

Status of the implementation of inclusive education in the elementary schools of tabaco city division

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Abstract

The study examined the status of inclusive education implementation in elementary schools in Tabaco City Division for the school year 2022-2023. It assessed key areas, including child find, assessment, program options, curriculum modification, and parental involvement, while analyzing differences among school categories. Additionally, the study identified challenges faced by school heads and teachers and proposed an action plan to address these issues. A quantitative survey method was utilized, drawing data from school heads and SPED coordinators, supplemented by literature reviews. The research aimed to provide insights into inclusive education practices and potential improvements for better accessibility and effectiveness.

Findings indicated that inclusive education implementation was highly evident across schools, with larger schools demonstrating stronger adoption compared to smaller ones. While child find, assessment, curriculum modification, and parental involvement showed statistically significant differences among school categories, program options remained consistent. Key challenges identified included parental denial of children's special needs, lack of appropriate assessment tools, limited SPED centers, confusion in curriculum modifications, and inadequate parental involvement. These obstacles hindered the optimal execution of inclusive education, affecting both students and educators. Understanding these issues allowed for the development of targeted strategies to enhance inclusion.

To address these concerns, the study recommended intensifying parental education, prioritizing teacher training, modifying assessment tools, and implementing an enhanced action plan. Strengthening institutional policies and fostering greater community participation were emphasized to support inclusive education efforts. Future studies could further investigate teacher competencies, mainstreaming readiness, and the impact of SPED training on instructional effectiveness, ensuring continuous improvement in inclusive education implementation.

Keywords: Inclusive Education ; Curriculum Modification; Parental Involvement; Special Education (SPED)

1. Introduction

Inclusive Education for All (EFA) in the Philippines aims to provide equal learning opportunities for children and youth with special needs. The policy strengthens the educational system's capacity to accommodate diverse learners, ensuring their integration into mainstream education. Special education programs focus on maximizing students' potential, fostering self-reliance, and promoting social inclusion. The Department of Education (DepEd) supports inclusive education through legal frameworks such as Republic Act No. 10533 and DepEd Order No. 72, highlighting the urgency of addressing barriers to education, particularly for marginalized children in rural areas. These policies underscore the government's commitment to inclusive, equitable learning.

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DepEd further reinforced its inclusive education initiatives through DepEd Order No. 21, integrating inclusion principles within the K to 12 Basic Education Program. Additionally, Republic Act No. 11650 established a national policy safeguarding the rights of learners with disabilities, ensuring their unrestricted access to education. This act promotes a community-based approach that encourages collaboration among schools, parents, and organizations. Inclusive education is evolving in the Philippines, with efforts to transition special needs learners into mainstream classes gradually. Schools implement shadow teaching and curriculum modifications to facilitate a seamless integration process, preparing students for lifelong learning and career opportunities.

One of the government's major strategies is teacher training. DepEd collaborates with UNESCO to equip teachers with the skills to accommodate diverse learners effectively. Training covers instructional adaptations, behavior management, and creating inclusive learning environments. Ensuring educators are fully prepared enhances the quality of education, benefiting both special needs learners and the broader school community. Inclusive education fosters empathy, social development, and respect among students from various backgrounds, promoting acceptance and equal participation in learning activities.

Regional Office V and the Schools Division Office of Tabaco City actively conduct training programs for educators managing learners with special needs. These initiatives include Filipino Sign Language workshops, specialized learning packets, and pedagogy enhancement. Division-wide efforts ensure that SNED learners receive the appropriate support while also preparing them for transition programs that promote independence. Schools offering SNED classes receive direct supervision from focal personnel to align teaching methods with learners' needs. These efforts solidify institutional commitment to inclusive education and equitable access to learning opportunities.

This study assesses the status of inclusive education implementation in elementary schools within Tabaco City Division for the school year 2022-2023. It aims to identify gaps in current programs and propose solutions to enhance inclusive learning practices. Addressing implementation challenges ensures that learners with disabilities are empowered, independent, and capable contributors to their communities. By refining the SNED curriculum and intervention strategies, educators can provide meaningful support, allowing every child, regardless of disability, to thrive academically and socially. The researcher advocates an action plan that strengthens inclusive education frameworks and policies, ensuring no child is left behind.

2. Conclusions

Inclusive Education for All (EFA) in the Philippines ensures equal learning opportunities for children with special needs by integrating them into mainstream education through various legal frameworks, including Republic Act No. 10533 and DepEd Orders No. 72 and 21. Republic Act No. 11650 further guarantees accessibility and support for learners with disabilities. The government prioritizes teacher training, collaborating with UNESCO to enhance instructional strategies for diverse learners. Regional initiatives, such as training programs in Tabaco City, strengthen implementation efforts. This study evaluates inclusive education in Tabaco City Division, identifying gaps and proposing solutions to enhance learning accessibility and effectiveness.

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