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Lens of Inclusive Education: School Heads and Classroom Teachers' Perspectives on Policy Implementation and Institutional Challenges in the Philippines

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Abstract. The study aimed to explore school heads and teachers' awareness of inclusive education and the institutional challenges in its implementation in the Alfonso Lista Districts 1 and 2, Philippines. Using a descriptive survey design with both quantitative and qualitative approaches, data were collected through questionnaires and validated through informal interviews. Findings revealed that both groups were knowledgeable and fully aware of inclusive education. School heads were more aware of the legal aspects, while teachers were knowledgeable about the pedagogical aspects of implementing inclusive education in real-life teaching contexts. Key challenges included limited functional transition programmes and insufficient teacher competencies in inclusivity, particularly content and pedagogical knowledge. The study recommends enhancing teaching strategies, providing proper orientation, training and information dissemination and strengthening teachers' professional development through continuous learning and advanced studies.

Keywords: awareness; challenges; inclusive education; implementation; Mainstreaming; special education

1. Introduction

Filipinos highly value education, viewing it as vital to national progress and socio-economic development. It plays a pivotal role across the country's political, economic, social and cultural domains and is seen as a primary avenue for upward mobility and inclusive growth. This emphasis is reflected in the government's consistent allocation of the largest portion of the national budget to education. The Department of Education (DepEd), the biggest bureaucracy in the

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country, receives the highest annual appropriation as mandated by the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

The DepEd has pledged to advance Inclusive Education (IE) in the Philippines, formalised through Department Order No. 72, s. 2009. This policy positions IE as a core strategy to enhance learner participation and retention, especially among students with diverse needs. In the past decade, the inclusive model of Special Education (SPED) – often called inclusion or mainstreaming – has become increasingly prominent. It places learners with disabilities in regular classrooms to ensure equal access to quality education. As part of the broader IE framework, SPED plays a vital role in promoting equity, diversity and learner-centred support at all levels of education. The goals of SPED mirror those of general education, focusing on the holistic growth of learners into independent and purpose-driven individuals who can reach their full potential and contribute to society. Research has often focused on capturing the multifaceted truths of classroom-level challenges, capacities, and adaptive strategies in line with IE curriculum (Baharuddin & Burhan, 2025).

As a distinct yet integral part of the education system, SPED ensures that learners with exceptionalities have equitable access to quality education. Its central aim is to deliver responsive and differentiated instruction that allows these learners to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, comparable to their peers in regular education (Namanye & Shaan, 2021). One of the most critical theoretical contributions of SPED, grounded in decades of practice with learners with exceptionalities, is the affirmation of learner individuality. Core challenges are limited resources and the inability to transform pedagogy, which leads to a reluctance to change to fit the purpose of IE specially in integrating appropriate strategies and method in teaching (Griggs & Moore, 2023).

At the core of its philosophy is the recognition that every student represents a unique constellation of competencies, aptitudes and developmental needs, thereby requiring the formulation of individualised educational programmes calibrated to their distinct learning profiles (Aquino et al., 2019). Special education (SPED) promotes an approach that considers learners as the centre of instruction to ensure inclusive instruction. It maintains the principles of mainstreaming in the context of IE (Nachiappan et al., 2018). In the Philippines, IE is viewed as a systemic strategy to strengthen the purpose of Education for All. It involves modifying curricular programmes, focusing on the learners' diversity in the context of digital learning as emphasised by Fadhil et al. (2023). As a global advocacy, it advances the integration of learners with varied needs into mainstream schools regardless of ability (Lindner & Schwab, 2020).

This study applies Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, which critiques both segregation and superficial inclusion. This theory advocated learning environments that address each child's unique needs while ensuring their integration within mainstream behaviour, social and cultural contexts (Chepkwony & Wa-Mbaleka, 2023). The theory underscores the role of cultural

tools in learning and offers valuable insights into how children with disabilities can best access education.

Reeves et al. (2020) noted that identifying a child as “exceptional” has lasting effects and is ultimately determined by educational authorities, though parents are consulted in the process. Inclusive education (IE) places learners with and without disabilities in shared settings that promote equity and participation. Schuelka and Engsig (2020) emphasised that it goes beyond placement, requiring social acceptance, peer interaction and recognition of individual worth. True inclusion demands that schools align their values, practices and systems with inclusive principles.

In addition, SPED highlights that all learners have strengths and potential, though students with disabilities are often defined by deficits, leading to reduced expectations. Effective inclusion requires focusing on their abilities and fostering collaboration between parents and educators to support active participation (Hiemstra, 2016). Thus, it is essential to discuss the experiences of students with special needs, which represent different learning difficulties that need to be addressed (Jensen & Dikilitas, 2023).

In the context of Inclusive Education, it also highlighted the significant contribution of partnership among the stakeholders to support students’ learning. One of the goals of SPED is to support learners in overcoming challenges and reaching their goals regardless of their status (Dyantyi & Ncanywa, 2024). In the context of this study, SPED provides customised instruction tailored to the unique needs of learners, using adapted methods, materials and environments. These interventions aim to promote greater independence and success in school and the community than traditional classroom settings alone can offer (Stone-Macdonald & Fettig, 2019). It also fosters reflection and collaboration that strengthen teachers’ capacity for deep learning pedagogy in line with IE (Köpeczi-Bócz, 2025).

Inclusive education (IE) focuses on designing schools, classrooms and lessons that enable all children to learn and participate. It involves adopting varied teaching approaches that engage every learner, while also fostering friendships, positive relationships, and mutual respect among students and teachers (Bartolome et al., 2020). Inclusive education (IE) applies to all children, as readiness is not a prerequisite. Every child has the right to participate in regular schools and classrooms without needing to earn inclusion (Francisco et al., 2020).

Furthermore, according to Sarabia et al., (2024), IE is a mindset that promotes creativity in making schools accessible for all learners. This involves teachers adopting diverse teaching strategies and designing lessons that engage every child. Thus, teachers who vigorously participate in career advancement demonstrate a proactive orientation towards growth in their fields relevant to the trends of IE, which adversely affect teachers’ performance (Alshammari et al., 2025). In addition, collaborative workshops grounded in experiential learning have been found to significantly heighten instructional quality (Ajani, 2023).

Kamran et al. (2023) emphasised that IE recognises all learners' right to acceptance, equality and opportunity. It ensures every child's placement in age-appropriate classes, access to responsive curricula, participation in school activities and support through home-school-community collaboration. Also, IE involves teaching all children in regular classrooms, offering temporary or individualised support only when needed, while avoiding the segregation of learners with disabilities into separate settings (Francisco et al., 2020).

Nonetheless, despite various challenges, IE remains achievable. Its implementation is often hindered by insufficient teacher training, limited resources, weak curricula and policy support, negative dispositions and poor stakeholder collaboration, most importantly, the parents' contribution. Addressing these barriers requires systemic support, continuous capacity building and adequate resource allocation to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability. If parents are positively motivated to support their children's success, it will inspire their engagement and interest in learning, unlike meagre parental supervision at home (Zamroni et al., 2021).

However, identifying challenges in implementing IE is crucial. Thus, this study highlights these challenges and provides insights for administrators to enhance SPED implementation, focusing on basic education. Generally, this study aimed to explore the implementation and challenges of IE in Alfonso Lista Districts 1 and 2, Philippines. Specifically, this study aims to (1) determine the school heads' and teachers' awareness of the implementation of IE; (2) show the significant differences in the perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding the implementation of IE; (3) highlight the challenges perceived by the school heads and teachers when implementing IE; and (5) propose mechanisms or interventions to improve the deployment and communication of information on IE.

2. Methodology

This part of the paper presents research design, respondents, data gathering instruments, data gathering procedure and data analysis. This section highlights the systematic design and logical steps taken to complete the study.

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey design, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess school heads and teachers' awareness of IE implementation and its challenges. Informal interviews were conducted to triangulate their experiences regarding these challenges. Qualitative data supported and validated the challenges related to the implementation of IE.

2.2 Respondents

The participants of this study were 32 selected public elementary school heads from Alfonso Lista Districts 1 and 2 and employing 15 selected teachers handling students with learning disabilities. The researcher employed a convenient random sampling of the population. Each sample had an equal probability of being chosen based on the availability of the participants and criteria such as teachers teaching students with learning disabilities.

2.3 Data Gathering Instruments

A questionnaire was used as the primary data gathering instrument for the study. The questionnaire was adapted from the study of Rombo (2007). Some modifications were done by the researcher based on readings of related literature and studies on concepts of IE. Modifications were made to fit the needs of the research, specifically regarding the challenges of implementing IE. The questionnaire had two parts, which included the perceptions on the awareness of the participants about the implementation and challenges they faced in implementing IE. A 5-point rating scale was used to determine the level of awareness of the participants on the implementation and challenges of IE.

Further, the instrument underwent pre-testing by five selected school heads from another district and five teachers who looked at the questionnaire, filled it out and commented on the applicability and clarity of the questions contained therein. The participants of the pre-testing were not included in the actual study. The results of the said pre-test were subjected to reliability testing, and a coefficient of 0.78 was obtained using Cronbach's alpha, which signifies that the instrument was reliable.

Interview questions were the secondary data gathering instrument, which served to cross-check the data gathered through the questionnaire. These were randomly conducted conversations to check the accuracy of the gathered information using purposive sampling. The informal interviews included questions about the challenges that the participants faced when implementing IE, such as pedagogy, classroom assessment, classroom management and teacher training. In addition, it also assessed school facilities, geographical challenges and stakeholders' support.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedures

Prior to data gathering, ethical protocols were observed, including approval from the relevant authority, informed consent, assurance of confidentiality and disclosure of the study's academic purpose. In gathering the data, the researcher personally administered and retrieved the questionnaires, providing sufficient time for completion. Survey responses were validated through interviews with teachers and school heads to cross-check the challenges to implementing IE. Data were tallied, classified and tabulated, with weighted means computed for systematic analysis and interpretation.

2.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse quantitative data. The mean was used to identify the respondents' awareness of the implementation and challenges in IE. On the other hand, a t-test was used to determine the significant differences between the perceptions of school heads and teachers on the implementation and challenges of IE. Moreover, descriptive analysis was used to explore the lived experiences of school heads and teachers related to the implementation and challenges of IE to develop the coping mechanisms to counter the challenges faced.

3. Results, Findings and Discussion

This section of the article presents the results, findings and discussion of the study based on the research objectives. It underscores the level of awareness of the school heads and teachers regarding the implementation and challenges of IE, and the coping mechanisms that can be used to counter the problems faced.

3.1 Level of Awareness of the Implementation of IE

Table 1 presents the mean and overall mean scores of the level of awareness of school heads and teachers regarding IE. The overall mean was 4.63 for school heads and 4.45 for teachers, indicating that school heads are "very fully aware," while teachers are "fully aware" of its implementation. The result indicates that school heads are more up to date on the nature of IE and how to implement it in their districts compared to teachers.

The results show that school heads are "very fully aware" that all children should study in regular classes and that IE benefits the social and emotional growth of students with disabilities. The findings support Hays (2015), who emphasised that school leaders' awareness and ability to adapt the government curriculum and teaching strategies are essential for the successful implementation of IE.

Conversely, both teachers and school heads are fully aware of the practicality of inclusion, the capacity of general educators to deliver specialised instruction, the school community's support for IE, and the availability of adequate resources and trained professionals. The results imply that, in terms of putting theory into practice, support from parents and the community is not evident in implementing IE, as perceived by the school heads. These statements are supported by a 42-year-old school head who stated:

"School heads recognise the practicality of inclusion and the role of teachers, parents and the community, showing their commitment to turning theory into practice and strengthening support for inclusive education."

The result corroborates the findings of Cluley et al. (2020), who identified that limited resources were a common concern regarding the successful implementation of IE. He strongly pointed out that in the past, inadequate resources were the cause of teachers' educational stress. This was testified to by one of the school heads to validate his awareness of the implementation of IE. A 45-year-old principal shared his experiences in implementing IE. He said:

“Educator stress would be reduced if there were minimal discrepancies between the availability of resources and educators’ perceived needs for those resources in the implementation of inclusive education in our district.”

This statement clearly depicts that school heads are aware that the availability of funds reduces the challenges of implementing IE. A 48-year-old principal said:

“Schools cannot cope with it as ordinary educators often have no training in inclusive teaching. As a result, they feel frustrated, helpless and disempowered.”

School heads noted that a lack of specialised training for teachers was observed in their district. This means that teachers must consider their training and abilities in handling students with learning difficulties. This statement was confirmed by one of the school heads:

“Most of the teachers have an inadequate training in inclusive education. This might be the reasons of the different issues and challenges in the implementation of inclusive education.”

In addition, teachers’ willingness to adapt instructional methods so that all students can learn in regular classrooms shows that the roles of both teachers and school heads need to be considered in the implementation of IE. The results show that teachers are “fully aware” that support, resources and their skills in handling students with learning disabilities can influence their teaching. Parsons et al. (2011) pointed out that teachers must adapt appropriate methods by instructionally integrating students’ activities along with learning difficulties.

In addition, Avramidis et al. (2000) view the inclusion of students with disabilities as both an equity and social justice issue, stressing that educators and administrators must continually reflect on how their schools uphold social justice for these learners. This was confirmed by one of the teachers:

“Any student, and all students, can learn in the general education classroom. Thus, regardless of their abilities and status, they need to be treated equally.”

Based on the informal interview, a 38-year-old SPED teacher mentioned:

“In order to make the implementation of inclusive successful, our classrooms must observe inclusivity to help our students with learning disabilities compared to our regular students.”

The teacher clearly stated that the classroom must be inclusive in nature. This aligns with the findings of Gilhool (2013), that inclusion refers to the practice of students with disabilities learning alongside their peers in general education classrooms. Further, teachers integrate students with disabilities into general classrooms, prepare to teach diverse learners using the standard curriculum, and

willingly collaborate with colleagues on inclusive practices. This was testified to by a school head:

“As school heads, we are very fully aware that teachers need their instructional responsibilities in terms of handling students with learning difficulties.”

Thus, teachers need to be aware of the importance of collaborating to enhance their inclusive teaching skills, supporting Kuyini and Boitumelo’s (2011) finding that teachers play a key role in advancing IE practices. Thus, training is essential to foster positive teacher attitudes towards children with disabilities, as these attitudes promote more effective inclusive programmes. However, Hodkinson (2010) notes that some teachers oppose inclusion for children with challenging behaviours, believing such learners should be excluded from mainstream schools.

The results align with Florian and Beaton (2021), who emphasised that IE cannot be realised without a strong commitment to developing an IE and training system. This suggests that teachers, school heads, parents and other stakeholders must share a clear and firm stance on IE. Further, the findings align with Hornby (2011), who surveyed mainstream teachers and found that positive attitudes towards educating students with disabilities were closely linked to the instructional methods used and the learners’ abilities in general education settings. Furthermore, choosing instructional methods must align with the goals of the students’ learning needs to make them more appropriate in the context of IE (Wardani et al., 2024). Both teachers and school heads must work together, as pointed out by the school head that:

“Teachers and school heads must work hand in hand in order to establish a good foundation of inclusive education. Moreover, the implementation of inclusive education must be patterned based from the level of awareness of the teachers, school heads and other stakeholders by integrating applicable teaching approaches.”

The findings suggest that effective IE depends on strong teacher–school head collaboration. As Cerna et al. (2021) note, positive teacher attitudes support effective practices, highlighting the need for all stakeholders to be aware of and united in implementing inclusion.

Table 1: The Level of Awareness of the School Heads and Teachers in the Implementation of IE

Level of Awareness in the Implementation of Inclusive Education	School Heads		Teachers	
	Mean	Level	Mean	Level
Overall Mean	4.63	VFA	4.45	FA

Legend: VFA- Very Fully Aware, FA-Fully Aware

3.2 Significant Differences in the Perceptions of Teachers and School Heads in the Implementation of IE

Table 2 indicates a significant variance in awareness levels of IE, with school heads reporting a mean of 4.63 and teachers reporting 4.45, respectively. The computed t-value of 2.939 and p-value of 0.004 reject the null hypothesis, confirming that school heads demonstrate a higher awareness than teachers. This implies the need for targeted capacity building and professional development programmes to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills, ensuring more consistent and effective implementation of IE.

On the contrary, the findings from Jardinez & Natividad (2024) explained that teachers must be aware of the congruency between their beliefs and practices in the implementation as one of the challenges in IE. Therefore, targeted professional development and continuous support for teachers are necessary to bridge this awareness gap and ensure cohesive, effective, IE practices across all levels of the school system. Moreover, IE policies and practices must be aligned with the actual awareness and preparedness levels of all stakeholders to foster a unified, well-informed and sustainable implementation across the educational landscape.

Table 2: Significant Differences Among School Heads and Teachers in the Implementation of IE

Respondents	Mean	Level	t-value	p-value	Remarks
School Heads	4.63	Very Fully Aware	2.939	0.004	Significantly Differed
Teachers	4.45	Fully Aware			

3.3 The Challenges Perceived by Teachers and School Heads in the Implementation of IE

Table 3 presents the means and the overall meaning of the challenges in implementing IE as perceived by school heads and teachers. The overall means were 3.41 for school heads and 3.62 for teachers, both interpreted as "moderately serious." This indicates that teachers affirmed the challenges experienced by school heads in implementing IE.

Table 3: The School Heads' and Teachers' Perceived Challenges in Implementing IE

Challenges in Implementing Inclusive Education	School Heads		Teachers	
	Mean	Level	Mean	Level
Overall Mean	3.41	MS	3.62	MS

Legend: MS=Moderately Serious

School heads identified functional transition programmes and teachers' preparation through continuing training as "very highly serious" challenges. The findings show that successful inclusion is unattainable without teachers' adequate preparation, skills and professional training to manage both disabled and non-disabled learners in one classroom. A 54-year-old school head mentioned these sentiments:

"In most schools, teachers manning or teaching the mainstream classes lack the training to handle inclusive classes. Teachers' colleges do not offer special needs education training. So, it is expected that when teachers deployed in public school, they have probably inadequate training in teaching or handling students with disabilities."

The school head's statement highlights systemic gaps in teacher preparation, noting that insufficient training and competencies hinder the effective implementation of IE and disadvantage both teachers and students. In addition, Teacher X, a 25-year-old teacher, pointed out:

"Ongoing professional development must be institutionalised to equip in-service teachers with the competencies required for inclusive classroom practices. Without these systemic reforms, inclusive education risks being implemented in name only, rather than in practice."

This implies that there is an urgent need for educational institutions and policymakers to reform pre-service teacher education by integrating comprehensive training in special needs education. It is very clear that IE will become successful if teachers have a professional background related to IE. This statement was supported by one of the SPED teachers:

"There were teachers who had unrelated skills and knowledge to the demand of the new curricular. In addition, teachers having inclusive skills and knowledge give them the status to be an inclusive teacher and confident in the regular schools."

In addition, as perceived by the school heads, the Functional Transition Programme (FTP) prevailed as one of the foremost challenges in the implementation of IE. This was testified to by the 45-year-old school head:

"The school head strictly monitors the programme and initiates FTP to identify the level of readiness of the students with learning disabilities. I need to point out how school transition programmes influence inclusive education in school. Thus, teachers looked at the students' skills before they include in the regular class."

Furthermore, school heads rated teachers' negative attitudes towards IE as a very serious constraint, indicating a significant barrier to its effective implementation. This was stressed by one of the teachers that:

"There are teachers who perceived that inclusive education is undesirable. Negative attitudes are just as obstructive as other barriers like physical barriers, limiting those with disabilities to participate fully in their learning."

The statement was confirmed by a school head that:

"The attitudes of parents, teachers and peers are decisive factors for successful inclusion. Negative attitudes are likened to decline in academic performance, dropping out of school or behaviour problems."

Moreover, Lambe and Bones (2017) noted that attitudes, once established, are difficult to alter; thus, fostering positive perceptions of inclusion before teaching can lead to more favourable attitudes towards implementing IE.

School heads identified very serious challenges to IE, including insufficient pre-service training, limited parental involvement and support, inadequate family orientation and lack of teacher support, all contributing to negative attitudes towards inclusion. A 35-year-old teacher stated her viewpoint that:

"I always encountered problems in terms of resources, instructional materials, approaches to be employed because I took Bachelor of Elementary Education and I have no background on how to handle students with disabilities and even the support of the parents."

This underscores the pressing need for targeted in-service training, accessible instructional materials and stronger collaboration with parents. These statements were supported by a school head:

"Without adequate support, teachers may find it difficult to implement inclusive practices effectively, potentially affecting the quality of education for learners with disabilities and creating challenges in managing students with learning difficulties."

This implies that training and exposure to the nature of teaching students with special educational needs affect the performance of the teachers in teaching students in SPED. Moreover, the statement of the teacher raises an issue that the assigned teachers in SPED must be graduate of a course that includes SPED classes.

The perception of school heads in terms of the challenges was confirmed by the teachers. It is clear that the integration of the FTP revealed serious challenges when implementing IE. This implies that FTP should be considered for both school heads and teachers. The impression above was emphasised by a school head:

“The programme must be properly monitored and quality assured. Thus, teachers who entail an in-service training have to be coordinated so they can enhance their skills and knowledge. If all teachers are informed of the changes in the education system, school effectiveness and the goals of reform education on inclusion are achieved as a result.”

The study’s findings align with Brennan and King (2022), who noted that challenges in implementing IE can stem from inadequate student skills, poorly timed learning activities and limited or overly controlled learning opportunities.

3.4 Significant Differences in the Perceptions of Teachers and School Heads Regarding the Challenges in the Implementation of IE

Table 4 reflects the significant differences in the perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding the challenges in implementing IE. The results show that teachers and school heads differ in their perceptions, and teachers felt they faced more challenges.

As reflected in the table, the school heads obtained a mean of 3.31, which denotes “moderately serious”, while the teachers obtained a mean of 3.62, which means “moderately serious”, regarding their perceptions of challenges in implementing IE. On the other hand, the t-value and p-value results were 2.065 and 0.043, respectively. The findings of the study confirm the statement by one of the teachers:

“Educators’ improved positive self-evaluation regarding the challenges and abilities to teach students with barriers to learning was associated with higher positive attitudes towards inclusive education must be manifested.”

This indicates that the teachers were very aware of the challenges faced by their school heads. Thus, the teachers should draw attention to these challenges and propose possible solutions to address them. In line with the findings, the findings highlight the significance of strategic planning and support systems for effective pedagogy in the context of IE (Ampo et al., 2025). In addition, one of the school heads testified:

“School systems must institutionalise platforms for teacher voices to be heard, recognise their lived experiences and equip them with both authority and resources to co-create solutions. Without this shift, inclusive education risks being undermined by top-down approaches that fail to address the realities in the classroom.”

The findings highlight that teachers should be recognised not only as implementers but also as key decision makers in IE. School systems need to create mechanisms that value teachers’ experiences and provide them with the authority and resources to develop solutions collaboratively. Without this, top-down approaches may compromise the effectiveness of IE (Avalos, 2020).

Table 4: Results of the Significant Differences in the Perceptions of Teachers and School Heads regarding the Challenges in Implementing IE

Respondents	Mean	Level	t-value	p-value	Remarks
School Heads	3.31	MS	2.065	0.043	Significantly Differed
Teachers	3.62	MS			

3.5 Mechanisms or Interventions to Improve the Roll-out and Information Dissemination on IE

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher found that the school heads and teachers' knowledge about IE was up to date. They are the grassroots implementers in schools. The researcher proposes the development and distribution of a contextualised awareness programme that highlights the salient features, principles and practical applications of IE. This programme would be tailored to the cultural, linguistic and educational context of the locality to ensure maximum relevance and impact. This intervention is titled Project Raising Equity Awareness and Dialogue (READ). This programme aims to improve the implementation of IE in public elementary schools and is composed of four salient parameters: strategies, programmes, activities and tasks, and resources (SPATR).

The proposed project would serve as a springboard for both teachers and school heads to introduce a positive outlook on IE in basic education. The programme stresses the importance of considering all forms of classroom activities for learners with special needs, such as instruction, providing them with relevant stimuli and engagement for learner retention (Tetteh et al., 2025). Moreover, Project READ could be the official platform for the DepEd to build a flagship programme to increase school heads and teachers' awareness of IE and identify the challenges in its implementation by proposing possible strategies and mechanisms to lessen them.

Table 5: The SPATR Components of Project READ for Advancing IE

Strategy (S)	Programme (P)	Activities & Tasks (A/T)	Resources / Budget (R)	Responsible	Timeline
1. Build stakeholder awareness of IE principles	Awareness & Advocacy Campaign	- Develop IEC (Inclusive Education Curriculum) materials - Conduct community seminars - Radio/FB posts - Initiate briefing packs for school heads	IEC design & printing, venue hire, speaker honoraria, media ad budget	Project Coordinator	Months 1-3
2. Strengthen teacher capacity for inclusive pedagogy	Teacher Capacity Building Programme	Design training modules, differentiated instruction and behaviour supports; deliver 2-day workshops; coaching/mentoring follow-ups	Trainer fees, training materials, stipends for coaches, travel	Training Lead / Master Trainers	Months 2-6 (workshop) + months 7-12 coaching
3. Improve classroom-level supports	Peer Support & Resource Hubs	Establish in-school peer support teams; create a resource bank; schedule pull-out tutoring when needed	Resource hub setup for low-cost assistive devices	School Inclusion Focal / Resource Officer	Months 3-9
4. Foster home-school-community collaboration	Dialogue & Partnership Programme	Regular parent-teacher forums; community inclusion dialogues; create referral pathways to social services	Venue, facilitation, info packs, referral directory	Community Liaison / Guidance Counsellor	Quarterly (Month 2 onward)
5. Address policy & barriers	Policy Review & Advocacy	Conduct policy gap analysis; draft school-level inclusion policy; workshop with division office for endorsement	Consultant fees (policy), printing, stakeholder workshop	Policy Lead / Researcher	Months 1-4
6. Ensure data-driven implementation	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning	Develop Monitoring & Evaluation tools; baseline and	Monitoring & Evaluation specialist,	M&E Officer	Baseline Month 1; midline M6;

Strategy (S)	Programme (P)	Activities & Tasks (A/T)	Resources / Budget (R)	Responsible	Timeline
		endline surveys; periodic classroom observations; data review workshops	data collection tools, analysis software, workshop costs		endline M12
7. Provide targeted learner supports	Individualised Support Programme	Screening for additional needs; develop Individual Support Plans; arrange targeted interventions (tutoring, therapy referrals)	Screening tools, small intervention fund, therapist/coach honoraria	Inclusion Teacher / School Nurse	Months 2-12
8. Sustain and scale effective practices	Institutionalisation & Scaling	Document best practices; create a sustainability plan; train master trainers; pilot replication in neighbouring schools	Documentation, workshops and small replication grants	Project Manager / Division Office	Months 9-12

This programme aims to enhance the roll-out and information dissemination of IE by increasing stakeholder awareness through localised, relevant and accessible educational materials. Thus, working with a systematic procedure plays a significant role in deciding teachers' productivity and their capacity for effective and successful implementation of IE (Cordova & Pantao, 2025). By providing clear, localised information, the project will help school heads, teachers, parents and community members better understand the goals and principles of IE. In addition, the intervention programme addresses the gap between what school leaders know and what teachers and other stakeholders may lack in terms of IE knowledge, leading to more unified implementation.

4. Conclusion

The study concludes that both school heads and teachers are knowledgeable about the principles, legal basis and pedagogy of IE, with school heads demonstrating a higher awareness. Thus, both teachers and school heads were fully aware of the context of IE in public elementary schools. However, effective implementation is hindered by challenges such as the absence of functional transition programmes and limited teacher professional development. This implies that problems in implementing IE were encountered and cannot be sidestepped. Hence, teachers face greater challenges, particularly in content knowledge, pedagogical skills and applying inclusive practices, highlighting their essential role and the difficulties they encounter as frontline implementers.

Therefore, school heads need to initiate mechanisms to lessen the challenges in implementing IE. School heads play an integral role in solving problems regarding the implementation of IE.

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