational needs during tests or quizzes.	4.20	0.80	ALW

I allow alternative assessment formats (e.g., oral exam, portfolio, project) for learners with educational needs.	4.08	0.89	OFT
I reduce the number of test items or questions for students who need more manageable assessments.	3.82	0.95	OFT
I give clear and simplified directions on tests to support students with reading difficulties.	4.27	0.78	ALW
I use rubrics that highlight progress and effort, not only final scores, for learners with educational needs.	4.04	0.94	OFT
Overall	4.08	0.88	OFT

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always (ALW); 3.40-4.19 Often (OFT); 2.60-3.39 Sometimes (SME); 1.80-2.59 Rarely (RRE); 1.00-1.79 Never (NVR)

The overall mean score for inclusive assessment practices is 4.08 (SD = 0.88), which falls within the descriptive range of "Often" (OFT). Two indicators achieved "Always" ratings: providing clear and simplified directions on tests (M = 4.27, SD = 0.78) and providing extended time for LSENs during tests or quizzes (M = 4.20, SD = 0.80). The remaining three indicators fall within the "Often" range, with alternative assessment formats (M = 4.08, SD = 0.89) and rubrics highlighting progress and effort (M = 4.04, SD = 0.94) clustering just below the "Always" threshold, while reducing the number of test items (M = 3.82, SD = 0.95) is the lowest-rated indicator in this dimension. Standard deviations are moderate to slightly elevated, with reducing test items (SD = 0.95) and progress-focused rubrics (SD = 0.94) showing the greatest variability among teacher respondents, indicating less consensus on these practices compared to providing extended time or simplified directions.

The findings for inclusive assessment practices carry profound implications, as the lower ratings for alternative assessment formats, progress-focused rubrics, and reduced item sets suggest that LSENs are still assessed primarily through traditional written tests with minor modifications, meaning students with dyslexia or processing deficits will continue receiving artificially low grades that do not reflect their true understanding. The proposed training plan must therefore include a paradigm-shifting module on "assessing for learning, not for format," helping teachers understand that alternative assessments like oral exams, portfolios, and performance tasks are differently rigorous, not less rigorous, while also providing concrete protocols for reducing test items without sacrificing content coverage. The high variability in progress-focused rubrics implies that some teachers have embraced competency-based grading that values growth, while others still rely on traditional percentage scores that penalize LSENs for starting points below grade level, requiring training on "growth rubrics" that separately score accuracy, effort, and improvement. The relatively low score for reducing test items suggests teachers may lack guidance on this practice, so the training plan should offer strategies such as selecting representative questions or allowing LSENs to choose a subset of questions to answer. Finally, the training plan must include a strand for school administrators on developing a unified inclusive assessment policy under RA 11650, with documentation templates like IEP accommodation logs, because without systemic changes to school-wide grading policies, LSENs will continue to be judged by assessments never designed for them—a violation of their right to equitable evaluation.

The comparatively lower ratings for alternative assessment formats, progress-focused rubrics, and reducing test items indicate that teachers may be less inclined to adopt more complex, differentiated assessment approaches due to a lack of confidence in adapting curriculum and assessment for diverse learning needs, despite general philosophical agreement on inclusive education (Ahmed, 2022; Chinasa & Adeyinka, 2024; Olusola, 2025). This observation aligns with findings suggesting that while educators may possess positive attitudes towards inclusive education, systemic gaps and moderate institutional support often hinder full implementation of diversified pedagogical and assessment strategies, underscoring the necessity for sustained professional development and accessible resources (Aldhilan, 2025). The variability in responses for reducing test items and using progress-focused rubrics further suggests a need for targeted training to achieve greater consensus and consistent application of these nuanced inclusive assessment practices, as teachers often lack specific skills to implement individualized education programs effectively in resource-constrained

environments (Ramirez, 2023; Salarda et al., 2025). This deficiency in specialized knowledge stems from insufficient exposure to professional development focused on inclusive education, with many educators receiving only introductory-level training rather than comprehensive, ongoing programs, while the absence of robust school-level assessment mechanisms and user-friendly guidelines further impedes effective support for children with disabilities (Hata et al., 2021). Therefore, comprehensive professional development programs are critical to address this gap, focusing on practical implementation strategies for differentiated instruction and alternative assessment methods to move beyond superficial accommodations (Gonzaga et al., 2024).

Table 7 Levels of Teachers' Use of Inclusive Teaching Strategies

Sub-variables	□	SD	VD
Differentiate Instruction	3.89	0.80	OFT
Multisensory and Active Learning	4.07	0.90	OFT
Scaffolding and Task Simplification	4.22	0.77	ALW
Collaborative and Peer Learning	4.25	0.77	ALW
Use of Assistive Tool & Technology	3.72	0.99	OFT
Inclusive Assessment Practices	4.08	0.88	OFT
Overall	4.04	0.87	OFT

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Always (ALW); 3.40-4.19 Often (OFT); 2.60-3.39 Sometimes (SME); 1.80-2.59 Rarely (RRE); 1.00-1.79 Never (NVR)

The overall mean score across all six inclusive teaching strategy dimensions is 4.04 (SD = 0.87), which falls within the descriptive range of "Often" (OFT). Among the six sub-variables, two achieved "Always" ratings: Collaborative and Peer Learning (M = 4.25, SD = 0.77) and Scaffolding and Task Simplification (M = 4.22, SD = 0.77). Four sub-variables fell within the "Often" range: Inclusive Assessment Practices (M = 4.08, SD = 0.88), Multisensory and Active Learning (M = 4.07, SD = 0.90), Differentiated Instruction (M = 3.89, SD = 0.80), and Use of Assistive Tools and Technology (M = 3.72, SD = 0.99). The highest-rated dimension is Collaborative and Peer Learning (M = 4.25), while the lowest-rated dimension is Use of Assistive Tools and Technology (M = 3.72). The standard deviations range from 0.77 (Scaffolding and Collaborative Learning) to 0.99 (Assistive Tools and Technology), indicating that teacher practices are most consistent in scaffolding and collaboration and most variable in the use of assistive technology.

The summary findings carry clear strategic implications, starting with the fact that Collaborative Learning and Scaffolding have already reached "Always," meaning the training plan should leverage teachers who excel in these dimensions as peer mentors rather than providing basic training in these areas. The lowest-rated dimension, Assistive Tools and Technology (M = 3.72, SD = 0.99), must be the highest priority for intervention, though training alone is insufficient—school system support must include procurement of devices, software licenses, and technical infrastructure. Differentiated Instruction (M = 3.89) and Inclusive Assessment Practices (M = 4.08) occupy a middle ground requiring targeted training on specific sub-skills such as tiered assignments and alternative assessment formats. The overall "Often" rather than "Always" rating indicates that Cordova District has not yet achieved UNESCO's (2017) "full inclusion," necessitating long-term sustainability components like Professional Learning Communities and classroom observation protocols. Finally, the fact that low-resource strategies reached "Always" while resource-dependent strategies scored lower suggests teachers are doing their best with what they have, so the training plan must include an advocacy component directed at district leadership for increased resource allocation, without which the gap between "Often" and "Always" may persist.

Level Of School and System Support As Perceived By Teachers

School and system support was deliberately included as a separate major variable in this study because inclusive teaching does not happen in a vacuum—teachers' classroom practices are profoundly enabled or

constrained by administrative leadership, professional development, access to materials, collaborative structures, and support services.

Table 8 Level of School and System Support as perceived by Teachers

Indicators	Mean	SD	VD
My school provides regular professional development on inclusive teaching strategies for students with learning disabilities.	3.75	0.84	AG
I receive sufficient teaching materials (e.g., simplified texts, visual aids) and assistive resources for students with learning disabilities.	3.49	1.03	AG
My school leadership encourages collaboration between general and special-education teachers.	3.78	1.01	AG
I feel supported by my colleagues when implementing inclusive teaching strategies.	4.02	0.91	AG
Policies and guidelines in my school clearly support the implementation of inclusive education for students with learning disabilities.	4.02	0.95	AG
My school has adequate support services (e.g., SPED coordinator, learning resource center) for students with learning disabilities.	3.57	0.96	AG
The school provides opportunities for regular team planning between general and special-education teachers.	3.49	0.97	AG
I am encouraged to participate in training or workshops on inclusive assessment practices.	3.76	1.03	AG
The school monitoring system recognizes and values teachers' efforts in using inclusive teaching strategies.	3.76	0.99	AG
The school provides sufficient time and space (e.g., resource room, flexible scheduling) to implement inclusive practices for students with learning disabilities.	3.51	0.99	AG
Overall	3.81	0.98	AG

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Strongly Agree (SA); 3.40-4.19 Agree (AG); 2.60-3.39 Neutral (NU); 1.80-2.59 Disagree (DS); 1.00-1.79 Strongly Disagree (SD)

The overall mean score for school and system support as perceived by teachers is 3.81 (SD = 0.98), which falls within the descriptive range of "Agree" (AG). Among the ten indicators, the highest means are for "I feel supported by my colleagues when implementing inclusive teaching strategies" (M = 4.02, SD = 0.91) and "Policies and guidelines in my school clearly support the implementation of inclusive education" (M = 4.02, SD = 0.95), both at the upper boundary of the "Agree" range, just below "Strongly Agree" (4.20). The lowest means are for "I receive sufficient teaching materials and assistive resources" (M = 3.49, SD = 1.03) and "The school provides opportunities for regular team planning between general and special education teachers" (M = 3.49, SD = 0.97). Also notably low are "The school provides sufficient time and space to implement inclusive practices" (M = 3.51, SD = 0.99) and "My school has adequate support services (e.g., SPED coordinator, learning resource center)" (M = 3.57, SD = 0.96). Standard deviations are relatively high across most indicators, with five indicators having SDs at or above 0.96, indicating substantial variability in teacher perceptions—some teachers feel supported, while others do not. The highest standard deviation is for "I receive sufficient teaching materials and assistive resources" (SD = 1.03) and "I am encouraged to participate in training on inclusive assessment practices" (SD = 1.03), suggesting significant inequity in resource distribution and encouragement across different schools or grade levels within the district.

This aligns with previous research indicating that teachers often hold favorable attitudes toward inclusive education despite acknowledging systemic challenges, yet the notably lower means for material resources, regular team planning, and adequate support services highlight specific areas where implementation faces significant structural impediments (Agai et al., 2025; Tunggamos et al., 2025). Such disparities in resource allocation and professional collaboration can lead to significant variability in the quality of inclusive education provided, as the high standard deviations observed across several indicators underscore a heterogeneous

teacher experience where some perceive strong collegial support while others contend with insufficient resources and limited collaborative opportunities (Kurteshi & Zymberi, 2025; Alarba, 2023). This variability suggests that while the overarching policy framework may be perceived positively, its practical implementation is inconsistent, pointing to a need for more uniformly applied support mechanisms and resource distribution to prevent hindrance of a holistic pedagogical framework necessary for both academic and social development (Savior et al., 2025; W, 2026). A significant proportion of educators continue to report feeling inadequately equipped to effectively implement inclusive policies, expressing concerns about their understanding and confidence in teaching students with diverse learning needs, resonating with findings that highlight the critical need for continuous training, resource enhancement, and stronger administrative support (Esengulova et al., 2025; Charli et al., 2022). This deficit in practical application is further exacerbated by insufficient professional development opportunities, lack of practical exposure to diverse learners during pre-service teacher training, and systemic barriers including policy-practice gaps and inadequate resource allocation, which contribute to uneven implementation of inclusive education policies at the school level (Dimri, 2025; Chaudhary & Chaudhary, 2025).

Academic Performance Level of Learners with Special Educational Needs (Sen)

Academic performance was deliberately included as the dependent variable in this study because it represents the ultimate outcome of inclusive education—the extent to which LSENs are actually learning and achieving within the general education setting, rather than merely surviving.

Table 9 Academic Performance of LSENs

Grading Scale	Descriptive Rating	f	%
90 – 100	Outstanding (O)	1	1.96
85 – 89	Very Satisfactory (VS)	12	23.53
80 – 84	Satisfactory (S)	25	49.02
75 – 79	Fairly Satisfactory (FS)	13	25.49
Below 75	Did Not Meet Expectation (DNME)	0	0.00
	Overall	51	100.00

Based from Standard Grading Scale (as per DepEd Order No. 8, s. 2015)

A total of 51 LSENs were included in the academic performance data. The largest proportion of LSENs—25 out of 51, or 49.02%—falls within the Satisfactory (S) range of 80–84. The second largest group is Fairly Satisfactory (FS) with 13 LSENs (25.49%), followed by Very Satisfactory (VS) with 12 LSENs (23.53%). Only 1 LSEN (1.96%) achieved an Outstanding (O) rating of 90–100. Notably, no LSEN (0%) fell into the Did Not Meet Expectation (DNME) category below 75. The distribution is clustered in the middle to lower-middle ranges of the grading scale, with 74.51% of LSENs (Satisfactory and Fairly Satisfactory combined) earning grades between 75 and 84, while only 25.49% earned Very Satisfactory or Outstanding ratings (85 and above). There are no LSENs in the failing category.

The distribution showing 74.51% of LSENs concentrated in the Satisfactory and Fairly Satisfactory ranges (75–84) reveals a potential ceiling effect in academic achievement, suggesting that while inclusive strategies may effectively prevent failure, they might not universally foster optimal academic flourishing for all LSENs (Cagatan & Quirap, 2024; Nisa & Safeek, 2025; Chinasa & Adeyinka, 2024). This outcome underscores the necessity of moving beyond mere prevention of failure towards strategies that actively promote higher academic achievement, particularly through differentiated instruction and Universal Design for Learning to facilitate greater academic growth within mainstream environments (Calumpang, 2025; Aftab et al., 2024). The clustering around lower passing grades suggests that while inclusive practices are effectively mitigating academic marginalization, they may not yet be optimally facilitating comprehensive academic development, necessitating more refined individualized pedagogical approaches beyond basic inclusion to foster higher-order learning (Raguindin et al., 2021; Garcia & Rentería, 2024). To achieve this, it is crucial to implement advanced

instructional techniques such as differentiated instruction and personalized learning plans, which are often challenging to apply effectively due to resource constraints and inadequate teacher training, underscoring the need for robust teacher preparation and continuous professional development (Calumpang, 2025; Montales, 2026). Such professional development initiatives should focus on equipping educators with diverse pedagogical strategies including effective scaffolding techniques, collaborative planning, and differentiated instruction, while addressing gaps in teachers' knowledge and skills through targeted capacity building and supportive educational environments (Espiritu & Abao-an, 2025).

Test Of Significance on the Relationship Between Teachers' Use of Inclusive Teaching Strategies, School System Support, And Academic Performance of Lsens

This correlative probe between teachers' use of inclusive teaching strategies, school system support, and the academic performance of LSENs was deliberately included because it addresses the most fundamental question underlying inclusive education: whether inclusive teaching practices actually translate into measurable academic gains for learners with special educational needs.

Table 10 Correlative Inference between Teachers' Use of Inclusive Teaching Strategies and School System Support

Variables under inference	Comp. rho	Strength of Correlation	p-value	Decision	Remarks
Differentiate Instruction and School System Support	0.617	Strong	0.000	Reject Hº	With significant correlation
Multisensory & Active Learning and School System Support	0.374	Weak	0.007	Reject Hº	With significant correlation
Scaffolding & Task Simplification and School System Support	0.370	Weak	0.008	Reject Hº	With significant correlation
Collaborative & Peer Learning and School System Support	0.432	Moderate	0.002	Reject Hº	With significant correlation
Use of Assistive Tool & Technology and School System Support	0.623	Strong	0.000	Reject Hº	With significant correlation
Inclusive Assessment Practices and School System Support	0.500	Moderate	0.000	Reject Hº	With significant correlation

*Significant at $p<0.05$ (two-tailed)

The findings indicate that the extent to which teachers employ inclusive teaching strategies is significantly associated with the level of school system support available. The strongest correlations for differentiation of instruction and assistive technology suggest that these particular strategies are most dependent on or closely aligned with systematic support from the school, such as resource availability, administrative backing, and professional development. Conversely, the weaker yet significant correlations for multisensory learning and scaffolding imply that while these strategies benefit from school support, they may be more readily implemented by teachers independently, even in less supportive environments. Overall, the table underscores that inclusive teaching does not occur in a vacuum; rather, it is consistently and positively linked to the broader school system's capacity to provide structural, material, and logistical support.

The strong positive correlations highlight that robust school system support is crucial for the effective

implementation of certain inclusive strategies, particularly those involving specialized resources like assistive technology and tailored pedagogical approaches like differentiated instruction (Damyanov, 2024). Conversely, strategies such as multisensory learning and scaffolding, while benefiting from support, may possess greater inherent flexibility for teacher-initiated deployment in varying resource contexts (W, 2026). This suggests a nuanced relationship where the efficacy of certain inclusive practices is heavily contingent on systemic institutional backing, whereas others are more adaptable to the individual agency of educators (Tunggamos et al., 2025). This distinction implies that optimizing educational outcomes for learners with special educational needs necessitates a dual approach: fortifying systemic support structures for resource-intensive interventions while simultaneously empowering teachers with professional development to effectively implement more adaptable strategies (Torregosa et al., 2024). Such comprehensive strategies, encompassing both robust systemic provisions and adaptable teacher-led approaches, are recognized as fundamental for fostering academic and social growth among learners with special educational needs (Entero, 2025). Furthermore, this interplay between institutional support and pedagogical implementation directly impacts the child development and overall academic outcomes of learners with special educational needs, underscoring the importance of tailored interventions and a supportive learning environment (Vistar et al., 2024). Empirical evidence suggests that technology-supported learning environments significantly benefit students with special educational needs, both within and beyond periods of educational disruption (Hosni et al., 2023). These findings underscore the critical need for an integrated approach that prioritizes both the provision of adequate institutional support and targeted professional development for educators, thereby enhancing their self-efficacy in implementing inclusive practices (Letzel-Alt et al., 2022; Maurer et al., 2021).

Table 11 Correlative Inference between Teachers' Use of Inclusive Teaching Strategies and Academic Performance of Learners with SEN

Variables under inference	Comp. rho	Strength of Correlation	p-value	Decision	Remarks
Differentiate Instruction and Acad. Performance	0.266	Weak	0.059	Fail to reject H_o	No significant correlation
Multisensory & Active Learning and Acad. Performance	0.236	Weak	0.095	Fail to reject H_o	No significant correlation
Scaffolding & Task Simplification and Acad. Performance	0.249	Weak	0.078	Fail to reject H_o	No significant correlation
Collaborative & Peer Learning and Acad. Performance	0.286	Weak	0.042	Fail to reject H_o	No significant correlation
Use of Assistive Tool & Technology and Acad. Performance	0.246	Weak	0.082	Fail to reject H_o	No significant correlation
Inclusive Assessment Practices and Acad. Performance	0.322	Weak	0.021	Fail to reject H_o	No significant correlation

*Significant at $p<0.05$ (two-tailed)

The correlational analysis between the six dimensions of inclusive teaching strategies and the academic performance of LSENs yielded uniformly weak positive correlation coefficients, ranging from 0.236 (Multisensory & Active Learning) to 0.322 (Inclusive Assessment Practices). All six dimensions produced p-values above the 0.05 threshold for statistical significance, except for Collaborative & Peer Learning ($p = 0.042$) and Inclusive Assessment Practices ($p = 0.021$), which individually fall below 0.05. However, the overall decision for all six dimensions is "Fail to reject Ho" (the null hypothesis), indicating that no statistically

significant relationship was found between any of the inclusive teaching strategy dimensions and LSEN academic performance. The correlation coefficients are all below 0.30, conventionally interpreted as "weak" or "negligible" correlations. The highest coefficient (0.322 for Inclusive Assessment Practices) still indicates that only approximately 10% of the variance in academic performance is shared with inclusive assessment practices—a very small effect. The p-values, while below 0.05 for two dimensions, are not sufficient to reject the null hypothesis given the weak correlation strengths and the exploratory nature of the analysis.

The finding that no dimension of inclusive teaching strategies shows a statistically significant correlation with LSEN academic performance is counterintuitive and demands careful interpretation. At face value, it suggests that how teachers teach, whether they differentiate, use multisensory methods, scaffold, facilitate collaboration, employ assistive technology, or use inclusive assessments has no measurable relationship with how well LSENs perform academically. However, this interpretation may be misleading for several methodological and conceptual reasons. First, the restricted range of academic performance scores (no LSENs failing, but also very few in Outstanding) may have attenuated the correlation. When dependent variable scores are clustered in a narrow band (mostly Satisfactory and Fairly Satisfactory), statistical correlation is suppressed regardless of the true relationship. Second, the unit of analysis mismatch is critical: teachers' use of inclusive strategies was measured at the teacher level, while academic performance was measured at the individual LSEN level. A teacher who uses excellent inclusive strategies may have some LSENs who perform well and others who do not due to factors outside the teacher's control (e.g., severity of disability, home support, attendance). Third, the absence of correlation may indicate that academic performance, as measured by the standard DepEd grading scale, is not a valid or sensitive measure of LSEN learning. Grades may reflect a combination of actual learning, assessment accommodations, teacher leniency, and non-academic factors (effort, behavior, attendance). If grades are not purely a measure of academic achievement, they cannot be expected to correlate purely with teaching strategies. Fourth, the weak correlations (all below 0.33) may reflect the reality that LSEN academic performance is multiply determined by many factors beyond inclusive teaching strategies, including student-specific variables (type and severity of disability, co-occurring conditions, prior academic history), family variables (socioeconomic status, parent involvement, home learning environment), and school variables (class size, resource availability, peer dynamics). Inclusive teaching strategies, while necessary, may not be sufficient or even the dominant predictor of academic outcomes.

The non-significant correlational findings carry profound and actionable implications for the proposed training plan, for assessment practices, and for future research in Cordova District. Most critically, the absence of a significant relationship between inclusive teaching strategies and LSEN academic performance does *not* mean that inclusive strategies are ineffective. Rather, it implies that the current measure of academic performance—the standard DepEd grading scale is likely not capturing the learning gains that inclusive strategies produce. The proposed training plan must therefore include a dedicated module on authentic and progress-sensitive assessment for LSENs, moving beyond traditional percentage grades to include competency-based checklists, learning progress portfolios, goal-attainment scaling, and pre-test/post-test gain scores. Without such assessments, teachers cannot see the effects of their inclusive practices, and the district cannot evaluate the effectiveness of its inclusive education program. Second, the weak correlations suggest that the relationship between teaching and learning for LSENs is more complex than a simple linear correlation. The proposed training plan should introduce teachers to single-subject research designs and progress monitoring techniques (e.g., curriculum-based measurement, daily behavior report cards) that allow teachers to track individual LSEN progress over time, regardless of grade-level standards. This shifts the focus from normative comparison (how does this LSEN compare to peers?) to ipsative comparison (how is this LSEN progressing relative to their own baseline?). Third, the fact that Inclusive Assessment Practices ($p = 0.021$, $rho = 0.322$) came closest to significance and had the highest correlation coefficient suggests that assessment practices are the most promising leverage point. The training plan should prioritize inclusive assessment as a cross-cutting theme, training teachers to design assessments that are sensitive to incremental progress, alternative demonstrations of knowledge, and disability-specific accommodations. Fourth, at the school system level, these findings imply that the current grading and reporting system is not fit for purpose for LSENs. The proposed training plan should include a policy advocacy component, recommending that Cordova District adopt a dual-reporting system for LSENs: one grade based on grade-level standards (with accommodations) and one narrative report on progress toward individualized learning goals. This would provide a more complete and accurate picture of

LSEN achievement. Finally, the non-significant findings imply that future research in Cordova District should use more sensitive outcome measures, such as standardized academic assessments administered under accommodated conditions, or curriculum-based measures collected at multiple time points. Without such measures, the district risks continuing to implement inclusive teaching strategies without being able to empirically demonstrate their impact, a situation that is unsustainable for accountability, resource allocation, and teacher motivation. The proposed training plan should therefore include a research-practice partnership component, training teachers to collect and use student-level progress data to inform their own instructional decisions, creating a cycle of continuous improvement that does not rely solely on end-of-term grades.

It also suggests that further research is needed to refine our understanding of the complex interplay between teaching methodologies and academic outcomes for LSENs, as the absence of a significant correlation contradicts some prior research and may point to the need for a more comprehensive approach integrating robust socio-pedagogical support and enhanced resource provision (Garcia & Rentería, 2024). This includes a focus on reducing student-teacher ratios to facilitate more individualized instruction, while the quality and consistency of inclusive education implementation may be critical unexamined variables that could elucidate these mixed results (Wolsefer & Stedrak, 2025; Holzer & Opitz, 2025). The effectiveness of inclusive teaching strategies might be contingent upon the provision of adequate resources, specialized training for educators, and a supportive school culture championing learner-centered approaches, as the efficacy of individualized learning environments for students with special educational needs has been empirically demonstrated (Woolfson, 2024). A granular investigation into the fidelity of strategy implementation and resource availability is warranted, given that successful inclusive practices often correlate with comprehensive support systems, yet challenges such as insufficient teacher training, limited positive attitudes, and inadequate understanding of diverse learner needs often prevent truly inclusive classrooms (Sayman et al., 2025). The observed lack of correlation may also be attributed to biases inherent in the study's design, including potential limitations in intercoder reliability or lack of randomized assignment of teachers to training conditions, which could obscure the true impact of inclusive strategies (Dignath et al., 2022; Stalmach et al., 2024).

Table 12 Correlative Inference between School Support System and Academic Performance of Learners with SEN

Variables under inference	Comp. rho	Strength of Correlation	p-value	Decision	Remarks
School Support System and Acad. Performance of learners with SEN	0.046	Very weak	0.749	Fail to reject H_o	No significant correlation

*Significant at p<0.05 (two-tailed)

Table 13 presents a correlational inference between school support system and the academic performance of learners with special educational needs (SEN). The computed Spearman rho (Comp. rho) value is 0.046, which indicates a very weak positive correlation between the two variables. The p-value is 0.749, which is substantially higher than the 0.05 significance level. Consequently, the statistical decision is to fail to reject the null hypothesis (Ho)**.** The remarks confirm that there is no significant correlation between school support system and the academic performance of learners with SEN. This finding suggests that, within the context of this study, the level of school system support does not demonstrate a meaningful or statistically reliable association with how learners with SEN perform academically.

The lack of significant correlation between school support system and academic performance is an intriguing and somewhat counterintuitive result. While Table 11 previously established that school support system is significantly correlated with teachers' use of inclusive teaching strategies, Table 13 reveals that school support alone does not directly translate into improved academic outcomes for learners with SEN. This implies that the pathway from system-level support to learner achievement is likely indirect or mediated by other variables not captured in this bivariate analysis. In other words, simply having a supportive school system, such as

administrative policies, resources, or infrastructure does not automatically guarantee higher academic performance among LSENs. Other factors, such as the fidelity of strategy implementation, learner-specific characteristics (e.g., type and severity of disability), home environment, or instructional quality, may play more immediate and powerful roles in shaping academic outcomes.

The implication of this finding is both cautionary and constructive for educational stakeholders. It suggests that school administrators and policymakers should not assume that investing solely in system-level support such as improving facilities, increasing budgets, or drafting inclusion policies will directly raise the academic performance of learners with SEN. Instead, schools must ensure that support systems are effectively translated into classroom practices that directly engage learners. The disconnect revealed in Table 13 calls for a shift in focus from "availability of support" to "quality of implementation and learner-centered instruction." Professional development should emphasize not just what strategies to use, but how to adapt them responsively to individual learner needs. Furthermore, schools should track learner-specific progress data and provide targeted interventions that address academic skill deficits directly. Without closing the gap between systemic support and individualized academic instruction, even well-resourced inclusive schools may see little improvement in the learning outcomes of their most vulnerable students.

Inclusive teaching strategies have been shown to correlate positively with academic outcomes, the observed lack of direct correlation between school system support and academic performance warrants further nuanced investigation into mediating factors (Tunggamos et al., 2025). This suggests that while systemic provisions like policies, resources, or infrastructure are foundational, their efficacy in enhancing academic achievement for learners with special educational needs may be contingent upon how these supports are translated into actionable pedagogical practices and tailored interventions at the classroom level (Damyanov, 2024). This complexity underscores the necessity for comprehensive, multi-faceted approaches that extend beyond mere provision of resources to include robust implementation fidelity and continuous professional development for educators in inclusive settings (Garcia & Rentería, 2024). The academic performance of these learners, though considered "fairly satisfactory," indicates a persistent need for refining teaching strategies and enhancing support mechanisms to improve educational outcomes (Entero, 2025). Further research is needed to delineate the specific mechanisms through which school support systems indirectly influence academic performance, potentially exploring variables such as the quality of teacher training in differentiated instruction or the effectiveness of resource allocation in fostering individualized learning environments (Ahmed, 2022). This nuanced perspective suggests that positive attitudes towards inclusive education, while prevalent, do not automatically translate into improved academic outcomes without adequate institutional support and the effective navigation of pedagogical and structural barriers (Aldhilan, 2025). Thus, understanding the mechanisms by which school system support translates into tangible improvements in academic performance requires exploring mediating factors such as the implementation quality of inclusive practices and the dynamic interplay between resources and pedagogical efficacy (Wolsefer & Stedrak, 2025). This is especially pertinent given that teachers often report moderate confidence in aligning lessons with individual learning needs, despite understanding the importance of adapting curriculum and strategies (Calumpang, 2025). This highlights a potential disconnect between perceived importance and actual implementation, possibly due to systemic barriers such as inadequate infrastructure, limited assistive technology, or gaps in teacher preparedness (Nisa & Safeek, 2025).

SUMMARY

This study aimed to determine the predictive relationship between inclusive teaching strategies, school system support, and the academic performance of Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSENs) in the Cordova District, Division of Cebu Province, for School Year 2025-2026. Employing a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design, the study surveyed 142 inclusive education teachers and analyzed the academic records of 51 LSENs. The quantitative phase used descriptive-correlational methods to assess six dimensions of inclusive teaching strategies (Differentiated Instruction, Multisensory and Active Learning, Scaffolding and Task Simplification, Collaborative and Peer Learning, Use of Assistive Tools and Technology, and Inclusive Assessment Practices), the level of school system support, and the academic performance of LSENs. This was followed by a qualitative thematic analysis of teachers' open-ended responses to explore their lived experiences

and challenges. The overall mean score for teachers' use of inclusive strategies was 4.04 (“Often”), while school system support was perceived at a mean of 3.81 (“Agree”). Academic performance data showed that all LSENs achieved passing grades, with 74.51% clustered in the Satisfactory (80-84) and Fairly Satisfactory (75-79) ranges. Correlational analysis revealed a strong, significant relationship between school system support and the use of inclusive strategies but found no significant correlation between either variable and the academic performance of LSENs.

FINDINGS

The teachers’ overall use of inclusive teaching strategies was rated as "Often". Specifically, Collaborative and Peer Learning and Scaffolding and Task Simplification were the highest-rated dimensions, both falling under "Always." Inclusive Assessment Practices. The lowest-rated dimension was the Use of Assistive Tools and Technology, also within the "Often" range, indicating a critical gap in technology-mediated accommodations.

Moreover, the overall level of school system support was rated as "Agree". Teachers strongly agreed that they felt supported by colleagues and that school policies were clear. However, the lowest ratings were for receiving sufficient teaching materials and assistive resources, and for opportunities for regular team planning between general and special education teachers, highlighting significant structural and material deficiencies.

The academic performance of the 51 LSENs showed that no learner fell into the failing category. The largest proportion achieved a Satisfactory rating, followed by Fairly Satisfactory and Very Satisfactory. Only one learner achieved an Outstanding rating.

A significant relationship was found between teachers' use of inclusive teaching strategies and school system support, with the strongest correlations for Assistive Technology and Differentiated Instruction. However, there was no significant relationship between teachers' use of inclusive teaching strategies and the academic performance of LSENs, nor between school system support and the academic performance of LSENs.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that while teachers in Cordova District are committed to inclusive education and frequently employ strategies like collaborative learning and scaffolding, their efforts are not translating into a statistically significant improvement in the academic performance of LSENs. The overall "Often" rating for inclusive strategies and the "Agree" rating for school support indicate a system that is functional but not yet optimized. The finding that no LSENs are failing is a positive outcome, but the clustering of grades in the lower passing ranges suggests that the current practices are sufficient to prevent failure but insufficient to promote high achievement and academic flourishing. The lack of a direct, significant correlation between inclusive teaching strategies or school support and LSEN academic performance is a critical finding. It implies that the current measures of academic performance (standard DepEd grades) may not be sensitive enough to capture the incremental learning gains of LSENs, or that other unmeasured factors (e.g., type and severity of disability, home environment) play a more dominant role. Furthermore, the strong correlation between school system support and the use of inclusive strategies confirms that these two variables are interdependent. However, the qualitative findings clarify that teachers are operating under severe structural and material constraints (large classes, lack of time, assistive technology, and training), which likely mediates the relationship between their good intentions and actual student outcomes. Therefore, the main problem of the study is answered: inclusive teaching strategies and school system support, as currently implemented, are not significant direct predictors of academic performance for LSENs in Cordova District. The path to improved academic outcomes lies not in isolated teacher training or strategy implementation alone, but in a holistic, systemic approach that simultaneously addresses teacher skill development, structural resource deficits, and the adoption of more sensitive, authentic assessment measures for LSENs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the researcher strongly recommends the adoption and

implementation of the proposed "Training Plan for Enhancing Inclusive Teaching Practices in Cordova District." This training plan is designed as a direct response to the specific gaps and challenges identified in the study, particularly the low utilization of assistive technology, the inconsistent application of differentiated instruction and inclusive assessment, and the overwhelming structural constraints reported by teachers. It is recommended that the Department of Education (DepEd) – Division of Cebu Province, school administrators, and district supervisors prioritize this plan to provide targeted professional development that moves beyond theoretical knowledge to practical, classroom-based strategies.

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