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Article

Identified Inclusive Classroom Behavior in Teaching Special Education

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Abstract: This study examines the relationship between inclusive classroom behaviors and academic performance in English, Mathematics, and Science. Despite moderate to high challenges in areas such as disruptive behavior, lack of engagement, difficulty with transitions, communication barriers, and social-emotional challenges, the findings reveal no significant impact on academic performance. Students maintain very satisfactory performance levels, indicating the effectiveness of current educational strategies and interventions. The study highlights the importance of these strategies in supporting students to overcome behavioral challenges and achieve solid academic results. It underscores the need for comprehensive approaches that address both behavioral and academic needs, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers to enhance supportive and effective learning environments.

Keywords: Inclusive classroom behaviors, academic performance, behavioral challenges, classroom engagement

Introduction

Special education is a complex sector focused on providing customized support and services to students with various disabilities, exceptionalities, or learning challenges (Kumar et al., 2023). Students in special education settings often need extra help and accommodations to engage fully with the curriculum and achieve their academic, social, and emotional goals (Lovett, 2021). Special education is inclusive of learner diversity, acknowledging that each student brings unique strengths, needs, and learning styles to the classroom (Francisco et al., 2020). Moreover, the objective of special education is to guarantee that every student receives an education tailored to their specific needs, which is both free and suitable (Friend & Bursuck, 2014).

Connor and Cavendish (2021) pointed out that managing an inclusive classroom is essential in special education due to the varied

needs of the students. Effective management techniques help create an environment where all students are valued, respected, and feel a part of the community (Cook-Sather, 2020). This inclusive atmosphere enhances student-teacher relationships, which in turn boosts engagement, motivation, and academic outcomes (Robinson, 2022). Such management also supports social-emotional growth by imparting crucial life skills like self-regulation, conflict resolution, and teamwork (Friedman & Weisberg-Gold, 2021).

Teachers are crucial in applying these inclusive management practices (Sharma & Mullick, 2020). Setting clear expectations, routines, and procedures, teachers can establish a well-ordered learning environment that reduces disruptions and maximizes learning time (Afalla & Fabelico, 2020). This approach enables teachers to meet diverse student needs, tailor instructions, and provide personalized support (Miguel, 2020). Additionally, effective management strategies are linked to greater teacher satisfaction, retention, and professional development (Bardach et al., 2022).

In the Philippines, inclusive education is deeply ingrained in the Constitution and supported by several policies and laws, including the Inclusive Education Policy Framework and the Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities. Despite these policies, significant obstacles remain in implementing inclusive practices, especially within special education. Effective classroom management is crucial for addressing these challenges and ensuring all students, including those with disabilities, receive an education that meets their needs.

Despite the focus on inclusive education in DepEd elementary schools, there is a notable lack of research on student behavior in inclusive classrooms. Few studies have examined the implementation and effectiveness of these practices in the Philippines' special education context. Understanding how teachers manage inclusive classrooms, identifying student behaviors, and assessing their impact is vital for shaping policy and practices in DepEd schools. Future research should delve into the effectiveness of different strategies, interventions, and supports that promote positive behavior, encourage participation, and foster inclusion among students with diverse needs. Research in DepEd elementary schools should fill this gap by conducting comprehensive studies on student behavior in inclusive classrooms. Exploring teachers' experiences and viewpoints can uncover effective methods, innovative approaches, and areas for enhancement in managing inclusive classrooms within the Philippine framework. By focusing on these aspects, researchers can provide valuable insights that bolster ongoing efforts to advance inclusive education.

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive research design to explore the relationship between inclusive classroom behaviors and academic

performance within several schools. Data were collected using a set of questionnaires developed from the works of Sprague & Walker (2005), Ladd (2009), and Weissberg et al. (2011), focusing on various aspects such as classroom management, disruptive behavior, behavior intervention, and social-emotional learning. These instruments were chosen to ensure a comprehensive analysis across common themes related to student behavior and academic achievement. The research was conducted at the Zapatera Elementary SPED Center, an institution dedicated to supporting students with special educational needs. Both teachers and students served as respondents, providing a balanced perspective on the classroom dynamics. Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," facilitating nuanced insights into the levels of agreement with the behavioral and academic statements presented. The collected data were analyzed using statistical software at a 0.05 level of significance to ascertain the correlations and implications for developing a strategic plan aimed at fostering a globally competitive educational environment. This strategic plan was intended to enhance instructional support and create a more inclusive and effective learning atmosphere for students with special needs.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Disruptive Behavior

Indicators	Mean	VD
Student frequently interrupts the class or others' learning activities.	3.07	MA
Student refuses to follow classroom rules or instructions.	2.69	MA
Student engages in physical aggression or disruptive outbursts.	2.54	MA
Student consistently distracts peers during lessons or group work.	2.46	MA
Student consistently disrupts the learning environment to the extent that it significantly impacts overall classroom functioning.	2.46	MA
Grand Mean	2.61	MA

Table 1 presents data on disruptive behaviors observed among students, categorized under several indicators. The indicator with the highest mean score, 3.07, indicates that students frequently interrupt the class or others' learning activities, classified as "Moderately Agree" (MA). This suggests that interruptions are a common issue. Following this, students refusing to follow classroom rules or instructions received a mean score of 2.69 (MA), indicating a notable level of non-compliance. Physical aggression or disruptive outbursts had a mean score of 2.54 (MA), showing moderate agreement that such behaviors occur. Both consistently distracting peers during lessons or group work and consistently disrupting the learning environment to a significant extent had equal mean scores of 2.46 (MA), suggesting that these behaviors are also present but to a slightly lesser degree. The grand mean of 2.61 (MA) reflects an overall moderate agreement that

disruptive behaviors are an issue, affecting the classroom environment and learning process to a considerable extent.

Table 2. Engagement

Indicators	Mean	VD
Student appears disinterested or passive during instructional activities.	2.31	MA
Student rarely volunteers or participates in class discussions.	3.00	MA
Student frequently appears distracted or off-task during lessons.	2.69	MA
Student exhibits limited enthusiasm or motivation for learning activities.	2.54	MA
Student consistently demonstrates a complete disengagement from classroom activities, regardless of instructional strategies used.	2.23	D
Grand Mean	2.55	MA

Table 2 outlines the levels of student engagement in the classroom through various indicators, each assessed by mean scores. The highest mean score, 3.00, reflects moderate agreement (MA) that students rarely volunteer or participate in class discussions, indicating a lack of active involvement. This is followed by a mean score of 2.69 (MA) for students frequently appearing distracted or off-task during lessons, highlighting a common issue with maintaining focus. The indicator for limited enthusiasm or motivation for learning activities scored 2.54 (MA), suggesting a moderate level of disengagement. Students appearing disinterested or passive during instructional activities had a mean score of 2.31 (MA), pointing to a noticeable but less severe issue. The lowest mean score, 2.23, indicates a disagreement (D) regarding students consistently demonstrating complete disengagement from classroom activities, regardless of instructional strategies used, suggesting that while disengagement exists, it is not pervasive. The overall grand mean of 2.55 (MA) reflects a moderate level of disengagement among students, implying that while some students show active participation and interest.

Table 3. Difficulty with Transitions

Indicators	Mean	VD
Student requires frequent reminders to transition between activities.	3.62	MA
Student exhibits mild resistance or reluctance to transition.	2.92	MA
Student experiences moderate difficulty with transitions, leading to minor disruptions.	2.92	MA
Student struggles significantly with transitions, leading to noticeable disruptions or delays in instructional time.	3.00	MA
Student experiences extreme difficulty with transitions, resulting in frequent meltdowns or prolonged disruptions.	2.84	MA
Grand Mean	3.06	MA

Table 3 presents data on students' difficulties with transitioning between activities, highlighting several behavioral indicators. The highest mean score, 3.62, indicates that students frequently require reminders to transition between activities, reflecting a moderate

agreement (MA) on the prevalence of this issue. Both mild resistance or reluctance to transition and moderate difficulty leading to minor disruptions have mean scores of 2.92 (MA), suggesting these behaviors are relatively common and contribute to some classroom challenges. A mean score of 3.00 (MA) shows that students struggling significantly with transitions, causing noticeable disruptions or delays in instructional time, is also a considerable issue. The indicator for students experiencing extreme difficulty with transitions, resulting in frequent meltdowns or prolonged disruptions, has a mean score of 2.84 (MA), indicating that while severe disruptions occur, they are slightly less frequent. The overall grand mean of 3.06 (MA) suggests a moderate level of difficulty with transitions among students, pointing to a need for consistent support and strategies to facilitate smoother transitions and minimize classroom disruptions.

Table 4. Communication Barriers

Indicators	Mean	VD
Student demonstrates occasional difficulty expressing thoughts or ideas verbally.	3.46	A
Student exhibits limited verbal communication skills in certain contexts.	3.77	A
Student experiences moderate challenges with both expressive and receptive communication.	3.70	A
Student demonstrates significant difficulty communicating verbally or nonverbally, impacting interactions with peers and understanding of instructional content.	3.46	A
Student experiences severe communication barriers, significantly impairing participation in classroom activities4.17 and social interactions.	3.23	MA
Grand Mean	3.52	A

Table 4 highlights the various communication barriers faced by students, as indicated by their mean scores. The highest mean score, 3.77, indicates that students exhibit limited verbal communication skills in certain contexts, showing agreement (A) on the frequency of this issue. This is closely followed by a mean score of 3.70 (A) for students experiencing moderate challenges with both expressive and receptive communication, suggesting significant obstacles in understanding and being understood. Both occasional difficulties expressing thoughts or ideas verbally and significant difficulty communicating verbally or nonverbally have mean scores of 3.46 (A), indicating that these issues are common and impact interactions and comprehension in the classroom. The indicator for severe communication barriers, significantly impairing participation in classroom activities and social interactions, has a slightly lower mean score of 3.23 (moderately agree, MA), suggesting that while these severe barriers are present, they are less pervasive. The grand mean of 3.52 (A) reflects an overall agreement that communication barriers are a notable concern, affecting students' ability to participate fully and interact effectively in the classroom.

Table 5. Social-Emotional Challenges

Indicators	Mean	VD
Student occasionally struggles with regulating emotions in certain situations.	3.23	A
Student exhibits mild difficulty managing frustration or disappointment.	3.23	A
Student experiences moderate challenges with emotional regulation and social interactions.	3.31	MA
Student demonstrates significant difficulty managing emotions or interacting with peers, impacting overall classroom climate.	3.46	A
Student experiences severe social-emotional challenges, requiring extensive support and intervention to participate in classroom activities effectively.	3.38	MA
Grand Mean	3.32	MA

Table 5 examines the social-emotional challenges faced by students, presenting various indicators and their mean scores. Students occasionally struggle with regulating emotions in certain situations and exhibit mild difficulty managing frustration or disappointment, both with a mean score of 3.23, indicating agreement (A) on the prevalence of these issues. More pronounced are the moderate challenges with emotional regulation and social interactions, with a mean score of 3.31, reflecting moderate agreement (MA) that these issues are notable. Significant difficulty managing emotions or interacting with peers, which impacts the overall classroom climate, is highlighted with a mean score of 3.46 (A), suggesting these challenges are fairly common and affect the classroom environment. Severe social-emotional challenges, requiring extensive support and intervention, scored 3.38 (MA), indicating a significant presence of severe issues that necessitate considerable assistance. The grand mean of 3.32 (MA) reflects a general moderate agreement that social-emotional challenges are a considerable concern, affecting students' ability to manage emotions and interact socially, thus impacting the overall classroom climate and necessitating ongoing support and interventions.

Table 6. Learners Academic Performance

Subject	Grade	VD
English	87	Very Satisfactory
Mathematics	85	Very Satisfactory
Science	85	Very Satisfactory

Table 6 presents the academic performance of learners across three subjects, each assessed with corresponding grades and verbal descriptions. In English, students achieved an average grade of 87, which is categorized as "Very Satisfactory," indicating a strong understanding and competence in language arts. Both Mathematics and Science have average grades of 85, also classified as "Very Satisfactory." This consistency across subjects demonstrates that students are performing well above average in these core areas,

showing a balanced and commendable level of academic achievement. Overall, the data reflects that learners are maintaining a solid performance in English, Mathematics, and Science, suggesting effective learning and understanding across these essential disciplines.

Table 7. Significant Relationship Between the Level of Inclusive Classroom Behavior and English Performance

Constructs	r-value	t-value	P value	Remarks	Decision
Disruptive Behavior	-0.142	-0.476	0.643	Not Significant	Do not reject
Lack of Engagement	0.045	0.151	0.883	Not significant	Do not reject
Difficulty with Transitions	-0.401	-1.451	0.175	Not significant	Do not reject
Communication Barriers	-0.363	-1.292	0.223	Not significant	Do not reject
Social-Emotional Challenges	-0.304	-1.059	0.312	Not significant	Do not reject

Table 7 examines the significant relationship between various constructs of inclusive classroom behavior and English performance, utilizing r-values, t-values, and p-values to determine significance. The analysis reveals that disruptive behavior has an r-value of -0.142, a t-value of -0.476, and a p-value of 0.643, indicating no significant relationship between disruptive behavior and English performance, leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. Similarly, lack of engagement shows an r-value of 0.045, a t-value of 0.151, and a p-value of 0.883, also indicating no significant relationship and leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. Difficulty with transitions has an r-value of -0.401, a t-value of -1.451, and a p-value of 0.175, which again is not significant, resulting in not rejecting the null hypothesis. Communication barriers present an r-value of -0.363, a t-value of -1.292, and a p-value of 0.223, showing no significant relationship, and thus the null hypothesis is not rejected. Lastly, social-emotional challenges have an r-value of -0.304, a t-value of -1.059, and a p-value of 0.312, indicating no significant relationship, and the null hypothesis is not rejected. Overall, the data suggests that none of the examined constructs of inclusive classroom behavior significantly impact English performance, as all p-values are above the 0.05 threshold, leading to the consistent decision to not reject the null hypothesis.

Table 8 investigates the significant relationship between various constructs of inclusive classroom behavior and Mathematics performance, using r-values, t-values, and p-values to assess significance.

Table 8. Significant Relationship Between the Level of Inclusive Classroom Behavior and Mathematics Performance

Constructs	r-value	t-value	P value	Remarks	Decision
Disruptive Behavior	0.031	0.104	0.919	Not Significant	Do not reject
Lack of Engagement	-0.134	-0.450	0.661	Not significant	Do not reject
Difficulty with Transitions	0.307	1.069	0.308	Not significant	Do not reject
Communication Barriers	0.276	0.953	0.361	Not significant	Do not reject
Social-Emotional Challenges	0.268	0.921	0.377	Not significant	Do not reject

The analysis shows that disruptive behavior has an r-value of 0.031, a t-value of 0.104, and a p-value of 0.919, indicating no significant relationship with Mathematics performance, leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. Similarly, lack of engagement is represented by an r-value of -0.134, a t-value of -0.450, and a p-value of 0.661, also showing no significant relationship and resulting in the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. Difficulty with transitions shows an r-value of 0.307, a t-value of 1.069, and a p-value of 0.308, indicating no significant relationship, hence the null hypothesis is not rejected. Communication barriers are associated with an r-value of 0.276, a t-value of 0.953, and a p-value of 0.361, reflecting no significant relationship and leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. Lastly, social-emotional challenges have an r-value of 0.268, a t-value of 0.921, and a p-value of 0.377, showing no significant relationship, and thus the null hypothesis is not rejected. Overall, the data demonstrates that none of the inclusive classroom behavior constructs significantly impact Mathematics performance.

Table 9. Significant Relationship Between the Level of Inclusive Classroom Behavior and Science Performance

Constructs	r-value	t-value	P value	Remarks	Decision
Disruptive Behavior	-0.302	-1.050	0.316	Not Significant	Do not reject
Lack of Engagement	-0.107	-0.356	0.729	Not significant	Do not reject
Difficulty with Transitions	-0.500	-1.914	0.082	Not significant	Do not reject
Communication Barriers	-0.451	-1.675	0.122	Not significant	Do not reject
Social-Emotional Challenges	-0.329	-1.156	0.272	Not significant	Do not reject

Table 9 analyzes the relationship between various constructs of inclusive classroom behavior and Science performance, using r-values,

t-values, and p-values to evaluate significance. Disruptive behavior is represented by an r-value of -0.302, a t-value of -1.050, and a p-value of 0.316, indicating no significant relationship with science performance, leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. Lack of engagement shows an r-value of -0.107, a t-value of -0.356, and a p-value of 0.729, also suggesting no significant relationship, resulting in the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. Difficulty with transitions has an r-value of -0.500, a t-value of -1.914, and a p-value of 0.082, which, while approaching significance, is still above the 0.05 threshold, leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. Communication barriers are associated with an r-value of -0.451, a t-value of -1.675, and a p-value of 0.122, indicating no significant relationship and leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. Finally, social-emotional challenges have an r-value of -0.329, a t-value of -1.156, and a p-value of 0.272, also showing no significant relationship, and thus the null hypothesis is not rejected. Overall, the data suggests that none of the inclusive classroom behavior constructs significantly impact Science performance, as all p-values are greater than 0.05, resulting in the consistent decision to not reject the null hypothesis.

Conclusion

The findings from this study reveal that while learners display varying levels of inclusive classroom behaviors, including disruptive behavior, lack of engagement, difficulty with transitions, communication barriers, and social-emotional challenges, these behavioral issues do not significantly impact their academic performance in English, Mathematics, and Science. Despite the moderate to high challenges observed, especially in communication and social-emotional areas, the absence of significant correlations between these behaviors and academic outcomes indicates that the learners are able to maintain very satisfactory performance levels. This suggests that current educational strategies or interventions are effectively supporting these students, allowing them to overcome behavioral challenges and achieve solid academic results.

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