

**INCLUSION COMPETENCIES TO WORK WITH PUPILS HAVING
LEARNING DISABILITIES AMONG PRIVATE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL TEACHERS IN ILOILO CITY**

A DISSERTATION

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**NANETTE G. DE LEON
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by

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the inclusion competencies of private elementary school teachers working with students with disabilities in Iloilo City. The study further aimed to determine the relationship of teachers' level of knowledge and the attitude and skills level or inclusion competencies of teachers in teaching pupils with learning disabilities. To determine the relationship between teachers' attitude level and the skills level of teachers teaching pupils with learning disabilities.

It was hypothesized that inclusion competencies of teachers significantly vary according to their personal characteristics such as age, gender and civil status; teaching related factors such as length of experience, educational qualification, class size and amount of training; level of knowledge and attitudes of teachers toward pupils with learning disabilities.

This descriptive study utilized a survey method of all full time teachers in private elementary schools, a modified version of the questioners by Matsheka (2002) that was adapted from The Scale of Knowledge and Skills for Instruction and Management of Students with Disabilities by Daniels and Vaughn (1999) was utilized. The SKSIMD- PC

by Bayani- Lopez (2004) was used to measure the inclusion competencies of primary public school teachers in Metro Iloilo City Division schools.

Data obtained was processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for XP Version 13.0 statistical software. Frequency distribution, Variation- Analysis of Variance (ANOVA test), Z test – test for variance, Pearson Product Moment of Correlation and Partial Correlation were used as the main statistical tools used in data analysis.

Major Findings of the Study

Teachers teaching in private elementary schools were mostly female, single, and young adults. Most of the teachers were graduates of BS Ed with other majors, BS Ed with no SPED preparation and graduates of other courses. There was rapid turn over of teachers in the private school system that most of the teachers had limited experience. Most of the teachers were handling medium size classes (26 to 35 pupils/class).

The majority of the teachers had moderate knowledge about and in teaching pupils with learning disabilities, specifically in instruction content and practice, planning and managing the teaching and learning environment, managing students' behavior and social interactions, and identifying pupils with the learning disabilities. They were most knowledgeable about instructional content and practice (highest mean), while they were least knowledgeable about identifying pupils with learning disabilities (lowest mean). The majority of the teachers considered knowledge about the instruction content and practice, planning and managing the teaching and learning environment, managing students' behavior and social interactions, and identifying pupils with the learning disabilities are very important.

The teachers' attitudes towards pupils with learning disabilities are generally fair to favorable, their mean level of attitude ranging from 3.15 for tolerance of certain behaviors to 3.4 for accepting children with learning disabilities. Regarding acceptance of pupils with learning disabilities, they appreciate most pupils who have good work habits. Even if pupils appear to be unmotivated, or they create disturbance in the classroom or manifest inappropriate behaviors, the teachers try to understand them. The majority are fairly tolerant of most of the behaviors of pupils with learning difficulties, but they are most tolerant of those with reading difficulties.

The teacher's inclusion competencies or skills in instruction, planning and managing teaching and managing student behavior are also moderate. Their mean level of skills was 2.42 for instructional content and practice, 3.14 for planning and managing teaching and learning and 3.11 for managing student behavior and social interaction.

The teachers' level of knowledge, level of attitude, and inclusion competencies do not significantly differ according to their personal characteristics such as, age, gender and civil status and the teaching related factor such as length of experience, educational qualification, class size, and amount of training the teachers receive. Irrespective of their personal and work-related characteristics, their knowledge about children with learning difficulties was moderate. Similarly, their attitude towards the children and how to deal with them are also fairly favorable, and their skills or inclusion competencies are moderate, irrespective of their age, gender and civil status and the teaching related factor such as length of experience, educational qualification, class size, and amount of training the teachers received.

The teachers' level of knowledge about children with learning disabilities is significantly correlated with their attitude towards them/in teaching them and their skills level or inclusion competencies. Moreover, their level of attitude is also significantly correlated with their skills. Even when attitude is controlled, the relationship between the teachers' level of knowledge and inclusion competencies is also remained to be high, positive and statistically significant. Teachers who are knowledgeable about children with learning disabilities and in teaching them, tended to have favorable attitude towards them and to have better inclusion competencies or skills in teaching them

Conclusions

The teachers' level of knowledge about pupils with learning disabilities tend to influence their attitudes towards them and in handling them. This affirms the importance of content and pedagogical knowledge of teachers in order for them to effectively teach children with disabilities. A teacher who is competent in content knowledge will have better skills in teaching the pupils with learning disabilities.

The fact that teachers' knowledge about children with learning disabilities is markedly correlated with their skills in teaching them implies that know what to teach the children and they are able to focus and assess their student's mind and make appropriate instructional adaptations. Teachers with adequate knowledge in pedagogy can understand their pupils better and accept them as they are. Teachers of general education are expected to understand their pupils regardless, whether they are normal or with special needs.

Acceptance of the children with learning disabilities, understanding them, and having a high level of tolerance of their unique behaviors are very important in order for a teacher to be effective. On the other hand, knowing what to teach them and how to teach

them remains to be an important factors that can determine how skilled or competent a teacher can be.