Learning Environment and Learners' Diversity: Basis for an Enhanced Inclusive Education Implementation

Madonna S. Pajarillo, Daryl I. Quinito, PhD

Mabini Colleges, Incorporated, Daet, Camarines Norte

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the learning environment and learners' diversity as bases for enhancing inclusive education implementation in Vinzons District. Specifically, it assessed the learning environment in terms of learner safety and security, fairness and inclusivity, classroom structure and learning activities, learner participation and engagement, purposive and meaningful learning, and learner behavior. It also examined learners' diversity in terms of learning experiences, socio-economic background, and individual strengths and determined the relationship between the variables. The study employed a quantitative method using a descriptive-correlational research design. Public elementary school teachers in Vinzons District during School Year 2025–2026 served as respondents and were selected through total enumeration. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire adapted from Domains 2 and 3 of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), which underwent expert validation, pilot testing, and reliability testing. Weighted mean and Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation were used to analyze the data. Findings revealed that teachers maintained a very high level of learning environment across all dimensions. Learners' diversity was likewise perceived at a very high level in terms of learning experiences, socio-economic background, and individual strengths. Significant positive relationships were found between several dimensions of the learning environment and learners' diversity, although some specific relationships were not statistically significant. Thus, the study concludes that a supportive and inclusive learning environment is associated with several aspects of learner diversity and that teaching practices should remain responsive to learners' varying needs, circumstances, and strengths. The study recommends sustaining effective inclusive classroom practices while strengthening learner participation, critical thinking, behavior management, differentiated instruction, and responsive learning support. School heads and instructional leaders may strengthen SLAC sessions, coaching, mentoring, classroom observations, and technical assistance. Project SUSTAIN: Sustaining Unified Support for Teaching, Adaptability, Inclusion, and Nurturing Learners is proposed as a school-based intervention to sustain effective practices and further enhance inclusive education implementation.

Keywords: Learning environment, learners' diversity, inclusive education, learner safety and security, fairness and inclusivity of the learning environment, management of classroom structure and learning activities, support for learner participation and engagement, promotion of purposive and meaningful learning

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education aims to provide all learners, regardless of their background or ability, with equal opportunities to learn and participate in school. Ainscow (2020) emphasizes that a positive learning environment promotes safety, fairness, participation, and meaningful learning. Similarly, Molina Roldán et al. (2021) found that safe, welcoming, and supportive classrooms help improve learners' motivation, confidence, and learning. These emphasize the important role of teachers in creating learning environments that respond to the diverse needs of learners. In the Philippines, inclusive education is supported by various Department of Education policies. DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, or the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), particularly Domain 2: Learning Environment and Domain 3: Diversity of Learners, emphasizes teachers' responsibility to maintain supportive learning environments and respond to learners' different needs, strengths, experiences, and backgrounds. Likewise, DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019 emphasizes the provision of appropriate support to diverse learners. These policies provide a strong basis for strengthening inclusive education in schools. Despite these

policies, challenges in implementing inclusive practices remain. Beltran et al. (2025) found that some teachers experience limitations in training, resources, and support for addressing learner differences. Similarly, Intong et al. (2024) reported that learners' cultural, economic, and language backgrounds continue to influence classroom participation. These findings highlight the need to further understand teachers' experiences in managing inclusive and diverse classrooms. At the local level, school records for School Year 2025–2026 showed reported bullying incidents, indicating continuing concerns related to learner safety and inclusion. Learners also differ in their learning experiences, socio-economic backgrounds, and individual strengths. Some have greater access to learning resources and family support, while others experience limitations that may affect their participation and learning. Learners likewise possess different abilities in academics, arts, leadership, and other areas that need to be recognized and developed. Given these conditions, there is a need to determine how the learning environment relates to learners' diversity as a basis for strengthening inclusive education. Thus, this study examines the learning environment and learners' diversity to provide a basis for an intervention that promotes learner safety, participation, appropriate support, and recognition of individual strengths.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a quantitative method using a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the levels of the learning environment and learners' diversity and examine the relationship between these variables. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire adapted from Domains 2 and 3 of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), covering the learning environment and diversity of learners. The instrument underwent expert validation, pilot testing, and reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha. The data were analyzed using Weighted Mean to determine the levels of the variables and Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation (Spearman's rho) to determine the significance, strength, and direction of their relationship. Data analysis was performed using SPSS Version 21.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of Practices on Learning Environment. The learning environment reflects the classroom conditions and practices that teachers provide to support effective and inclusive learning. In this study, it covers learner safety and security, fairness and inclusivity, management of classroom structure and learning activities, support for learner participation and engagement, promotion of purposive and meaningful learning, and management of learner behavior. These areas provide a basis for assessing how well the classroom responds to the needs of learners and supports their active participation in the learning process.

Learner Safety and Security. This reflects the classroom conditions maintained by teachers to protect learners physically and emotionally while providing a secure atmosphere for learning. It covers practices that allow learners to participate in classroom activities while feeling protected, comfortable, and supported. The level of practices on the learning environment along learner safety and security obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.86, interpreted as Very Much Practiced. The highest weighted mean of 3.94, interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was obtained for the indicator learners feel secure when participating in classroom discussions. On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 3.77, also interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was obtained for the indicator establish routines that promote a safe and orderly classroom. The findings were corroborated by Reyes (2021), who found that teachers generally maintained physical and emotional security among learners and emphasized that classroom practices should create conditions that strengthen learners' trust and participation. This supports the present findings because learners are more likely to participate when they feel secure, while established classroom routines help maintain the safe and orderly environment needed for such participation.

Table 1Level of Practices on Learning Environment along Learner Safety and Security

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I ensure that learners are physically safe during all classroom activities.	3.83	VMP
I maintain a classroom environment free from bullying and harassment.	3.84	VMP
I immediately address unsafe behaviors in the classroom.	3.85	VMP
I create an emotionally safe space where learners can express themselves.	3.89	VMP

Learners feel secure when participating in classroom discussions.	3.94	VMP
I consistently enforce rules that protect learners' well-being.	3.83	VMP
I monitor learner interactions to prevent harmful behavior.	3.87	VMP
Learners are treated with respect to maintain emotional safety.	3.92	VMP
I respond promptly to learners' concerns related to safety.	3.87	VMP
. I establish routines that promote a safe and orderly classroom.	3.77	VMP
Overall Weighted Mean	3.86	VMP

Rating Scale: Descriptive Interpretation:

3.25 – 4.00 - Very Much Practiced (VMP)

2.50 – 3.24 - Practiced (P)

1.75 – 2.49 - Moderately Practiced (MP)

1.00 – 1.74 - Not Practiced (NP)

Fairness and Inclusivity of the Learning Environment. This reflects teachers' practices in providing equal opportunities, unbiased treatment, and classroom experiences that include all learners. It considers how teachers make learning accessible and responsive so that learners can participate regardless of their individual differences and backgrounds. The level of practices on the learning environment along fairness and inclusivity obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.96, interpreted as Very Much Practiced. The highest weighted mean of 3.99, interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was shared by two indicators: using teaching strategies that include all learners and ensuring that classroom activities are accessible to all learners. The lowest weighted mean of 3.86, also interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was obtained for the indicator give all learners equal chances to participate. The findings were corroborated by Cruz (2022), who found that fairness in the classroom is influenced by differences among learners, particularly their socio-economic conditions, and that equitable participation requires appropriate support and awareness of these differences. This supports the present findings because fairness and inclusivity require teachers not only to provide learning opportunities but also to adjust their practices so that learners with different circumstances and needs can participate meaningfully.

Table 2 Level of Practices on Learning Environment along Fairness and Inclusivity

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I provide equal learning opportunities to all learners.	3.95	VMP
I treat all learners fairly regardless of their background.	3.93	VMP
I use teaching strategies that include all learners.	3.99	VMP
I ensure that classroom activities are accessible to all learners.	3.99	VMP
I consider learners' individual differences when teaching.	3.98	VMP
I avoid bias when assessing learners' performance.	3.98	VMP
I encourage respect for diversity among learners.	3.97	VMP
I give all learners equal chances to participate.	3.86	VMP
I adjust instruction to meet diverse learning needs.	3.98	VMP
. I promote an inclusive atmosphere in the classroom.	3.98	VMP
Overall Weighted Mean	3.96	VMP

Rating Scale: Descriptive Interpretation:

3.25 – 4.00 - Very Much Practiced (VMP)

2.50 – 3.24 - Practiced (P)

1.75 – 2.49 - Moderately Practiced (MP)

1.00 – 1.74 - Not Practiced (NP)

Management of Classroom Structure and Learning Activities. Management of classroom structure and learning activities focuses on the practices of teachers in organizing classroom routines, instructional flow, learning tasks, and physical arrangements to facilitate effective learning. These practices reflect how teachers manage the different classroom activities and conditions needed to provide an organized and suitable setting for the teaching and learning process. The level of practices on the learning environment along management of classroom structure and learning activities obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.92, interpreted as Very Much Practiced. The highest weighted mean of 3.98, interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was obtained for the indicator establish clear classroom routines and procedures. On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 3.83, although still interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was obtained for the indicator manage time effectively during lessons. The finding was corroborated by Santos (2023), who found that structured classroom management improved learner engagement and that flexible grouping and properly organized classroom activities allowed learners to participate according to their strengths and learning preferences. This supports the present findings because clear classroom routines provide structure to learning activities, while effective use of instructional time helps teachers maintain the flow of lessons and learner participation.

Table 3Level of Practices on Learning Environment along Management of Classroom Structure and Learning Activities

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I establish clear classroom routines and procedures.	3.98	VMP
I organize learning activities in a logical sequence.	3.91	VMP
I provide clear instructions before starting activities.	3.87	VMP
I manage time effectively during lessons.	3.83	VMP
I prepare materials needed for each lesson in advance.	3.88	VMP
I maintain smooth transitions between activities.	3.90	VMP
I arrange the classroom to support learning tasks.	3.97	VMP
I ensure that activities match the lesson objectives.	3.94	VMP
I monitor learners during activities to maintain order.	3.94	VMP
. I use structured activities to maximize learning time.	3.95	VMP
Overall Weighted Mean	3.92	VMP

Rating Scale: Descriptive Interpretation:

3.25 – 4.00 - Very Much Practiced (VMP)

2.50 – 3.24 - Practiced (P)

1.75 – 2.49 - Moderately Practiced (MP)

1.00 – 1.74 - Not Practiced (NP)

Support for Learner Participation and Engagement. Support for learner participation and engagement focuses on the strategies used by teachers to encourage learners to become actively involved, work with others, interact during lessons, and remain engaged in classroom activities. The level of practices on the learning environment along support for learner participation and engagement obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.94, interpreted as Very Much Practiced. The highest weighted mean of 3.99, interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was obtained for the indicator encourage all learners to actively participate in class. This implies that teachers make learner participation an important part of the teaching and learning process. Teachers encourage learners to answer questions, share ideas, react to the lesson, and relate their experiences to the topic being discussed. On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 3.88, although still interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was obtained for the indicator support learners who are hesitant to participate. This implies that teachers recognize that not all learners are equally confident in participating in classroom activities. Some learners may hesitate to answer because they are shy, afraid of making mistakes, unsure of their responses, or uncomfortable speaking

in front of the class. The finding was conformed by Perez (2020), who reported a strong relationship between teachers' support for learner participation and their ability to respond to differences in learners' interests and gender. The study found that classroom practices that provided choice, collaboration, and inclusion contributed to greater learner engagement and motivation. This supports the present finding that active participation becomes more possible when teachers provide different opportunities for learners to become involved while giving additional support to those who are hesitant to participate.

Table 4Level of Practices on Learning Environment along Support forLearner Participation and Engagement

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I encourage all learners to actively participate in class.	3.99	VMP
I use strategies that promote learner interaction.	3.93	VMP
I ask questions that require learners to think and respond.	3.97	VMP
I provide opportunities for group and collaborative work.	3.97	VMP
I engage learners through varied instructional methods.	3.93	VMP
I ensure that learners stay focused during activities.	3.92	VMP
I motivate learners to share their ideas and opinions.	3.95	VMP
I involve learners in meaningful classroom discussions.	3.92	VMP
I monitor participation to ensure all learners are involved.	3.96	VMP
. I support learners who are hesitant to participate.	3.88	VMP
Overall Weighted Mean	3.94	VMP

Rating Scale: Descriptive Interpretation:

3.25 – 4.00 - Very Much Practiced (VMP)

2.50 – 3.24 - Practiced (P)

1.75 – 2.49 - Moderately Practiced (MP)

1.00 – 1.74 - Not Practiced (NP)

Promotion of Purposive and Meaningful Learning. Promotion of purposive and meaningful learning focuses on how teachers make instruction relevant, practical, and understandable to learners. It reflects teachers' practices in helping learners recognize the relevance of lessons, apply what they learn to actual situations, and develop understanding that goes beyond simply remembering information. The level of practices on the learning environment along promotion of purposive and meaningful learning obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.80, interpreted as Very Much Practiced. This indicates that teachers consistently provide learning experiences that help learners understand the purpose and relevance of what they are learning and connect classroom lessons with situations beyond the classroom. The highest weighted mean of 3.92, interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was obtained for the indicator help learners see the value of what they learn. This implies that teachers do not simply present the content of the lesson but help learners understand why it is important and how it can be useful in their lives. On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 3.71, although still interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was obtained for the indicator provide tasks that require critical thinking. This implies that teachers provide activities that require learners to think, analyze, explain, and make decisions, although these tasks may require greater preparation and guidance. The finding was supported by Hernandez (2022), who found that learning became more relevant and understandable when classroom content was connected with learners' local knowledge, traditions, values, and identities. Learners demonstrated improved participation and academic performance when instruction reflected contexts that were meaningful to them. This supports the present findings that learners are more likely to recognize the value of what they learn when lessons are connected to meaningful situations, while activities that require deeper thinking help them move beyond simply remembering classroom content.

Table 5Level of Practices on Learning Environment along Promotion of Purposive and Meaningful Learning

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I connect lessons to learners' real-life experiences.	3.89	VMP
I explain the purpose of each lesson to learners.	3.83	VMP
I relate new lessons to learners' prior knowledge.	3.76	VMP
I design activities that promote understanding, not memorization.	3.77	VMP
I use examples that are relevant to learners' daily lives.	3.75	VMP
I encourage learners to apply what they learn.	3.76	VMP
I provide tasks that require critical thinking.	3.71	VMP
I make learning meaningful through real-world applications.	3.82	VMP
I ensure that lesson objectives are clearly achieved.	3.81	VMP
. I help learners see the value of what they learn.	3.92	VMP
Overall Weighted Mean	3.80	VMP

Rating Scale: Descriptive Interpretation:

3.25 – 4.00 - Very Much Practiced (VMP)

2.50 – 3.24 - Practiced (P)

1.75 – 2.49 - Moderately Practiced (MP)

1.00 – 1.74 - Not Practiced (NP)

Management of Learner Behavior. Management of learner behavior focuses on the strategies used by teachers to establish expectations, reinforce appropriate conduct, and address misbehavior in the classroom. These practices reflect how teachers guide learners toward responsible behavior while maintaining an environment that supports learning and positive interactions. The level of practices on the learning environment along management of learner behavior obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.90, interpreted as Very Much Practiced. This indicates that teachers consistently apply classroom practices that guide learner behavior, maintain discipline, and provide an orderly environment where teaching and learning can take place effectively. The highest weighted mean was shared by two indicators: establish clear rules for classroom behavior and create a respectful and orderly classroom environment. Based on the table provided, however, both indicators have a weighted mean of 3.98, and are interpreted as Very Much Practiced. This implies that teachers give importance to making behavioral expectations clear to learners and maintaining respect and order inside the classroom. On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 3.80, also interpreted as Very Much Practiced, was shared by the indicators address misbehavior in a fair and consistent manner and respond calmly to behavioral issues. This implies that teachers make efforts to handle behavioral concerns fairly and without immediately reacting in anger. When a learner misbehaves, teachers consider what happened and allow the learner to explain before deciding on an appropriate response. The finding was corroborated by Garcia (2020), who found that teachers who used positive reinforcement and supportive behavior strategies were able to improve learners' participation, confidence, and compliance with classroom routines. This supports the present findings because clear behavioral expectations and respectful classroom management provide direction to learners, while fair and calm responses to misbehavior help maintain discipline without creating fear in the classroom

Table 5Level of Practices on Learning Environment along Management of Learner Behavior

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I establish clear rules for classroom behavior.	3.98	VMP
I consistently enforce classroom rules.	3.91	VMP

I use positive strategies to manage learner behavior.	3.85	VMP
I address misbehavior in a fair and consistent manner.	3.80	VMP
I reinforce appropriate behavior among learners.	3.97	VMP
I prevent disruptions through effective classroom management.	3.90	VMP
I maintain discipline without creating fear among learners.	3.88	VMP
I guide learners to take responsibility for their behavior.	3.93	VMP
I respond calmly to behavioral issues.	3.80	VMP
. I create a respectful and orderly classroom environment.	3.98	VMP
Overall Weighted Mean	3.90	VMP

Rating Scale: Descriptive Interpretation:

3.25 – 4.00 - Very Much Practiced (VMP)

2.50 – 3.24 - Practiced (P)

1.75 – 2.49 - Moderately Practiced (MP)

1.00 – 1.74 - Not Practiced (NP)

Level of Learners' Diversity, as Perceived by the Teachers in the School Context. The level of learners' diversity reflects the differences among learners within the school context as perceived by teachers. In this study, these differences are examined through learners' learning experiences, socio-economic backgrounds, and strengths, which provide a picture of the varied characteristics and circumstances teachers encounter in responding to learners' needs.

Learners' Learning Experiences. This focuses on teachers' perceptions of the differences in learners' previous and current educational exposure. These include differences in their previous academic performance, experiences with various teaching strategies, participation in classroom and co-curricular activities, and ability to adjust to different learning tasks. The level of learners' diversity along learning experiences obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.86, interpreted as Very High Level. This indicates that teachers encounter learners with highly varied learning experiences. The highest weighted mean of 3.93, interpreted as Very High Level, was obtained for the indicator learners have varied experiences in classroom learning tasks. On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 3.75, although still interpreted as Very High Level, was obtained for the indicator learners have been exposed to different teaching methods. The finding was corroborated by Tan (2021), who found that learner profiling helped teachers recognize differences in learners' strengths, challenges, and learning needs and use this information in designing differentiated instructional and assessment strategies. This supports the present findings because recognizing learners' varied learning experiences allows teachers to provide learning activities and instructional support that are appropriate to their different levels of experience and readiness.

Table 7 Level of Learners' Diversity along Learning Experiences

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Learners in my class have different levels of prior knowledge.	3.85	VHL
Learners vary in their previous academic performance.	3.89	VHL
Learners have been exposed to different teaching methods.	3.75	VHL
Learners differ in their participation in school activities.	3.83	VHL
Learners show different levels of learning readiness.	3.92	VHL
Learners respond differently to instructional strategies.	3.85	VHL
Learners have varied experiences in classroom learning tasks.	3.93	VHL
Learners differ in their ability to adapt to new lessons.	3.81	VHL

Learners have different levels of engagement in learning activities.	3.88	VHL
. Learners bring varied educational experiences into the classroom.	3.86	VHL
Overall Weighted Mean	3.86	VHL

Rating Scale: Descriptive Interpretation:

3.25 – 4.00 - Very High Level (VHL)

2.50 – 3.24 - High Level (HL)

1.75 – 2.49 - Low Level (LL)

1.00 – 1.74 - Very Low Level (VLL)

Learners' Socio-Economic Background. This focuses on teachers' perceptions of the differences in the economic and social conditions of learners. These differences are reflected in learners' access to learning resources, parental support and involvement, availability of basic needs such as food, transportation, and school supplies, and the conditions of their home environment. The level of learners' diversity along socio-economic background obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.76, interpreted as Very High Level. This indicates that teachers encounter learners with widely different economic and home situations. These differences may affect the resources, support, and opportunities available to learners as they participate in their schooling. The highest weighted mean of 3.86, interpreted as Very High Level, was shared by the indicators some learners experience financial challenges that affect learning and learners have different home environments for studying. On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 3.62, although still interpreted as Very High Level, was obtained for the indicator learners receive varying levels of guidance from their families. The finding was corroborated by Cruz (2022), who found that socio-economic differences affected learners' equitable participation in school, particularly when limited resources prevented some learners from fully accessing learning opportunities. The study emphasized that appropriate support and awareness of learners' economic circumstances are necessary in addressing these differences. This supports the present findings because financial conditions, home environments, and family support can influence how learners participate in and respond to their learning experiences.

Table 8 Level of Learners' Diversity along Socio Economic Background

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Learners differ in access to learning materials at home.	3.77	VHL
Some learners have limited access to technology for learning.	3.74	VHL
Learners vary in the level of parental support they receive.	3.71	VHL
Some learners experience financial challenges that affect learning.	3.86	VHL
Learners have different home environments for studying.	3.86	VHL
Some learners lack sufficient school supplies.	3.65	VHL
Learners' attendance is influenced by their economic situation.	3.85	VHL
Learners differ in their access to basic needs.	3.73	VHL
Learners receive varying levels of guidance from their families.	3.62	VHL
. Learners' living conditions affect their academic performance.	3.83	VHL
Overall Weighted Mean	3.76	VHL

Rating Scale: Descriptive Interpretation:

3.25 – 4.00 - Very High Level (VHL)

2.50 – 3.24 - High Level (HL)

1.75 – 2.49 - Low Level (LL)

1.00 – 1.74 - Very Low Level (VLL)

Learners' Strengths. This focuses on teachers' perceptions of the different abilities and competencies demonstrated by learners. These include their academic skills in areas such as literacy and numeracy, talents in arts, sports and leadership, problem-solving and critical thinking abilities, and interpersonal and social skills. The level of learners' diversity along their strengths obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.64, interpreted as Very High Level. This indicates that teachers observe considerable differences in the abilities, skills, and talents demonstrated by learners. These differences show that learners have particular areas where they perform well and areas where they may require further development and support. The highest weighted mean of 3.85, interpreted as Very High Level, was obtained for the indicator learners demonstrate different levels of academic ability. On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 3.46, although still interpreted as Very High Level, was obtained for the indicator learners exhibit critical thinking abilities. The finding was conformed by Lim (2022), who found a significant relationship between the quality of the learning environment and the recognition of learners' individual strengths. The study showed that recognizing differences among learners contributed to their motivation and learning outcomes. This supports the present findings because learners possess different academic and thinking abilities, and recognizing these strengths provides teachers with a clearer basis for responding to their individual learning needs.

Table 9Level of Learners' Diversity along their Strengths

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Learners demonstrate different levels of academic ability.	3.85	VHL
Some learners excel in literacy skills.	3.71	VHL
Some learners excel in numeracy skills.	3.70	VHL
Learners show talents in creative activities.	3.63	VHL
Some learners demonstrate strong problem-solving skills.	3.59	VHL
Learners exhibit leadership abilities.	3.66	VHL
Learners show confidence in expressing their ideas.	3.53	VHL
Learners demonstrate strong interpersonal skills.	3.56	VHL
Learners exhibit critical thinking abilities.	3.46	VHL
. Learners show unique talents in different areas.	3.70	VHL
Overall Weighted Mean	3.64	VHL

Rating Scale: Descriptive Interpretation:

3.25 – 4.00 - Very High Level (VHL)

2.50 – 3.24 - High Level (HL)

1.75 – 2.49 - Low Level (LL)

1.00 – 1.74 - Very Low Level (VLL)

Relationship between the Level of the Learning Environment and the Level of Learners' Diversity. Table 9 presents the test of the significant relationship between the level of practices on the learning environment and the level of learners' diversity as perceived by teachers. A test of normality was initially conducted, and the data failed to satisfy the assumption of normality. Hence, the Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient was employed as an appropriate nonparametric statistical technique to determine the direction and strength of the relationships among the variables. The findings revealed that the different practices on the learning environment generally had positive relationships with learners' learning experiences, socio-economic background, and strengths. Among the three variables of learners' diversity, learning experiences demonstrated the most consistent pattern, with all seven learning-environment practices showing statistically significant positive relationships at the 0.01 level. The correlation coefficients ranged from $\rho = .210$to $\rho = .589$, indicating weak to strong positive associations. The strongest relationship was found between management of learner behavior and learners' learning experiences ($\rho = .589, p < .001$), suggesting that better implementation of learner behavior management tends to be associated with more favorable learning experiences. Moreover, on learners' socio-economic background, significant positive relationships were found with fairness and inclusivity of the

learning environment ($\rho = .198, p = .001$), management of classroom ($\rho = .192, p = .001$), promotion of purposeful and meaningful learning ($\rho = .208, p < .001$), and management of learner behavior ($\rho = .360, p < .001$). However, learner safety and security ($\rho = .146, p = .012$), structure and learning activities ($\rho = .103, p = .078$), and support for learner participation and engagement ($\rho = .103, p = .078$) did not reach statistical significance at the 0.01 level. It is noteworthy that the relationship between learner safety and security and learners' socio-economic background would be significant at the 0.05 level but not at the more stringent 0.01 level adopted in the study. The findings imply that learners' socio-economic background influences some classroom practices because teachers consider differences in learners' financial capacity, available learning resources, family support, and home conditions when providing instruction. Teachers modify requirements for learners who cannot afford certain materials, provide alternatives when gadgets or internet access are unavailable, organize activities where resources can be shared, and relate lessons to situations that learners commonly experience at home and in the community. They also consider a learner's circumstances before responding to concerns such as tardiness, incomplete requirements, or changes in classroom behavior.

Table 10 Test for Significant Relationship between the Level of Practices on Learning Environment and the Level of Learners' Diversity

Practices on Learning Environment	Learners' Diversity					
	Learners' Learning Experiences		Learners' Socio-Economic Background		Learners' Strengths	
	ρ	*p-value*	ρ	*p-value*	ρ	*p-value*
Learner Safety and Security	.241**	.000	.146*	.012	.111	.059
Fairness and Inclusivity of the Learning Environment	.256**	.000	.198**	.001	.277**	.000
Management of Classroom Structure and Learning Activities	.473**	.000	.192**	.001	.527**	.000
Support for Learner Participation and Engagement	.272**	.000	.103	.078	.281**	.000
Promotion of Purposive and Meaningful Learning	.210**	.000	.208**	.000	.406**	.000
Management of Learner Behavior	.589**	.000	.360**	.000	.474**	.000

**Correlation is significant @ 0.01 level.

*Correlation is significant @ 0.05 level

However, practices related to safety, classroom routines, and learner participation are generally provided to all learners regardless of economic background, since every learner is expected to receive protection, an orderly learning environment, and opportunities to participate. This explains why some aspects of the learning environment were significantly related to socio-economic background while others did not reach the 0.01 level of significance.

For learners' strengths, significant positive relationships were found for fairness and inclusivity, management of classroom, structure and learning activities, support for learner participation and engagement, promotion of purposeful and meaningful learning, and management of learner behavior. The strongest relationship was observed between management of classroom and learners' strengths ($\rho = .527, p < .001$), followed by management of learner behavior ($\rho = .474, p < .001$). In contrast, learner safety and security did not show a statistically significant relationship with learners' strengths ($\rho = .111, p = .059$).

The findings imply that learners' strengths are closely connected with how teachers organize and manage classroom learning. Teachers consider differences in academic ability, talents, leadership skills, problem-solving abilities, and other competencies when assigning tasks, forming groups, encouraging participation, and providing learning opportunities. Learners who demonstrate particular strengths may be given roles where these abilities can be used, while those who need support are provided with guidance and opportunities to develop their skills.

The stronger relationship with classroom management suggests that teachers often structure activities according to what learners can do, while the relationship with learner behavior shows that recognizing learners' strengths can also help teachers assign responsibilities and encourage positive conduct. In contrast, learner safety and security are provided to all learners regardless of their abilities or talents; whether a learner is academically advanced, creative, athletic, or still developing particular skills, the same protection and secure classroom conditions are expected to be maintained.

The findings indicate that effective learning-environment practices are significantly associated with teachers' perceptions of learner diversity, particularly in terms of learners' learning experiences and strengths. The results suggest that creating an inclusive, well-managed, purposeful, and engaging learning environment may be closely related to teachers' ability to recognize and respond to differences among learners. However, the strength of the associations varies across dimensions, indicating that some learning-environment practices are more closely related to particular aspects of learner diversity than others.

The findings of the present study were corroborated by Cruz (2022**)**, who found that socio-economic differences affected equitable participation among learners and that limitations in resources influenced their access to learning opportunities. The study further emphasized that teachers' awareness of learners' socio-economic differences influenced classroom interactions and participation. This corroborates the present finding that learners' socio-economic background is significantly related to several aspects of the learning environment, particularly fairness and inclusivity, classroom management, purposive and meaningful learning, and management of learner behavior.

For learners' strengths, the findings were corroborated by Lim (2022), who found a significant relationship between the quality of the learning environment and the recognition of learner diversity, particularly among gifted and talented learners. The study showed that the physical and instructional environment influenced how learners' individual strengths were recognized and supported. This corroborates the present finding that learners' strengths are significantly related to fairness and inclusivity, management of classroom structure and learning activities, learner participation and engagement, purposive and meaningful learning, and management of learner behavior.

Proposed Intervention Plan to Enhance the Learning Environment and Support Learners' Diversity.

The proposed intervention, titled Project SUSTAIN: Sustaining Unified Support for Teaching, Adaptability, Inclusion, and Nurturing Learners, (see appendix H) is designed to maintain and further strengthen the school's existing practices in providing a supportive learning environment and responding to learners' diversity. Since the findings generally revealed high to very high levels of practice, Project SUSTAIN is not intended as a corrective intervention for areas of poor performance. Rather, it provides a sustained mechanism for preserving effective practices while giving continued attention to indicators that obtained comparatively lower weighted means. Project SUSTAIN focuses on areas such as maintaining safe and orderly classroom routines, providing equitable opportunities for participation, managing instructional time effectively, supporting hesitant learners, using varied teaching approaches, managing learner behavior fairly and consistently, strengthening school-home learning support, and developing learners' critical thinking abilities. These areas represent opportunities for continuous enhancement despite their generally favorable levels of implementation. The intervention will be carried out through regular School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) sessions, collaborative sharing of classroom practices, development and application of contextualized learning activities, peer support, and classroom-based monitoring. Teachers will have opportunities to discuss strategies that have been effective in addressing learner differences and adapt these practices according to learners' abilities, learning experiences, socio-economic backgrounds, and individual strengths. Particular attention will be given to activities that encourage learners to analyze information, solve problems, explain their reasoning, participate actively, and connect classroom learning with real-life situations.Through Project SUSTAIN, the school is expected to establish a continuing process of reflection, application, monitoring, and improvement rather than conducting a one-time intervention. The project recognizes that sustaining a positive learning environment requires consistent efforts from teachers and school leaders. By integrating the identified strategies into regular classroom instruction and existing professional development activities, the school can maintain its established strengths while continuously enhancing its capacity to provide an inclusive, responsive, and meaningful learning environment for diverse learners.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that teachers are able to maintain a highly supportive learning environment characterized by safety, inclusivity, organized learning activities, learner engagement, meaningful learning, and appropriate behavior management. Learner diversity is likewise highly evident in terms of learning experiences, socio-economic backgrounds, and individual strengths, highlighting the need for flexible and responsive teaching practices. Significant relationships were found between several dimensions of the learning environment and learner diversity, although some specific dimensions showed no significant relationship; thus, the null hypothesis is rejected based on the significant relationships established. Finally, a sustained intervention is needed to maintain existing strengths and address areas for further improvement. Hence, Project SUSTAIN: Sustaining Unified Support for Teaching, Adaptability, Inclusion, and Nurturing Learners is proposed to strengthen inclusive classroom practices and responsiveness to learner diversity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends to sustain effective practices in maintaining a safe, fair, inclusive, organized, and supportive learning environment while strengthening classroom routines, learner participation, behavior management, and activities that promote critical thinking. Teachers may also continue using differentiated, contextualized, and flexible teaching strategies to address learners' diverse experiences, socio-economic backgrounds, abilities, and strengths. School heads and instructional leaders may strengthen these practices through SLAC sessions, classroom observations, coaching, mentoring, and collaborative professional learning. Furthermore, Project SUSTAIN: Sustaining Unified Support for Teaching, Adaptability, Inclusion, and Nurturing Learners may be implemented and integrated into existing school programs to continuously strengthen inclusive teaching and learning practices. Future researchers may conduct similar studies in other educational settings and explore additional variables or perspectives related to the learning environment and learner diversity.

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