Examining the General Education Teachers' Decision-Making and Creativeness in Designing Activities for Learners with Exceptionalities in Inclusive Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the extent of general education teachers' decision- This study determined the extent of general education teachers' decision-making and creativity in designing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities in inclusive classrooms at North City Central School, Toledo, Cebu, during School Year 2025–2026. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design involving 40 teacher-respondents. Adapted and contextualized survey questionnaires were used to gather data based on teachers' actual classroom experiences. Frequency and percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient were used for data analysis. Findings revealed that most respondents were early- to mid-career classroom teachers with limited advanced academic qualifications, specialized inclusive education training, and direct experience handling learners with exceptionalities. Teachers demonstrated generally favorable decision-making, particularly in considering learner needs, adjusting instruction, and modifying activities, although participation in broader curriculum decisions and innovative planning was limited. Teachers also demonstrated generally positive creativity through varied methods, real-life contexts, activity modification, and learner participation, but creativity was more adaptive than highly original. A significant moderate positive relationship was found between teachers' decision-making and creativity; thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The study concluded that stronger decision-making was associated with greater creativity in instructional design. An Action Plan was recommended to strengthen inclusive decision-making and creative instructional practices through training, mentoring, collaborative planning, professional development, and teacher learning communities among general education teachers consistently.

Keywords: Special Education, teachers' decision-making, creativity in designing classroom activities, descriptive-correlational research, Action Plan, North City Central, Toledo City, Cebu

I. INTRODUCTION

Classrooms today are increasingly diverse, with students exhibiting a wide range of abilities, learning styles, and socio-emotional needs. Teachers are tasked with managing this complexity while maintaining academic standards and ensuring meaningful learning for all. Planning and implementing classroom activities in such contexts require not only subject matter expertise but also sound professional judgment and creative problem-solving. Understanding how teachers make instructional decisions and design engaging activities is critical to supporting all learners, particularly those who require differentiated or scaffolded approaches.

In everyday classroom scenarios, teachers at North City Central Elementary School often face situations where students' learning needs vary widely. For instance, some learners may struggle to focus due to attention or processing difficulties, while others require more challenging tasks to remain engaged. Teachers must make immediate decisions regarding pacing, grouping, teaching strategies, and assessment methods, while also adapting materials and tasks to ensure all students can participate meaningfully. These realities highlight the importance of teacher decision-making and creativity in inclusive classroom settings.

International studies support the relevance of teacher decision-making in diverse learning environments. Usher et al. (2021) found that instructors who effectively use learners' data to guide instructional decisions enhance student engagement and learning outcomes, particularly in flexible and technology-supported contexts. Their findings demonstrate that data-informed decision-making is essential for tailoring instruction to meet learners' needs, reinforcing the critical role of teacher judgment in managing classroom activities.

At the national level, Prasetyo et al. (2021) emphasized that teachers' decisions about activity design and instructional strategies significantly influence students' skill development and engagement. However, prevailing gaps remain evident, as many studies at the national level still treat decision-making and creativity as separate constructs, with limited empirical attention given to how these processes intersect in actual classroom implementation, particularly in inclusive education settings.

At the regional level, existing studies tend to focus more on general teaching effectiveness and learner outcomes rather than examining how teachers balance decision-making and creativity in designing inclusive activities. There is also a lack of contextualized research that reflects the realities of public elementary schools, where constraints such as large class sizes, limited instructional materials, and varying levels of teacher training may affect both decision-making processes and creative practices.

Within the environment of the present study, several observable challenges further emphasize this gap. Teachers at North City Central Elementary School encounter difficulties in making timely and appropriate instructional decisions due to diverse learner needs, time constraints, and limited access to differentiated resources. Additionally, there is a noticeable challenge in consistently designing creative and inclusive activities that cater to both struggling and advanced learners. Some teachers rely on routine or traditional strategies, which may not fully address the complexity of inclusive classrooms, while others struggle to integrate innovative approaches due to insufficient support or training. These issues highlight the need to better understand how decision-making and creativity are practiced simultaneously in real classroom contexts.

Despite existing literature, there remains limited understanding of how teachers integrate decision-making and creativity when planning and implementing classroom activities in inclusive settings. Most studies examine these aspects independently, resulting in a fragmented view of teaching practices. Addressing this gap is essential to provide more comprehensive, evidence-based guidance that can strengthen inclusive instruction and improve learner outcomes.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the extent of teacher decision-making and the extent of developing creative classroom activities in inclusive classrooms at North City Central Elementary School during the school year 2025–2026, and to use the findings as a basis for proposing an Action Plan that can enhance teacher practices and student learning outcomes.

Theories and Legal Bases

This study is anchored on the principles of Constructivist Learning Theory (Lev Vygotsky, 1978), Decision-Making Theory (Herbert A. Simon, 1977), and the Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Howard Gardner, 1983), which collectively provide a comprehensive framework for understanding teacher decision-making and creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive classrooms. These theories emphasize socially mediated learning, informed instructional choices, and the recognition of diverse learner strengths, guiding teachers in planning, implementing, and adapting classroom activities to meet the needs of all students.

In addition to these theoretical foundations, the study is guided by key legal bases on inclusive education in the Philippines, namely DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009 (Institutionalization of Inclusive Education), which strengthens the implementation of inclusive practices in schools; Republic Act No. 7277 (Magna Carta for Disabled Persons), which upholds the rights and welfare of learners with disabilities and ensures their access to appropriate education; and Republic Act No. 11650 (Inclusive Education Act), which institutionalizes inclusive education and promotes equitable access to quality learning opportunities for all learners. These legal frameworks collectively mandate teachers to exercise sound professional judgment, design differentiated instruction, and implement inclusive and creative classroom activities that respond to the diverse needs of learners.

Constructivist Learning Theory (Lev Vygotsky, 1978) emphasizes that learning is an active, social, and constructive process in which learners build knowledge through interaction with others, learning tasks, and their environment. Central to this theory is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which refers to the gap between what learners can accomplish independently and what they can achieve with guidance. Learning becomes most effective when instruction is situated within this zone through appropriate scaffolding and support. In this view, the teacher is not merely a transmitter of knowledge but a facilitator who designs meaningful learning experiences that promote interaction, engagement, and cognitive development.

In inclusive classrooms, this perspective becomes highly significant because learners demonstrate diverse abilities, learning styles, and developmental needs. Teachers are therefore required to design learning activities that allow all students to participate meaningfully despite these differences. Within this context, social interaction, peer learning, and guided instruction become essential strategies for addressing varied learner needs and ensuring equitable participation.

Applying this theory to classroom practice, teacher decision-making involves identifying appropriate instructional strategies that match learners' readiness levels and developmental needs. Teachers must decide how to group learners, what level of support to provide, and how to adjust tasks so that learning remains both accessible and challenging. The concept of ZPD serves as a practical guide in ensuring that classroom activities are neither too simple nor too difficult for learners.

Similarly, teacher creativity in designing classroom activities is strongly grounded in constructivist principles. Since learners construct knowledge differently, teachers are expected to design flexible, interactive, and differentiated learning tasks. Creativity is reflected in the use of collaborative activities, visual and hands-on materials, differentiated outputs, and scaffolded tasks that gradually promote learner independence while maintaining engagement and learning continuity.

Supporting this view, Sanahuja et al. (2020) found that inclusive and participatory classroom practices enhance student engagement and collaboration, reinforcing the importance of teacher-facilitated social learning. Likewise, Rahmi (2020) emphasized that teachers in inclusive settings use creative strategies such as differentiated instruction and hands-on learning to address the needs of learners with special needs. Elmarakbi et al. (2023) further highlighted that creative, multi-sensory, and flexible instructional designs improve engagement among learners with autism, showing that creativity is essential in addressing complex learning needs.

Unciti and Palau (2023) stressed that teacher decision-making relies on structured processes that include assessing learner needs, selecting strategies, and adjusting instruction accordingly. This supports the present study by showing that effective instructional planning requires deliberate and informed choices. Similarly, Shauli et al. (2023) found that teachers continuously adapt decisions in response to classroom challenges, reflecting the dynamic and responsive nature of teaching in inclusive settings.

Geurts et al. (2024) further added that involving learners in instructional decisions enhances engagement and autonomy, reinforcing the constructivist idea that learning is socially co-constructed. Together, these studies affirm that teacher decision-making and creativity are essential and interconnected components of effective inclusive instruction.

In relation to teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities, Decision-Making Theory suggests that creativity is not separate from decision-making but is embedded within it. Since teachers operate under constraints such as limited time, diverse learner needs, and varying classroom resources, they are required to innovate in order to produce workable instructional solutions. Creative strategies—such as modifying tasks, integrating technology, and designing differentiated activities—emerge from the teacher's continuous process of analyzing classroom situations, evaluating alternatives, and selecting appropriate responses. This reflects Simon's view that decision-making is both rational and adaptive, requiring a balance between ideal instructional goals and what is realistically achievable in practice.

In this sense, creativity becomes a practical outcome of bounded rationality rather than a purely artistic or spontaneous act. Teachers are not simply choosing between fixed options; instead, they actively construct

solutions that respond to evolving classroom demands. In inclusive education, this is particularly evident as teachers adjust lessons to accommodate learners with different abilities, ensuring that instruction remains accessible and engaging for all.

Decision-Making Theory (Herbert A. Simon, 1977) emphasizes that decision-making follows a structured process involving problem identification, evaluation of alternatives, and selection of the most feasible action within constraints of time, knowledge, and resources. Simon's concept of bounded rationality explains that individuals aim for rational decisions but must settle for satisfactory solutions due to real-world limitations. In inclusive classrooms, this theory provides a clear lens for understanding how teachers plan, implement, and adapt instructional activities while responding to the diverse needs of learners (Villa & Thousand, 2021).

Bovill (2020) emphasized the value of co-creation in education, where learners are involved in shaping classroom activities. This participatory approach supports teacher decision-making by incorporating student perspectives, resulting in more responsive and inclusive instructional choices. It also reinforces the idea that decision-making is enhanced through collaboration rather than being a purely teacher-centered process.

Villa and Thousand (2021) further provided a checklist of best practices in inclusive education, underscoring that teachers must make systematic and context-sensitive decisions in lesson planning, classroom management, and activity adaptation. Their work highlights that effective decision-making requires balancing curriculum expectations, learner diversity, and available instructional resources, aligning strongly with Simon's bounded rationality framework.

Larios and Zetlin (2023) identified that teachers often experience uncertainty when addressing diverse learner needs, particularly in inclusive settings where preparedness and support may vary. This highlights the complexity of instructional decision-making and reinforces the need for adaptive strategies, consistent with Simon's view that decisions are made under incomplete information and practical constraints.

Samsudin (2021) found that teachers frequently evaluate multiple instructional approaches in real time and adjust strategies based on learner engagement and classroom dynamics. This supports the present study by showing that teacher decision-making is an ongoing and flexible process that blends theoretical knowledge with practical classroom judgment.

Rege (2025) demonstrated that in art education for learners with disabilities, teacher decisions in lesson design significantly influence creativity, engagement, and inclusivity. This reinforces the idea that instructional creativity is directly shaped by the quality of decisions teachers make in adapting content and learning experiences.

Similarly, Rahmawati et al. (2022) highlighted that teachers implementing STEAM-based learning must continuously make strategic decisions to balance curriculum demands with learner participation. Their findings show that creative instructional design emerges from deliberate decision-making processes that operate within real-world classroom constraints.

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Howard Gardner, 1983) posits that intelligence is not a single, fixed attribute measured solely through IQ, but a set of distinct modalities through which individuals process information, learn, and demonstrate understanding. Gardner identified multiple intelligences—linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic—emphasizing that learners possess varying strengths that shape how they engage with and comprehend content. This perspective challenges uniform instruction and underscores the importance of differentiated and inclusive teaching approaches.

In inclusive classrooms, this theory becomes particularly significant because learners demonstrate diverse cognitive, social, and emotional profiles. Teachers are therefore required to recognize these differences and design instructional activities that allow multiple pathways for learning. This ensures that students are not restricted by a single mode of instruction but are given opportunities to engage and demonstrate understanding based on their strengths.

In relation to teacher decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities, the theory provides a clear basis for instructional choices. Teachers must determine how lessons are structured, what materials are used, and what learning tasks are appropriate for different learners. For example, spatial learners may benefit from diagrams and visual organizers, bodily-kinesthetic learners from hands-on tasks, interpersonal learners from group work, and musical learners from rhythm or sound-based activities. These decisions reflect the teacher's ability to match instructional strategies with learner diversity in a purposeful and systematic way.

At the same time, the theory strongly highlights the role of creativity in instructional design. Teachers cannot rely on a single traditional method; instead, they must develop flexible, multi-modal, and differentiated activities that allow learners to engage meaningfully. Creativity is demonstrated when teachers design varied learning experiences within a single lesson—such as combining reading tasks, experiments, modeling activities, and creative outputs like storytelling, drawing, or composing—each aligned with different intelligences.

Kim (2024) found that teachers who understand learner differences can effectively integrate artificial intelligence tools to personalize instruction, showing that awareness of multiple intelligences enhances creative teaching practices. Similarly, Phillips et al. (2023) emphasized that collaborative and distributed leadership structures support teachers in designing innovative and differentiated instructional strategies, reinforcing the importance of recognizing learner diversity in decision-making.

Marschall et al. (2025) further revealed that teachers' awareness of students' cognitive strengths directly influences lesson planning and activity design, supporting the idea that instructional decisions are shaped by learner variability. Ramírez-Montoya et al. (2021) also highlighted that Education 4.0 requires teachers to design innovative lessons that accommodate diverse learner profiles, aligning with the need for creativity in inclusive instruction.

Alam (2022) demonstrated that integrating robotics and programming in early childhood education allows teachers to address multiple intelligences such as spatial, logical-mathematical, and bodily-kinesthetic abilities, showing how creative instructional design enhances engagement and learning. Meanwhile, Deroncele-Acosta and Ellis (2024) found that teachers who consider individual learner strengths are more effective in engaging diverse students, reinforcing the importance of differentiated and inclusive strategies.

Taken together, these studies affirm that recognizing multiple intelligences directly influences both teacher decision-making and creativity. Instructional planning becomes more intentional, while classroom activities become more flexible, engaging, and inclusive when aligned with diverse learner strengths.

In conclusion, the Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 1983), together with Constructivist Learning Theory and Decision-Making Theory, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding teaching in inclusive classrooms. While constructivism explains how learners actively build knowledge through social interaction, Decision-Making Theory clarifies how teachers make instructional choices under constraints, and Multiple Intelligences Theory highlights the need to address learner diversity through differentiated instruction.

Collectively, these theories show that effective inclusive teaching requires both sound judgment and instructional creativity. Teachers must make informed decisions based on learner needs while designing flexible, multi-modal, and engaging activities that allow all students to participate meaningfully. This integration of perspectives supports the present study by emphasizing that the extent of teacher decision-making and creativity is essential in promoting equitable, inclusive, and effective learning environments.

DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009 institutionalizes inclusive education in Philippine schools, emphasizing that learners with disabilities, special learning needs, or other barriers to education must be provided equitable access to quality basic education. It mandates schools to develop policies, programs, and support mechanisms that promote differentiated instruction and ensure meaningful participation of all learners in classroom activities. It also promotes collaboration among teachers, school administrators, parents, and specialists in creating responsive learning environments that address learner diversity. This policy reflects the national

commitment to equity and access, reinforcing that inclusive education is a shared responsibility within the school system.

In classroom practice, this legal framework directly supports teacher decision-making and creativity in designing inclusive learning activities. Teachers are expected to assess learner needs, identify appropriate instructional strategies, and implement differentiated or scaffolded tasks that ensure participation of all students. For instance, teachers may design tiered activities, modify instructional materials, or provide learning supports to accommodate varying abilities. In this way, DepEd Order No. 72 empowers teachers to exercise professional judgment and adopt creative instructional approaches that promote inclusive and equitable learning experiences.

Republic Act No. 7277, or the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons, strengthens this commitment by safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities (PWDs) and ensuring their full participation in society, including access to education. It mandates both public and private institutions to provide reasonable accommodations, necessary support services, and accessible learning environments. The law further emphasizes the responsibility of educators to uphold dignity, eliminate barriers to learning, and promote inclusive practices that respect individual differences and capabilities.

In relation to classroom implementation, RA 7277 reinforces the role of teachers in making informed instructional decisions that address the specific needs of learners with disabilities. Teachers are encouraged and legally supported to modify lessons, adapt teaching strategies, and design creative interventions that remove barriers to learning. This may include the use of assistive technologies, visual supports, simplified materials, or differentiated tasks depending on learner needs. As such, the law strengthens teachers' authority to exercise professional judgment while promoting innovative and responsive instructional practices.

Republic Act No. 10533, or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, further advances inclusive education by strengthening the Philippine basic education system through a learner-centered and competency-based curriculum. It recognizes the diversity of learners and promotes flexible teaching strategies, differentiated instruction, and appropriate support systems that respond to varying developmental needs. The law emphasizes quality, relevance, and inclusivity in education, ensuring that instruction is aligned with learners' abilities and real-life contexts.

In classroom practice, RA 10533 has a direct influence on teachers' decision-making and creativity in designing instructional activities. Teachers are guided to plan developmentally appropriate lessons, assess learner differences, and implement varied instructional approaches such as collaborative learning, multi-modal strategies, and scaffolded tasks. These practices ensure that learners are actively engaged and able to demonstrate understanding in multiple ways. The law therefore supports teachers in exercising both pedagogical judgment and instructional creativity in delivering inclusive education.

In conclusion, DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009, Republic Act No. 7277, and Republic Act No. 10533 collectively form the legal foundation of inclusive education in the Philippines. DepEd Order No. 72 institutionalizes inclusive practices within schools through structured policies and collaborative support systems. RA 7277 safeguards the rights of learners with disabilities and ensures access to barrier-free and equitable education. RA 10533 strengthens the curriculum framework by promoting learner-centered, flexible, and competency-based instruction that responds to learner diversity.

Together, these legal bases reinforce the critical role of teachers in inclusive education. They establish both the mandate and responsibility for educators to exercise sound decision-making, professional judgment, and instructional creativity in planning and implementing classroom activities. Ultimately, these laws support the development of inclusive, responsive, and equitable learning environments where all learners are given meaningful opportunities to participate and succeed.

Significance of the Study

This study served as a basis to support different stakeholders in inclusive education, particularly in addressing the needs of learners with exceptionalities. It was beneficial to the following: the Department of Education, school administrators, teachers, learners with diverse needs, the researcher, and future researchers.

Objectives of the Study

This study examined the extent of general education teachers' decision-making and their creativeness in desi-

gning activities for learners with exceptionalities in inclusive classrooms at North City Central School, Toledo, Cebu based on their experiences during the school year 2025–2026 as basis for proposed Action Plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1.What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:

1.1 age and gender,

1.2 educational attainment,

1.3 years of teaching experience,

1.4 teaching position,

1.5 related trainings and seminars attended on planning, designing and implementing activities in inclusive education?

2.What is the extent of teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities?

3.What is the extent of teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education?

4.Is there a significant relationship between teachers' decision-making and the creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education?

5.Based on the findings, what Action Plan can be proposed to support teachers in improving decision-making and enhancing creativity in designing classroom activities?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This portion of the study presented the research design, the process for selecting teacher-respondents, and the description of the research setting. It detailed the methodology, including the instruments and procedures used for data collection, such as validated questionnaires, as well as ethical considerations like obtaining informed consent and maintaining respondent confidentiality. Additionally, it outlined the statistical techniques and procedures applied to analyze the data, ensuring the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the findings. This approach provided meaningful insights into the extent of teacher decision-making and creativity in designing classroom activities within inclusive classrooms at North City Central School.

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive–correlational research design, which aimed to describe the extent of teacher decision-making and creativity in designing classroom activities, as well as to examine the relationship between these two variables in inclusive classrooms at North City Central School during the school year 2025–2026. According to Creswell (2020), correlational research was appropriate for exploring relationships among variables without manipulating them, making it suitable for studies where direct intervention was not possible or ethical.

This design was appropriate for the present study as it sought to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the extent of teachers' decision-making and their level of creativity in planning classroom activities. Using this approach, the study assessed how teachers made instructional choices, adapted learning tasks, and implemented creative strategies to engage diverse learners. It also explored whether higher levels of deliberate decision-making corresponded with more innovative and responsive activity design. The findings

provided insights into teachers' instructional practices and offered guidance on how professional development, support systems, and collaborative frameworks could enhance teaching effectiveness in inclusive classrooms at North City Central School.

Environment

The study was conducted at North City Central School, Toledo Cebu which served as the primary setting for examining teachers' decision-making and creativity in classroom practices. As an educational institution catering to diverse learners, the school provided a relevant environment where teachers were actively engaged in planning and implementing instructional activities to meet varying student needs.

The presence of teachers with different backgrounds in terms of age, educational attainment, teaching experience, and position created a dynamic professional setting that allowed for a meaningful analysis of how these factors influenced decision-making and creativity. Within this context, North City Central School offered a practical and authentic environment where classroom interactions, instructional strategies, and innovative teaching practices could be observed and assessed, making it an appropriate venue for the conduct of the study.

Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was a structured, adapted questionnaire designed to gather data on the respondents' demographic profile, teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities, and teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education. The questionnaire was adapted from relevant studies and was organized into three parts.

Part I gathered the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, educational attainment, years of teaching experience, teaching position, total number of learners in classrooms, and number of related trainings and seminars attended on planning, designing, and implementing activities in inclusive education.

Part II determined the extent of teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities. It consisted of 10 indicators that focused on considering the individual needs and characteristics of learners with exceptionalities, selecting appropriate teaching strategies and instructional materials, determining the pacing and sequence of lesson activities, adjusting classroom activities, exercising professional judgment, modifying existing lesson plans, selecting appropriate assessment methods, participating in curriculum discussions, and integrating innovative learning tasks. The items in this part were adapted from the works of Burić and Frenzel (2021) and Gilmour and Wehby (2020).

Part III assessed teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education. It consisted of 10 indicators that focused on designing activities that encouraged creative thinking, using varied teaching methods, providing opportunities for learners to express their ideas in different ways, incorporating real-life situations, developing original instructional materials, modifying activities, integrating interactive and hands-on activities, providing creative tasks, using innovative approaches, and promoting active participation and collaboration. The items in this part were adapted from the works of Bereczki and Kárpáti (2018) and Henriksen et al. (2016).

Parts II and III used a four-point Likert scale: 4 – Strongly Agree, 3 – Agree, 2 – Disagree, and 1 – Strongly Disagree. The respondents selected the response that best described their classroom experiences. The instrument provided the necessary data for determining the extent of teachers' decision-making and creativity and for examining the relationship between these variables in inclusive education.

Data Gathering Procedure

Pre-Data Gathering. Before the final administration of the instrument, the questionnaire underwent content validation by experts in inclusive education and educational research to ensure the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of all items. It was also subjected to pilot testing involving a small group of teachers outside the study locale to determine its reliability, consistency, and clarity. Necessary revisions were made based on the results of the content validation and pilot testing.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part gathered demographic information such as age, educational attainment, years of teaching experience, teaching position, total number of learners in the classroom, and relevant trainings and seminars attended. The second part focused on teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities, particularly their instructional choices, flexibility, professional judgment, and classroom adaptation. The third part assessed teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education, particularly their use of varied teaching methods, real-life situations, original instructional materials, interactive and hands-on activities, innovative approaches, and activities that promoted active participation and collaboration. The second and third parts used a four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

Prior to the conduct of the study, the researcher secured permission from the appropriate school authorities to administer the research instrument at North City Central School. The purpose of the study, the procedures for data collection, and the responsibilities of the respondents were clearly communicated. The respondents were also informed of the voluntary nature of their participation, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to decline or withdraw from participation.

Data Gathering. The primary tool used for data collection was a printed questionnaire consisting of three parts: the demographic profile of the respondents; indicators measuring the extent of teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities; and indicators assessing teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the 40 general education teacher-respondents. The instructions were clearly explained to ensure that the respondents understood how to accomplish the instrument properly. They were provided sufficient time to complete the questionnaires at a convenient time without disrupting their teaching duties. This procedure helped ensure the completeness, accuracy, and consistency of the data gathered.

Post-Data Gathering. After the questionnaires were collected, the researcher carefully reviewed each accomplished instrument for completeness and accuracy. Only properly accomplished questionnaires were included in the final data set. The responses were then systematically organized, encoded, tabulated, and prepared for statistical treatment. Appropriate statistical tools were applied to determine the extent of teachers' decision-making, the extent of teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities, and the significant relationship between the two variables.

The researcher maintained an organized procedure throughout the collection, processing, and analysis of the data to ensure the smooth conduct of the study. Confidentiality of the respondents' information, voluntary participation, and protection of their rights were observed throughout the research process to preserve the integrity and ethical conduct of the study at North City Central School.

Statistical Treatment

The data gathered from the 40 general education teacher-respondents of North City Central School, Toledo, Cebu, were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical tools to ensure accurate, systematic, and meaningful interpretation of the findings.

Frequency. This statistical tool was used to determine the number of teacher-respondents in each category of the demographic profile, including age, educational attainment, years of teaching experience, teaching position, total number of learners in classrooms, and number of related trainings and seminars attended on planning, designing, and implementing activities in inclusive education. It provided a clear description of the distribution of the respondents according to their demographic and professional characteristics.

Percentage. This was used to determine the proportion of teacher-respondents represented in each demographic category. It provided a clearer description of the composition of the respondents and their distribution according to the demographic and professional characteristics included in the study.

Weighted Mean. This statistical measure was utilized to determine the extent of teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities and the extent of teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education. It determined the average responses of the teacher-respondents for each indicator and provided the basis for interpreting the extent of the two variables.

Standard Deviation. This was employed to determine the degree of variation or consistency in the respondents' responses regarding teachers' decision-making and creativity in designing classroom activities. It indicated whether the responses were closely clustered around the mean or widely dispersed, thereby reflecting the consistency of the respondents' responses to the indicators of the study.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r). This inferential statistical tool was used to determine the significant relationship between teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities and teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education. It measured the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables and determined whether higher levels of teachers' decision-making were associated with higher levels of creativity in designing classroom activities.

Ethical Consideration

In conducting this study on teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities and creativity in designing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities in inclusive education at North City Central School, Toledo, Cebu, ethical principles were strictly observed to protect the rights, privacy, and welfare of all teacher-respondents. The researcher ensured that the study adhered to established ethical standards in educational research by promoting transparency, respect for participants, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and responsible management of research data.

Informed Consent. Prior to data collection, the teacher-respondents were fully informed of the purpose, objectives, procedures, and significance of the study. The researcher explained the contents of the adapted questionnaire, including the sections on the respondents' demographic profile, teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities, and teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education. Each participant was asked to accomplish an informed consent form indicating voluntary agreement to participate in the study. The respondents were also informed that they had the right to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any stage without any adverse consequences.

Confidentiality and Anonymity. The privacy and confidentiality of the respondents were protected throughout the conduct of the study. The questionnaire did not require the respondents' names or any personal identifiers that might reveal their identities. The responses were coded to ensure anonymity, and all information gathered was treated with strict confidentiality. The collected data were used solely for academic and research purposes and were accessible only to the researcher. Both printed and electronic records were securely stored to prevent unauthorized access.

Voluntary Participation. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. No respondent was compelled, influenced, or coerced to participate. The decision to participate, refuse participation, or withdraw from the study did not affect the respondents' employment, professional evaluation, teaching assignments, or relationship with the school administration.

Beneficence and Non-Maleficence. The researcher upheld the principles of beneficence and non-maleficence by ensuring that the study posed no physical, psychological, social, or professional harm to the respondents. The study was intended to generate information that might contribute to strengthening teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities and enhancing their creativity in designing appropriate, engaging, and responsive learning activities for learners with exceptionalities. The findings were likewise expected to support the development of interventions that would strengthen inclusive instructional practices and improve the delivery of classroom activities at North City Central School.

Ethical Approval and Coordination. Prior to the conduct of the study, the researcher secured the necessary approvals from the appropriate school authorities through the submission of the required research documents. Coordination with the administration of North City Central School was undertaken to facilitate the conduct of the study and ensure the orderly administration of the survey questionnaire to the 40 general education teacher-

respondents. These procedures ensured that the study complied with institutional policies and accepted ethical standards in educational research.

RESULTS

This chapter presented, analyzed, and interpreted the data gathered from the respondents of the study. The presentation of data followed the sequence of the research problems. It began with the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, years of teaching experience, teaching position, number of learners with exceptionalities in the classroom, and number of trainings and seminars attended in inclusive education. It was followed by the presentation and analysis of teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with diverse needs and their creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education. Finally, the chapter presented the test of relationship between teachers' decision-making and creativity in designing classroom activities. The findings were presented in tabular form and were analyzed and interpreted using appropriate statistical tools to provide a clear understanding of the results of the study.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

This part of the study presented the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, years of teaching experience, teaching position, number of learners with exceptionalities in the classroom, and number of trainings and seminars attended in inclusive education. These data provided a descriptive overview of the respondents and served as a basis for understanding and interpreting the results of the study.

Age and Gender of the Respondents

This part of the study presented the distribution of the respondents according to their age and gender. These variables were examined to provide a general description of the respondents who participated in the study.

Table 2

Age and Gender of the Respondents

Age	f	%
Below 25 years	2	5
25–34 years	18	45
35–44 years	14	35
45–54 years	5	12.5
55 years and above	1	2.5
Total	40	100
Gender of the Respondents	**f**	**%**
Male	11	27.5
Female	29	72.5
Total	40	100

Table 2 presented the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age and gender. Examining the respondents' demographic characteristics provided a clearer understanding of the composition of the teaching force involved in the study and served as a basis for interpreting their classroom environmental structuring practices and behavioral regulation in inclusive classrooms.

The findings revealed that the largest group of respondents belonged to the 25–34 years age bracket, comprising 18 teachers or 45.00% of the total respondents. This was followed by respondents aged 35–44 years with 14 teachers or 35.00%. Meanwhile, five teachers or 12.50% were aged 45–54 years, while two

teachers or 5.00% were below 25 years old. The least represented age group consisted of teachers aged 55 years and above, with only one respondent or 2.50%.

The data clearly showed that the majority of the respondents were within the 25–44 years age range, accounti-

ng for 80.00% of the total population. This finding indicated that the school was largely staffed by teachers who were in the early and middle stages of their professional careers. Such teachers were likely to possess a balance of professional experience and current pedagogical knowledge, enabling them to effectively organize classroom environments and manage learner behavior in inclusive settings. The relatively small number of teachers in the older age groups suggested that the teaching workforce was predominantly composed of younger educators who were more actively engaged in implementing contemporary educational practices and inclusive teaching approaches.

In terms of gender, the findings showed that female teachers dominated the respondent population, accounting for 29 respondents or 72.50%, while male teachers comprised only 11 respondents or 27.50%. The data demonstrated a substantial disparity between the number of female and male teachers, with females outnumbering males by more than two-thirds of the total respondents. This finding reflected the common trend in elementary education wherein teaching remained a profession largely occupied by women. The predominance of female teachers suggested that the perspectives and experiences regarding classroom environmental structuring and behavioral regulation were primarily influenced by female educators.

Table 3 Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Educational Attainment	**f**	**%**
Bachelor’s Degree	34	85
Master’s Degree	6	15
Doctorate Degree	0	0
Total	40	100

The findings supported the principles of Constructivist Learning Theory of Vygotsky, which emphasized the importance of teachers in creating supportive and interactive learning environments that facilitated students' learning and development. Since most of the respondents were within the productive age range of 25–44 years, they were likely capable of implementing learner-centered and collaborative classroom practices that promoted meaningful interactions among diverse learners. Their age profile suggested a teaching workforce that could effectively guide students through structured learning experiences within inclusive classrooms. This observation was reinforced by the study of Elmarakbi et al. (2023), which highlighted the importance of thoughtfully designed classroom environments in supporting diverse learners, particularly children with special educational needs. The authors emphasized that teachers play a crucial role in shaping learning spaces that encourage engagement, participation, and meaningful learning experiences. Similarly, Wilkerson (2023) underscored the role of creativity in fostering educational inclusion, emphasizing that teachers who employed innovative and adaptive approaches were better able to accommodate the diverse needs of learners. These perspectives supported the finding that the predominantly young and middle-aged teaching workforce was well-positioned to create inclusive and responsive classroom environments that promoted both learning and positive behavioral outcomes.

The findings were also consistent with Decision-Making Theory of Simon, which posited that decisions were influenced by individuals’ experiences, knowledge, and environmental conditions. The predominance of teachers in the early and middle stages of their careers suggested that their classroom management decisions and behavioral regulation strategies were informed by both formal training and practical teaching experiences. As a result, they were likely able to make informed decisions regarding classroom organization and learner behavior management to address the varying needs of students in inclusive settings. The age distribution of the respondents indicated that most teachers possessed sufficient professional exposure to make sound instructional and behavioral decisions necessary for maintaining effective classroom environments.

Likewise, the findings aligned with Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, which recognized that learners possessed diverse strengths and learning preferences. The presence of teachers from different age groups and both genders suggested a variety of perspectives and teaching approaches that could help address the diverse needs of learners. Such diversity among teachers potentially contributed to the development of classroom environments that accommodated different intelligences and supported positive behavioral outcomes among students. In inclusive classrooms, recognizing and responding to individual differences remained essential in promoting equitable learning opportunities and fostering appropriate behavioral regulation among learners.

Educational Attainment of the Respondents

This part of the study presented the educational attainment of the respondents. The data provided information on the highest academic qualifications attained by the respondents and served as a basis for describing their professional background.

Table 3 presented the educational attainment of the respondents. Determining the respondents' educational qualifications was essential in understanding their academic preparation and professional capacity to implement classroom environmental structuring practices and behavioral regulation strategies in inclusive classrooms.

The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents held a Bachelor's Degree, accounting for 34 teachers or 85.00% of the total respondents. Meanwhile, six teachers or 15.00% had earned a Master's Degree. Notably, none of the respondents possessed a Doctorate Degree, representing 0.00% of the respondent population.

The data indicated that the teaching force was predominantly composed of teachers whose highest educational qualification was a Bachelor's Degree. This finding suggested that most respondents had acquired the foundational knowledge and competencies required for classroom instruction and management through their undergraduate education. The presence of teachers with Master's Degrees, although limited, demonstrated that some respondents had pursued advanced studies to further enhance their professional knowledge, pedagogical skills, and understanding of learner diversity. However, the absence of respondents with Doctorate Degrees suggested limited engagement in the highest level of academic and professional specialization within the school.

The predominance of teachers holding Bachelor's Degrees may imply that the respondents primarily relied on their professional experiences, in-service trainings, and practical classroom exposure in implementing classroom environmental structuring and behavioral regulation practices. While advanced academic qualifications can contribute to deeper theoretical understanding and research-based practices, the findings suggested that most teachers performed their instructional responsibilities using competencies acquired through undergraduate preparation and continuous professional development activities.

The findings supported the principles of Constructivist Learning Theory of Vygotsky, which emphasized the teacher's role in facilitating learning through meaningful interactions and supportive classroom environments. Regardless of educational attainment, teachers were expected to create learning conditions that encouraged collaboration, participation, and active knowledge construction among learners. The predominance of Bachelor's Degree holders suggested that the respondents possessed the foundational pedagogical knowledge necessary to establish inclusive learning environments where students could engage in social interaction and guided learning experiences. This finding was supported by Anderson and Putman (2023), who found that teachers' instructional planning and implementation were influenced by their professional knowledge and ability to integrate appropriate strategies to support diverse learners. Their study emphasized the importance of teacher competence in designing learning experiences that respond to students' varied educational needs, which is particularly relevant in inclusive classroom settings.

The findings were also consistent with Decision-Making Theory of Simon, which posited that individuals made decisions based on available knowledge, experience, and contextual factors. Teachers with varying levels of educational attainment drew upon their academic preparation and professional experiences when making decisions regarding classroom organization, behavior management, and instructional delivery. The dominance of Bachelor's Degree holders suggested that classroom decisions were largely informed by

foundational teacher education, supplemented by practical teaching experiences and professional development opportunities. Such factors likely enabled the respondents to make appropriate decisions in managing inclusive classroom environments. The findings of Anderson and Putman (2023) further supported this perspective, as they highlighted that teachers continuously made instructional decisions based on their understanding of learner needs, available resources, and classroom contexts.

Furthermore, the findings aligned with Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, which recognized the diverse abilities and learning preferences of students. Teachers with undergraduate and graduate educational backgrounds were expected to employ varied instructional approaches to address learners' differing needs and strengths. The presence of Master's Degree holders indicated an additional level of professional expertise that could contribute to the implementation of differentiated instruction and inclusive classroom practices. At the same time, the large proportion of Bachelor's Degree holders suggested that meeting the needs of diverse learners relied not only on advanced degrees but also on teachers' commitment to understanding individual learner differences and applying appropriate teaching strategies within the classroom. Consistent with Anderson and Putman (2023), effective instruction required teachers to thoughtfully select and implement strategies that accommodated diverse learners, thereby fostering inclusive and meaningful learning experiences for all students

Years of Teaching Experience of the Respondents

This part of the study presented the years of teaching experience of the respondents. The data provided information on the length of time the respondents had been engaged in the teaching profession and helped describe their level of professional experience.

Table 4 Years of Teaching Experience of the Respondents

Years of Teaching Experience	**f**	**%**
Less than 1 year	2	5
1–5 years	16	40
6–10 years	13	32.5
11–15 years	6	15
16–20 years	2	5
More than 20 years	1	2.5
Total	40	100

Table 4 presented the respondents' years of teaching experience. Teaching experience is a significant professional characteristic that influences teachers' instructional practices, classroom management approaches, and ability to address the diverse needs of learners in inclusive educational settings.

The findings revealed that the largest group of respondents had 1–5 years of teaching experience, comprising 16 teachers or 40.00% of the total respondents. This was followed by teachers with 6–10 years of experience, accounting for 13 respondents or 32.50%. Meanwhile, six teachers or 15.00% had been teaching for 11–15 years. Respondents with less than one year of teaching experience and those with 16–20 years of experience each accounted for two teachers or 5.00%. The least represented group consisted of teachers with more than 20 years of teaching experience, with only one respondent or 2.50%.

The distribution of responses showed that the majority of the teachers, representing 72.50% of the respondents, had accumulated between 1 and 10 years of teaching experience. This finding suggested that the school workforce was largely composed of educators who had already gained practical classroom exposure but were still in the process of expanding their professional expertise. These teachers were likely to be actively refining their instructional methods, classroom management skills, and approaches to supporting diverse learners. The relatively high concentration of respondents within this experience range indicated a teaching force that was developing professional competence through continuous engagement with classroom realities and evolving educational practices.

The smaller proportion of teachers with more than 10 years of experience suggested that veteran educators constituted a limited segment of the respondent population. While experienced teachers often contribute extensive practical knowledge and refined classroom management skills, the findings indicated that much of the responsibility for implementing inclusive classroom practices rested on teachers in the early and middle stages of their careers. This may reflect a workforce characterized by professional growth, adaptability, and openness to emerging educational approaches.

The findings supported the principles of Constructivist Learning Theory of Vygotsky, which emphasized the role of teachers as facilitators of learning who create environments that support interaction, collaboration, and knowledge construction. Teachers with several years of classroom experience were likely to have developed the skills necessary to guide learners effectively through social and academic activities. Their accumulated experiences may have enhanced their ability to provide appropriate support and scaffolding to learners with diverse needs, thereby fostering meaningful participation in inclusive classrooms. This perspective was supported by Robinson (2024), who found that teachers' confidence in implementing inclusive teaching strategies was influenced by their professional experiences and ability to respond effectively to the diverse needs of learners. As teachers gained experience, they were more likely to develop the competence necessary to create supportive and inclusive learning environments.

The findings were likewise consistent with Decision-Making Theory of Simon, which posited that decision-making is influenced by an individual's knowledge, experience, and understanding of situational demands. Teachers with 1–10 years of experience were likely to draw from a growing repertoire of classroom encounters when making decisions regarding classroom organization, behavioral expectations, and instructional adjustments. As they encountered diverse learner needs, these experiences may have strengthened their capacity to make informed and effective decisions that supported positive learning environments. The findings of Robinson (2024) further indicated that teachers with stronger self-efficacy in inclusive education demonstrated greater confidence in selecting and implementing strategies that addressed learners' academic and behavioral needs, reflecting the role of experience in shaping effective classroom decisions.

The findings also aligned with Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, which recognized that learners possess varying strengths, abilities, and ways of learning. Teachers who had spent several years in the profession were likely exposed to a wide range of learner characteristics, allowing them to develop a deeper understanding of how to accommodate diverse intelligences within the classroom.

The predominance of respondents with moderate levels of teaching experience suggested that many teachers had sufficient opportunities to observe individual learner differences and adjust their instructional practices accordingly. Such experiences may have contributed to the creation of inclusive classroom environments that recognized and nurtured the unique potentials of all learners while promoting appropriate behavioral regulation and engagement. Consistent with Robinson (2024), teachers who possessed confidence in their inclusive teaching capabilities were more likely to employ diverse instructional approaches that responded to learners' varying strengths and educational needs.

Teaching Position of the Respondents

This part of the study presented the teaching position of the respondents. The data provided information on the current professional roles held by the respondents and helped describe their distribution in terms of position.

Table 5 Teaching Position of the Respondents

Teaching Position	**f**	**%**
Teacher I	17	42.5
Teacher II	8	20
Teacher III	10	25
Master Teacher I	4	10
Master Teacher II	1	2.5
Total	**40**	**100**

Table 5 presented the teaching positions of the 40 respondents. The distribution showed that Teacher I constituted the largest group, with 17 respondents or 42.50% of the total respondents. This was followed by Teacher III, with 10 respondents or 25.00%, and Teacher II, with eight respondents or 20.00%. Meanwhile, four respondents or 10.00% were Master Teacher I, while one respondent or 2.50% was Master Teacher II.

The findings indicated that the respondents were predominantly composed of teachers occupying regular teaching positions. Teacher I, Teacher II, and Teacher III collectively accounted for 35 respondents or 87.50% of the total respondents. This indicated that the study primarily reflected the experiences of teachers who were directly involved in classroom instruction and the day-to-day implementation of teaching and learning activities. The presence of Master Teacher I and Master Teacher II respondents, comprising 12.50% of the total respondents, also provided perspectives from teachers with higher teaching positions and greater instructional responsibilities.

The distribution of teaching positions was relevant to the study because teachers at different career stages may have varying experiences, responsibilities, and levels of exposure to instructional practices. Teacher I respondents, who comprised the largest group, were likely to be directly engaged in classroom instruction and the management of learners' day-to-day learning experiences. Teacher II and Teacher III respondents represented teachers with additional experience and professional progression, while the Master Teachers provided perspectives associated with advanced instructional expertise, mentoring, and instructional support. Thus, the distribution provided a range of teaching experiences that contributed to the overall description of the respondents.

The findings were consistent with the principles of Constructivist Learning Theory, particularly the view that teachers play an important role in facilitating learning through meaningful interaction, guidance, and appropriately structured learning experiences. Since the majority of respondents occupied regular teaching positions, the findings primarily reflected the experiences of teachers who were directly responsible for facilitating learners' engagement and responding to their varying learning needs. The presence of Master Teachers also provided an additional perspective from educators who may support the development and improvement of instructional practices through mentoring and professional guidance.

The distribution was likewise relevant to Decision-Making Theory, which recognizes that decisions are influenced by an individual's role, experience, available information, and situational demands. Teachers in different positions may encounter varying levels of responsibility in making instructional and classroom-related decisions. Teacher I, Teacher II, and Teacher III respondents were primarily involved in classroom-level decisions, while Master Teachers generally carried additional instructional and mentoring responsibilities. The representation of these positions therefore provided a broader basis for understanding how teaching responsibilities and professional experience may relate to the practices examined in the study.

Furthermore, the distribution of teaching positions was relevant to the principles of Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, which emphasized the importance of recognizing differences in learners' abilities and learning needs. The predominance of classroom teachers indicated that most respondents were directly involved in identifying learner differences and adapting classroom practices to accommodate varying abilities. The participation of Master Teachers further contributed perspectives from teachers who may provide instructional guidance and support in developing responsive teaching practices. . Overall, the distribution of respondents across teaching positions provided a relevant representation of teachers with varying levels of professional experience and instructional responsibility.

Number of Trainings and Seminars in Inclusive Education

This part of the study presented the number of trainings and seminars attended by the respondents in inclusive education. The data provided information on the respondents' exposure to professional development activities related to inclusive practices.

Table 6 Number of Trainings and Seminars in Inclusive Education

Number of Trainings	**f**	**%**
None	36	90

1–2	4	10
3–4	0	0
5 and above	0	0
Total	40	100

Table 6 presented the number of trainings and seminars attended by the respondents related to inclusive education. This variable was important in determining the level of professional development exposure of teachers in handling diverse learners and implementing inclusive classroom practices.

The findings revealed that the majority of respondents had not attended any training or seminar on inclusive education, comprising 36 teachers or 90.00% of the total respondents. Meanwhile, four teachers or 10.00% reported that they had attended 1–2 trainings or seminars. No respondents indicated participation in 3–4 trainings or in five and above trainings, both registering 0.00%.

The data clearly showed that most teachers had very limited formal training exposure in inclusive education. This suggests that the majority of respondents may not have undergone structured capacity-building programs specifically designed to strengthen their knowledge and skills in handling learners with exceptionalities. As a result, their understanding of inclusive strategies, differentiated instruction, and classroom accommodations may be primarily grounded in general teaching experience rather than specialized training.

The small proportion of teachers who had attended at least one or two trainings indicated that only a limited number of respondents had opportunities to enhance their competencies through formal professional development. This limited exposure may contribute to inconsistencies in the application of inclusive practices across classrooms, particularly in adapting instruction, managing learner behavior, and designing supportive learning environments for diverse learners.

The findings supported the principles of Constructivist Learning Theory of Vygotsky, which emphasized that learning is strengthened through guided experience, interaction, and structured knowledge construction. The limited training exposure suggested that many teachers had fewer structured opportunities to build deeper understanding of inclusive education practices through formal professional learning. This finding is supported by Rendoth et al. (2025), who emphasized that teachers' instructional decisions for students with complex disabilities are significantly influenced by competing curriculum demands and limited structured guidance, often shaping how inclusion is enacted in actual classroom practice.

Their study highlighted that without sustained professional learning, teachers may rely heavily on personal interpretation when implementing inclusive strategies.

The findings were also consistent with Decision-Making Theory of Simon, which emphasized that decisions are shaped by available information, experience, and contextual constraints. The lack of training among most respondents suggested that teachers may rely more on personal experience and immediate classroom conditions when making instructional decisions related to inclusive education. This may limit the consistency and effectiveness of strategies used in addressing diverse learner needs. In relation, Rendoth et al. (2025) found that teacher decision-making in inclusive settings is often influenced by systemic pressures and curriculum expectations, which can constrain the application of ideal inclusive practices when adequate training and support are lacking.

Furthermore, the findings aligned with Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, which highlights the importance of using varied instructional strategies to address different learner abilities. The limited exposure to inclusive education trainings suggests that many teachers may not yet be fully equipped with a broad repertoire of strategies to effectively respond to multiple intelligences and diverse learning needs. However, teachers who had attended trainings were likely better positioned to adapt instruction and implement differentiated approaches. As emphasized by Rendoth et al. (2025), effective support for learners with complex disabilities requires not only curriculum flexibility but also strong teacher preparedness to translate inclusive principles into responsive classroom practice.

Teachers' Decision-Making in Planning and Implementing Classroom Activities for Learners with Diverse Needs

This part of the study presented the level of teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with diverse needs.

Table 7

Teachers' Decision-Making in Planning and Implementing Classroom Activities for Learners with Diverse Needs

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	I consider the individual needs and characteristics of learners with exceptionalities when planning classroom activities	3.05	0.72	Agree
2	I have the freedom to choose appropriate teaching strategies that suit my students' needs.	3.18	0.68	Agree
3	I am involved in selecting suitable instructional materials for my lessons.	3.1	0.7	Agree
4	I decide on the pacing and sequence of lesson activities based on student readiness.	3.08	0.66	Agree
5	I adjust my classroom activities when I notice students are not responding effectively.	3.2	0.64	Agree
6	I plan creative classroom activities based on my professional judgment rather than a fixed script.	2.95	0.75	Agree
7	I am allowed to modify existing lesson plans to better support learners with diverse needs.	3	0.73	Agree
8	I choose assessment methods that best reflect my students' learning and progress.	3.12	0.69	Agree
9	I actively participate in curriculum discussions to enhance my instructional decisions.	2.85	0.78	Agree
10	I have the autonomy to integrate innovative learning tasks in my classroom activities.	2.9	0.76	Agree
	Aggregate Mean	**3.04**		**Agree**
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		**0.71**	

Legend:3.25-4.00- Strongly Agree; 2.50-3.24- Agree; 1.75-2.49- Disagree ;1.00-1.74- Strongly Disagree

Table 7 presented the teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities for learners with diverse needs. The table reflected ten indicators describing teachers' autonomy, instructional flexibility, and involvement in planning learning experiences for diverse learners.

The findings revealed that the highest-rated indicator was the statement "I adjust my classroom activities when I notice students are not responding effectively," which obtained a weighted mean of 3.20 and was described as Agree. This was followed by "I have the freedom to choose appropriate teaching strategies that suit my students' needs," with a weighted mean of 3.18, also interpreted as Agree. These results indicated that teachers commonly exercised responsiveness in modifying instruction based on learner feedback and were generally granted autonomy in selecting appropriate teaching strategies aligned with student needs.

Other indicators that obtained relatively higher ratings included "I choose assessment methods that best reflect my students' learning and progress" with a weighted mean of 3.12, and "I am involved in selecting suitable instructional materials for my lessons" with a weighted mean of 3.10, both described as Agree. These findings showed that teachers were moderately engaged in instructional planning decisions, particularly in areas related

to assessment and learning resources. This suggests that teachers had a functional level of participation in shaping classroom activities that support learner development.

On the lower end, the statement "I actively participate in curriculum discussions to enhance my instructional decisions" obtained a weighted mean of 2.85, while "I have the autonomy to integrate innovative learning tasks in my classroom activities" recorded 2.90, both interpreted as Agree but comparatively lower than the other indicators. These results indicate that teachers had limited involvement in curriculum-level decision-making and somewhat restricted opportunities to introduce innovative instructional practices. This implies that decision-making authority was stronger at the classroom implementation level than at the curriculum design level.

The pattern of responses suggests that teachers were more empowered in responding to immediate classroom needs than in shaping broader instructional frameworks. This may be attributed to structured curriculum systems where instructional content and pacing are largely predetermined, allowing teachers flexibility mainly in delivery and adaptation rather than in curriculum construction.

This finding is supported by Debasu and Yitayew (2024), who emphasized that creating inclusive learning environments depends significantly on teachers' ability to adapt instruction and manage classroom conditions, even within structured curricular systems. Their review highlighted that while inclusion requires systemic support, the practical implementation often relies on teachers' classroom-level decisions in modifying instruction and supporting diverse learners.

Similarly, Zhang, Carter, and Lim (2026) underscored that inclusive educational design benefits from adaptive systems that respond to learner diversity through flexible and context-sensitive decision-making processes. Their work, grounded in Cultural-Historical Activity Theory, emphasized that teacher agency plays a crucial role in mediating learning experiences, particularly when supporting students with disabilities through responsive instructional adjustments and adaptive learning environments.

From the perspective of Constructivist Learning Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), the findings indicate that teachers actively engage in constructing learning experiences by adjusting activities and selecting strategies based on learner responses. This reflects the role of teachers as facilitators who adapt instruction to support knowledge construction among diverse learners. However, limited participation in curriculum-level decision-making may constrain the extent to which teachers can fully design learning environments that reflect the full range of learner diversity. In relation to Decision-Making Theory (Simon, 1977), the results reflect bounded decision-making, where teachers exercise autonomy primarily within classroom-level constraints. While they demonstrate competence in adjusting instruction and selecting strategies, their decisions are shaped by institutional structures that limit their involvement in broader curriculum planning. This aligns with the view that effective decision-making in education often occurs within defined organizational boundaries.

Aligned with Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences (1983), the ability of teachers to adjust activities, assessments, and instructional materials indicates responsiveness to varied learner abilities and learning styles. However, restricted involvement in curriculum design may limit the systematic integration of multiple intelligences across learning programs, making differentiation dependent on individual teacher initiative rather than institutionalized instructional design.

Teachers' Creativity in Designing Classroom Activities in Inclusive Education

This part of the study presented the level of teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education.

Table 8 Teachers' Creativity in Designing Classroom Activities in Inclusive Education

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	I design classroom activities that encourage students to think creatively.	3.05	0.62	Agree

2	I use a variety of teaching methods to make lessons more engaging.	3.1	0.58	Agree
3	I create activities that allow students to express their ideas in different ways.	2.98	0.63	Agree
4	I incorporate real-life situations into my classroom activities to enhance learning.	3.02	0.59	Agree
5	I develop original instructional materials to support my lessons.	2.8	0.66	Agree
6	I modify activities to make them more interesting and relevant to students.	3.08	0.57	Agree
7	I integrate interactive and hands-on activities in my teaching.	3	0.61	Agree
8	I encourage students to participate in creative tasks such as group work, projects, or role-playing.	3.12	0.55	Agree
9	I use innovative approaches to present lesson content.	2.88	0.64	Agree
10	I design activities that promote active participation and collaboration among students.	3.06	0.55	Agree
	Aggregate Mean	**3.01**		**Agree**
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		**0.6**	

Legend:3.25-4.00- Strongly Agree; 2.50-3.24- Agree; 1.75-2.49- Disagree ;1.00-1.74- Strongly Disagree

Table 8 presented the teachers' creativity in designing classroom activities in inclusive education. The table contained ten indicators describing the extent to which teachers applied creative, varied, and learner-centered approaches in developing instructional activities, with responses interpreted using weighted mean and standard deviation values.

The findings showed that the highest-rated indicator was the statement "I encourage students to participate in creative tasks such as group work, projects, or role-playing," which obtained a weighted mean of 3.12 and was described as Agree. This was followed by "I use a variety of teaching methods to make lessons more engaging," with a weighted mean of 3.10, also interpreted as Agree. These results indicated that teachers frequently utilized interactive and participatory strategies that promoted learner engagement and collaboration, which are essential components of inclusive classroom practice.

Other relatively high-rated indicators included "I modify activities to make them more interesting and relevant to students," with a weighted mean of 3.08, and "I design activities that promote active participation and collaboration among students," with a weighted mean of 3.06. These findings suggest that teachers actively adjusted learning activities to sustain student interest and encourage meaningful interaction, reflecting an adaptive approach to instructional delivery in diverse classroom settings.

Indicators such as "I design classroom activities that encourage students to think creatively" with a weighted mean of 3.05 and "I incorporate real-life situations into my classroom activities to enhance learning" with a weighted mean of 3.02 also reflected agreement. These results indicate that teachers moderately integrated creativity and contextual learning strategies, supporting learner understanding by connecting lessons to real-world experiences.

On the lower end, the statement "I develop original instructional materials to support my lessons" obtained a weighted mean of 2.80, while "I use innovative approaches to present lesson content" recorded 2.88. These

results suggest that although teachers demonstrated creativity in modifying and delivering activities, the development of original instructional materials and highly innovative presentation methods was comparatively less frequent. This may reflect limitations in time, resources, or exposure to advanced instructional design approaches.

The findings imply that creativity among teachers was more evident in instructional adaptation and learner engagement strategies than in the production of original teaching resources. This highlights that creativity in

inclusive education is often expressed through flexible classroom practices rather than through highly specialized instructional materials.

This finding is supported by Alsudairy (2024), who emphasized that professional development programs focused on collaboration and co-teaching significantly enhance teachers' instructional flexibility and creative capacity in inclusive settings. The study highlighted that when teachers are trained to work collaboratively, they are more capable of designing adaptive and engaging learning activities that respond to diverse learner needs.

Similarly, Khazanchi and Khazanchi (2024) emphasized that emerging tools such as generative artificial intelligence can strengthen teacher preparation for inclusive classrooms by expanding instructional design possibilities and supporting more creative approaches to lesson planning. Their work underscored that creativity in teaching is increasingly supported by both collaboration and technology-enhanced instructional planning, which can improve responsiveness to learner diversity.

From the perspective of Constructivist Learning Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), the findings indicate that teachers promoted learning through interactive, collaborative, and meaningful classroom activities. The use of group work, projects, and role-playing reflects constructivist principles where learners actively construct knowledge through engagement and social interaction, which is particularly important in inclusive education contexts.

In relation to Decision-Making Theory (Simon, 1977), the results suggest that teachers exercised creativity within bounded instructional conditions. Their decisions on how to modify and implement activities were influenced by available resources, training, and classroom constraints, demonstrating practical rather than fully unrestricted creative autonomy. Aligned with Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences (1983), the use of varied teaching strategies and collaborative tasks indicates efforts to address diverse learner strengths and learning styles. However, the relatively lower emphasis on original instructional materials suggests that more structured support systems and professional development opportunities may be needed to fully maximize creativity in addressing multiple intelligences.

Test of Relationship on Teachers' Decision-Making and Creativity in Designing Classroom Activities

This part of the study presented the test of relationship between teachers' decision-making and creativity in designing classroom activities. The data showed the strength and significance of the relationship between the two variables.

Table 9

Test of Relationship on Teachers' Decision-Making and Creativity in Designing Classroom Activities

Variables under Inference	Computed rho	Strength of correlation	p-value	Decision	Result
Decision-Making and Creativity in Designing Classroom Activities	0.54	Moderate Positive	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 9 presented the test of relationship between teachers' decision-making and creativity in designing classroom activities. The relationship was examined using correlation analysis to determine the extent to which teachers' decision-making practices are associated with their creativity in developing classroom activities for inclusive education.

The findings revealed a computed rho value of 0.54, indicating a moderate positive correlation between teachers' decision-making and creativity in designing classroom activities. This suggests that as teachers' decision-making capacity increases, their level of creativity in designing instructional activities also tends to increase. The relationship was found to be statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.001, which is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming that a significant relationship exists between the two variables.

The result indicates that teachers who demonstrate stronger decision-making skills are more likely to exhibit higher levels of creativity in instructional planning and classroom activity design. This may be attributed to the fact that effective decision-making enables teachers to better assess learner needs, select appropriate strategies, and adjust instructional approaches, all of which support more creative and responsive teaching practices. In inclusive education settings, this connection becomes more critical as teachers are required to continuously adapt instruction to accommodate diverse learners.

This finding can be explained through the lens of Constructivist Learning Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), which emphasizes that teachers actively construct learning environments through informed instructional decisions. When teachers make effective decisions, they are better able to design engaging and meaningful learning experiences that support knowledge construction among learners. Creativity, in this sense, becomes an extension of thoughtful decision-making that responds to learners' needs and classroom realities.

In relation to Decision-Making Theory (Simon, 1977), the moderate positive relationship highlights that teachers operate within bounded rationality, where better decision-making processes enhance their ability to generate flexible and creative instructional solutions. Teachers who are more decisive and responsive to classroom conditions are more capable of designing activities that address diverse learner needs despite contextual constraints.

Aligned with Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences (1983), the relationship suggests that teachers who make effective instructional decisions are also more capable of designing varied learning experiences that cater to different learner strengths and intelligences. Creativity in instructional design allows teachers to present content in multiple forms, ensuring that learners with different abilities are adequately supported.

Additional support from recent literature strengthens these findings. Studies emphasize that inclusive classrooms inherently require continuous instructional adjustment, where decision-making naturally translates into creative practice. For instance, Bongabong et al. (2023) noted that classroom diversity and daily instructional challenges compel teachers to refine both their judgment and their ability to design responsive learning tasks. This aligns with the observed correlation, as decision-making becomes more effective when it is exercised in dynamic classroom conditions that also demand creativity.

Similarly, Harrison (2023) highlighted that learner-centered and activity-based approaches encourage teachers to think more flexibly when delivering lessons. When instruction is designed around engagement and participation, teachers are pushed to make real-time instructional decisions that simultaneously require creative adaptation, reinforcing the interconnectedness of both variables found in this study.

Further, Fitas (2025) explained that emerging tools and inclusive education innovations can enhance teachers' instructional responsiveness by providing additional options for differentiation. This supports the idea that improved decision-making capacity expands instructional possibilities, which in turn enhances creativity in classroom activity design.

However, Larios and Zetlin (2023) pointed out that limited training and inadequate preparation for inclusive teaching can restrict both decision-making confidence and instructional creativity. This suggests that while the current study shows a significant relationship, the strength of this link may still depend on teachers' professional readiness and access to sustained training support.

II. CONCLUSIONS

This study employed a descriptive correlational research design to examine the extent of general education

teachers' decision-making and their creativity in designing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities in inclusive classrooms at North City Central School, Toledo, Cebu for School Year 2025–2026, based on their experiences in actual classroom practice. The study involved 40 teacher-respondents and focused on describing their demographic profile, determining the extent of teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing inclusive classroom activities, assessing their level of creativity in designing such activities, and identifying the significant relationship between decision-making and creativity. The results of

the study served as basis for the development of a proposed action plan to enhance teachers' competencies in inclusive education grounded on real classroom experiences.

The study utilized survey questionnaires adapted from different validated sources, which were modified to suit the context of the present research. These instruments were used to gather data based on the teachers' experiences in handling learners with exceptionalities and their actual practices in designing and implementing classroom activities. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools were employed in the analysis of data. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the demographic profile of the 40 respondents in terms of age and gender, educational attainment, years of teaching experience, teaching position, number of learners with exceptionalities handled, and related trainings and seminars attended on inclusive education practices.

Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to determine the extent of teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities, as well as their level of creativity in designing inclusive learning activities as reflected in their lived classroom experiences. To determine the relationship between decision-making and creativity, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was applied. All data were systematically organized, analyzed, and interpreted to ensure accurate and meaningful presentation in line with the objectives of the study. The findings of the study provided the basis for crafting an action plan aimed at strengthening teachers' decision-making and enhancing creativity in designing classroom activities for inclusive education grounded on their actual teaching experiences.

The findings on the demographic profile show that the teaching workforce is largely composed of early- to mid-career educators, indicating a relatively young and developing professional group with a smaller proportion of highly experienced teachers. This suggests that most respondents are still in the process of strengthening their classroom expertise through continued practice. In terms of gender distribution, the teaching population is predominantly female, reflecting the typical composition of the basic education teaching force.

In terms of educational attainment, the majority of respondents hold only basic undergraduate qualifications, with a smaller proportion having pursued graduate studies. This indicates that while the teachers meet minimum professional requirements, advanced academic preparation is still limited among many of them, which may influence exposure to more advanced instructional strategies. Similarly, the data on teaching experience reveal that most respondents are still within early to intermediate stages of their teaching careers, with only a small fraction having long-term classroom experience.

Regarding teaching position, most respondents are classroom teachers, with fewer occupying higher instructional or supervisory roles. This indicates that decision-making and classroom implementation responsibilities are concentrated at the classroom level. In terms of exposure to learners with exceptionalities, the findings show that most teachers currently handle few or no such learners, suggesting limited direct classroom experience in inclusive education. A similar pattern is observed in training attendance, where most respondents have not yet participated in specialized seminars or trainings related to inclusive education, indicating a gap in formal professional development in this area.

For teachers' decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities, the results show a generally positive level of practice. Teachers demonstrate attentiveness to learner needs, flexibility in instructional strategies, and willingness to adjust classroom activities based on student responses. However, indicators related to professional autonomy in curriculum influence, participation in curriculum discussions, and integration of innovative tasks reflect relatively lower agreement compared to other areas. This suggests that while teachers exercise classroom-level decision-making, their involvement in broader instructional planning and innovation remains somewhat constrained.

In terms of creativity in designing classroom activities, the findings indicate that teachers generally apply creative instructional practices such as using varied methods, integrating real-life contexts, modifying activities, and promoting learner participation. Nevertheless, comparatively lower emphasis is observed in the development of original instructional materials and the use of highly innovative approaches, suggesting that creativity is more adaptive than fully original or highly innovative in nature.

Finally, the test of relationship reveals a meaningful positive association between teachers' decision-making and their creativity in designing classroom activities. This indicates that teachers who demonstrate stronger decision-making tendencies are also more likely to exhibit higher levels of creativity in instructional design.

The study concludes that the respondents are mostly early- to mid-career teachers with limited advanced academic qualifications, minimal specialized training in inclusive education, and limited direct experience handling learners with exceptionalities. Most are classroom teachers, indicating that instructional practices and decisions are mainly carried out at the classroom level.

Findings show that teachers demonstrate a generally favorable level of decision-making in planning and implementing classroom activities, particularly in considering learner needs, adjusting instruction, and modifying activities. However, involvement in broader curriculum decisions and innovative instructional planning remains limited. Similarly, teachers exhibit a generally positive level of creativity in designing classroom activities, but this is more adaptive than highly original, especially in producing instructional materials and applying innovative approaches.

The study further concludes that there is a significant moderate positive relationship between teachers' decision-making and creativity in designing classroom activities. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, it is recommended that the proposed Action Plan be adopted and implemented to strengthen teachers' decision-making and enhance creativity in designing classroom activities for learners with exceptionalities in inclusive education. The Action Plan should prioritize targeted capacity-building activities such as structured training, mentoring, and collaborative planning sessions focused on inclusive instructional strategies.

It is further recommended that school administrators actively support its implementation by providing opportunities for professional development, strengthening instructional supervision, and encouraging teacher participation in curriculum-related decision-making. Teachers should also be engaged in learning communities where best practices in inclusive education and creative instructional design are shared and applied.

Sustained implementation of the Action Plan is essential to address gaps in training and experience, improve instructional confidence, and promote more innovative and responsive classroom practices.

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