

Original Article

Awareness And Preparedness of Teachers in the Implementation of Inclusive Education

Alimusa Mauga Minandang^{1*}

1. Secondary School Teacher, Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Philippines.

* Correspondence: minandangalimusa@gmail.com

Abstract: “No Bangsamoro children shall be left behind” is the mantra of Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education which means that implementing inclusive education is a key for that to happen. Teachers were the one who will make the successful along the way. Consequently, the study determined the level of awareness and preparedness of teachers in Lanao Del Sur II in terms of knowledge, attitudes, skills and strategies in the implementation of inclusive education. The output of the study is the training program for teachers and support, coordination and partnership of other stakeholders to enhance the implementation of inclusive education to become successful. The study used mixed methods of study using convergent where quantitative and qualitative techniques of data collection were simultaneously done. Frequency distribution, percentage, weighted mean and standard deviation were used as statistical tools of the study. The crucial disclosure of the investigation revealed that in quantitative results, teachers of Lanao Del Sur II had a very high awareness and high preparedness in the implementation of inclusive education. However, in qualitative results, there is a minimal awareness and knowledge, somewhat preparedness in terms of attitude and low preparedness in terms of skills and strategies. In any case, they still need exposures like training, workshops and seminars because some of them had never attended any inclusive seminars. They are agreeable in embracing the inclusive education program. However, they need support from other stakeholders for the resources needed upon the implementation of inclusive education program.

Keywords: Awareness, preparedness of teachers, implementation, inclusive education

1. INTRODUCTION

Inclusivity is one of the seven key principles in the Bangsamoro Education Code promulgates by the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) in addressing the learning gap opportunities among the Bangsamoro learners specifically between the typical students and the learners with special education needs. It is a stepping stone of catering the agency’s slogan that “No Bangsamoro children shall be left behind”, wherein all Bangsamoro children should have an equal opportunity to learn all the basic and essential skills in order to become a productive citizen of the Bangsamoro region and the country as a whole regardless of their status in life [1]. According to the [2] inclusivity means that everyone shall have access to quality education regardless of beliefs, cultures, ethnicities, genders, needs, and abilities, and socio-economic backgrounds. Its means that Bangsamoro learners shall have rights to receive quality education as their rights-based. Furthermore, inclusive education is about putting the right to education into action by including all learners, respecting their diverse needs, abilities and characteristics and eliminating all

forms of discrimination in the learning environment [3.] The valuing of education is inscribed in the country's fundamental law, the 1987 Philippine Constitution in which article XIV, section 1 states "The state shall protect and promote the rights of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all," which includes the rights of students with special education needs [4]. With it, in order to mainstream the inclusivity principles, the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) has conducted a survey among the school's division offices in the entire region with 22,003 children surveyed wherein 2,000 of them were from the Division of Lanao del Sur II. The survey found out that 52% were female and 48% were male, 20% of them were not studying or attending school and 33% of the children were experiencing functional difficulty in at least one domain of functioning in which anxiety and depression including making friends with others, accepting change, and controlling behavior were found the most domain with difficulty experiencing among the Bangsamoro learners. Most of the learners who were involved in that difficulty were in age category of 5 to 7 years old which alarmed the region to promote inclusive education in all schools' division office so the students would be able to address their individual difficulties and so the teachers are the main implementer of accommodating those difficulties [5]. Furthermore, the Community and Family Services International (CFSI) held a three day Special Education Training on August 24-26, 2021 for teachers from the municipalities of Ditsaan Ragain, Marantao, Piagapo, Butig, Lumbayanague, and Masiu in order to capacitate the and/or improve the knowledge and skills of the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) teachers in implementing inclusive education to different learners particularly those needing special education but not limited to children with a mobility problem, down syndrome, autism, visual and speech impairment, among others. They were trained in order to strengthen the implementation of inclusive education in the Lanao Del Sur [6]. Nevertheless, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2021) defined inclusive education as a child's right, not a privilege. Inclusion elevates education for all in quality and equitable way, without exclusion, including those who may be potentially marginalized by needs of learning or social position. It also quoted that "Children who have learn together, learn to live together" in which the aims of the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) corresponds to the promotion of inclusivity among the learners so they could be able to learn to live together despite their differences with each other [7]. Furthermore, [8] pointed out that inclusive education aims to mainstream students with special needs in a flexible learning environment for acquiring quality education that optimizes their potential for holistic development. He further added that it goal depends upon teachers who can attain inclusivity in the educational system by shaping positive values, providing knowledge, and developing the skills of exceptional students to cope with life's challenges. Hence, the awareness and preparedness of teachers should be considered knowing that teachers are one who is agent in catering the learners in implementing inclusive education and address their difficulties of learning. According to the study of [9] it was found out that teachers' awareness for learners with special education needs for effective inclusive education were extremely high which means that most of the teachers handling a numerous number of learners were highly aware that they were having learners with special education needs. On the other hand, [10-12] found out in their study that the preparedness of teachers in terms of knowledge aspect was less prepared in regards to implementation of inclusive education. It was also revealed that there is no significant relationship between the preparedness of teachers in implementing inclusive education to their experiences in teaching. An author [13] pointed out also that the awareness on inclusive education in schools is still at an infancy stage, educational institutions are somewhat skeptical about having both normal and special children studying in the same classroom. They added also that in circumstances, where a former excluded child is given admission into a mainstream

classroom, the outcome of the action is questionable. It is the thoughts that the ministry of education wanted to address in implementing inclusive education. In addition, [14] revealed that the public-school teachers in the Department of Education (DepEd) have not fully embraced the inclusive education in which teachers are more aware of the need for updated special education training and were favorable to inclusive education but needs to expose to training, seminars and workshops. It was also found out that teachers were skilled on a personal level but were needed teaching strategies in handling the mainstream pupils. Unfortunately, there is no study being conducted in the area of Lanao del Sur covering the issues and concerns in terms of the awareness and preparedness of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education providing that the province has a number of mainstream pupils which then enrolled in the school but not being recognized as a learner with special education needs. Thus, the study was highly interested to deep through the awareness and preparedness of teachers in the Division of Lanao del Sur II considering that implementing inclusive education is one of the priorities of the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE). The study aimed to determine the level of awareness and preparedness of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education so as to give feedbacks and implications on how it has to be implemented based on the results of the study. The study determined the level of awareness and preparedness of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study used the mixed methods study design. The study was conducted in the Schools Division of Lanao del Sur II under the supervision and leadership of Dr. Rubina M. Macabunar who covers the at least 21 Municipalities in Lanao del Sur II as such: Kapatagan, Balabagan, Malabang, Picong, Calanogas, Pualas, Ganassi, Madalum, Madamba, Bacolod-Kalawi, Tugaya, Pagayawan, Binidayan, Bayang, Marogong, Tubaran, Lumbac a Unayan, Lumbatan, Lumbayanague, Sultan Dumalondong and Butig, Lanao del Sur. The respondents of the study were the teachers in schools of Division of Lanao del Sur II.

Table 01: Distribution of Respondents in Schools of Division of Lanao Del Sur II

Schools Division of Lanao del Sur II	Total Population	Sample Population
Lanao del Sur II- A		
Elementary	1,420	134
Secondary	691	65
Lanao del Sur II- B		
Elementary	990	94
Secondary	732	69
Total	3,833	362

In selecting the sample size of the respondents in the study, the study used snowball method of sampling technique in disseminating the survey questionnaires to respondents. In terms of qualitative data, 10 respondents were being interviewed which was divided from every delegation such as two participants were from Illiana Bay covered the municipality of Kapatagan and Balabagan, two respondents were from Pagilidan covered the municipality of Malabang, Picong and Calanogas, another two were from Central Unayan covered the municipality of Tubaran, Pagayawan, Bayang, Binidayan and Marogong, two participants were from West Masiu Unayan covered the municipality of Pualas, Ganassi, Madamba, Madalum, Bacolod-Kalawi and Tugaya and last two participants were from East Unayan covered the municipality of Lumbac Unayan, Lumbatan, Lumbayanague, Sultan Dumalondong and Butig. Slovin's

formula with a confidence level of 95% and a margin error of 0.05 was used also to calculate the appropriate number of sample size require from a population. The results from the sample size would most likely reflect the awareness and preparedness of the entire teachers in Lanao del Sur II. The study instrument utilized in the study was adapted-modified questionnaires for the awareness of teachers and adapted for the preparedness of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education. Thus, the validity of the instrument was reliable and at the same time valid since it was already proven by previous study. A four-point Likert Scale was used to answer each item on Part II and Part III in the questionnaires with the corresponding descriptive equivalent: 4 – Strongly Agree, 3 – Agree, 2- Disagree, and 1 – Strongly Disagree. In data gathering, a visit courtesy and permission letter were given personally to the office of the school's division superintendent of the Division of Lanao del Sur II located in Malabang, Lanao del Sur in order to conduct the study. The statistical tools used in analyzing and interpreting the data were the frequency and percentage distribution, weighted arithmetic mean, and standard deviation. First, frequency and percentage were used in determining the demographic profiles of the respondents. The formula of frequency and percentage distribution was indicated below:

$$P = (F/N) \times 100$$

Where:

P = Percentage (%)

F = frequency, the total number of respondents N = number of cases / samples

Second, weighted mean was used also in determining and describing the level of awareness and preparedness of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education. The formula of weighted mean was indicated below:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$$

Where, $\bar{x}$ stands for the weighted arithmetic mean; f is the frequency; and x stands for the weight. Lastly, Standard Deviation was used to measure of the amount of variation and indicated that the values tend to be close to the mean. The formula was as follows:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x_i - \mu)^2}{N}}$$

Where:

σ = Population standard deviation N = the size of population

x_i = each value from the population

μ = the population mean

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 02: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Male	50	14	2
Female	312	86	1
Total	362	100	

Table 01 presents the distribution of frequency and percentage according to the gender of the respondents. As shown in the table, majority of the respondents (312) or 86% were composed of female teachers and only 50 or 14% of them were male. It indicates that female teachers were dominated in the school's division of Lanao del Sur II. The finding agreed to the findings of [15] as he revealed that 89% of his respondents were female. He also added that there are more female teachers employed in the Department of Education (DepEd) than males. Additionally, [16] revealed in their study that female teachers (91.9%) were dominated in the province of Aurora, Philippines than male teachers. Furthermore, [17] revealed also that female gender was dominated in the field of teaching profession. An author [18] also pointed out in his study that based on the census findings revealed that in the Philippines, woman is dominated in profession of teaching. There are more female school teachers both in the public elementary and secondary schools than male. The findings also supported by the study of [19] found out that female teachers were dominant in education system for a reason that female were more committed and passionate in terms of influencing and upbringing the children considering that they were also a mother who enact an adequate role model among the children.

Table 03: Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
College Graduate	279	77	1
Masters Units	53	14	2
MA Graduate	21	6	3
PhD Units	7	2	4
PhD Graduate	2	1	5
Total	362	100	

These results show that majority of the teachers' respondents did not go further in their education. According to [19] in their study entitled "The Reasons for Teacher's Preference for Master's Degree" found out that the reasons for teachers of not getting into master's degree was because of economic conditions, insufficient time, interview and language-barrier and the institution-based reason that prevent teachers to not complete its master's degree.

Table 04: Specialization

Specialization	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
General	98	27	1
Early Childhood	54	15	2
Science	24	7	7.5
Special Education	1	1	11
English	40	11.	4
TLE	32	9	5

Filipino	41	11	3
Mathematics	24	7	7.5
Social Studies	18	4	9
Agricultural Education	27	7	6
Others, Please Specify	3	1	10
Total	362	100	

It is contrary to the article issued by the [20] that the ideal student-teacher ratio for SPED is 15:1, however, Gatchalian stressed that there are only 4,000 SPED teachers. It indicates that 126,598 learners with disabilities, the present student-teacher ratio are 31.1.

Table 05: Number of Inclusive Seminars Attended

Specialization	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Never	100	28	2
Once	104	29	1
Twice	57	16	4
Thrice	22	6	5
More	79	21	3
Total	362	100	

According to [21] that one of the main difficulties in implementing inclusive education is that general education teachers receive insufficient training to work in complex teaching contexts and to respond to the unique needs of all the pupils in their classroom.

Table 06: Level of Awareness in the Implementation of Inclusive Education

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION	SD
1. Implementing inclusive education is catering both typical and atypical students in one classroom.	3.27	Strongly agree	Very high awareness	5.51
2. Teachers need training, seminars and workshop to uplift their knowledge in implementing inclusive education.	3.43	Strongly agree	Very high awareness	6.61
3. Teachers need strategies and accommodation in handling and implementing inclusive education.	3.64	Strongly agree	Very high awareness	6.23
4. Implementing inclusive education requires a lot of resources and materials in accommodating learners with special education needs.	3.60	Strongly agree	Very high awareness	6.26

5. Teachers are familiar with the term "Inclusive Education".	3.26	Strongly agree	Very high awareness	5.37
6. Inclusive education is educating all types of learners in a single classroom	3.48	Strongly agree	Very high awareness	6.62
7. Teachers need to identify students with special education needs in classroom.	3.62	Strongly agree	Very high awareness	6.31
8. Learners with special education needs had difficulty in getting better marks.	3.07	Agree	High awareness	6.28
9. Government and school heads should invest and support teachers in implementing inclusive education.	3.62	Strongly agree	Very high awareness	6.29
10. Teachers should have faculty development programs in implementing inclusive education.	3.61	Strongly agree	Very high awareness	6.25
OVERALL MEAN	3.46	Strongly agree	Very high awareness	6.17

However, the finding of [22] do not agreed as he found out on his study that not all teachers of secondary school are aware of the term "Inclusive Education", many teachers are not even aware that all types of students could be educated together. They were not aware that children with special education needs could also do better in education and score higher than normal children if they are provided with proper educational needs and means.

Table 07: Level of Preparedness in terms of Knowledge

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION	SD
1. I understand about the Inclusive Education Program.	3.47	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.64
2. I have taken courses related to the Special Need Students in Inclusive Education Program.	2.47	Disagree	Low preparedness	7.28
3. The courses given helped me to carry Out the Inclusive Education Program at school.	2.50	Disagree	Low preparedness	7.37
4. I know the goals of the students being Placed in the Inclusive Education Program.	3.16	Agree	High preparedness	4.72
5. I know the right program for students with special needs is either a Full Inclusive Program or a Partial Inclusive Program.	3.14	Agree	High preparedness	4.32
6. I know the characteristics and criteria of students that need to be included.	3.18	Agree	High preparedness	4.61
7. I know the duties of resource teachers and escort teachers that can be used during the Inclusive Education program.	3.39	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.55
8. I know my role as a special education Teacher in the Inclusive Education Program.	3.18	Agree	High preparedness	4.65
9. I need to collaborate with mainstream Teachers in implementing the Inclusive Education Program.	3.45	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.60
10. I know the problems and ways to overcome in implementing the Inclusive Education Program in schools.	3.17	Agree	High preparedness	4.42
OVERALL MEAN	3.11	Agree	High preparedness	5.72

Table 08: Level of Preparedness in terms of Attitude Level

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION	SD
1. I am happy to be part to implement the Inclusive Education Program in schools.	3.30	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	5.79
2. I understand what needs to be done for the implementation of the Inclusive Education Program.	3.20	Agree	High preparedness	4.64
3. I feel the Inclusive Education Program is very easy to implement in schools.	2.33	Disagree	Low preparedness	7.32
4. The implementation of the Inclusive Education Program does not pressure me.	2.41	Disagree	Low preparedness	6.99
5. I am trying to understand the Inclusive Education Program.	3.48	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.66
6. I have good relationship with mainstream teachers involved in the Inclusive Education Program.	2.92	Agree	High preparedness	6.46
7. I am interested in learning more about the Inclusive Education Program in the future.	3.35	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.15
8. I am always looking for Resources related to the Inclusive Education Program.	3.26	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	5.62
9. I agree that the Inclusive Education Program can increase self-confidence and bring positive change for special education students	3.27	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	5.38
10. I am proud to be an education teacher involved in the Inclusive Education Program.	3.29	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	5.70
OVERALL MEAN	3.08	Agree	High preparedness	6.07

Table 08 presents the level of preparedness of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education in terms of attitude level. As shown in the table, first in rank is the fifth indicators “I am trying to understand the Inclusive Education Program” which obtained a mean of 3.48 and SD of 6.66 with a descriptive rating of “strongly agree” and is qualitatively interpreted as “very high preparedness”. It implies that teachers had a very high preparedness of trying to understand the inclusive education program. it agreed with the finding of [23] that teachers were trying to understand inclusive education programs. It is also similar to [24] that special education teachers strive to meet the needs of special education students.

Table 09: Level of Preparedness in terms of Skills

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION	SD
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1. I use discussion as a teaching strategy for the subject that I teach.	3.56	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.58
2. I support the need for teachers to know one basic sign language.	3.25	Agree	High preparedness	5.24
3. I develop my personal skills such as empathy, patience, and love in teaching mainstreamed pupils.	3.36	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.17
4. I am flexible in dealing with students' needs (due dates, absences, make-up exams)	3.23	Agree	Very high preparedness	4.93
5. I develop the Individualized Education Program (IEPs) for each mainstream student.	3.22	Agree	High preparedness	4.73
6. I adapt lessons to meet the needs of students.	3.56	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.55
7. I implement Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) throughout the school year to reflect Students' progress and goals.	3.00	Agree	High preparedness	6.58
8. I teach and mentor students as a class in small groups and one-On-one.	3.28	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	5.53
9. I assess students' skills to Determine their needs and to develop teaching plans.	3.32	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	5.87
10. I prepare and help students Transition from grade to grade and after graduation.	3.25	Agree	High preparedness	5.13
OVERALL MEAN	3.30	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	5.73

Table 10: Level of Preparedness in terms of Strategy

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION	SD
1. Special education teachers need to be given exposure such as training and courses to implement the Inclusive Education Program more effectively.	3.60	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.43
2. Administrators need to be aware and involved to ensure successful implementation of the Inclusive Education Program in schools.	3.53	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.54
3. Special education teachers need to have good relationships with mainstream teachers who will be involved in the Inclusive Education Program.	3.54	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.56
4. Special Education students need to have good relationships with mainstream students involved in the inclusive programs.	3.55	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.55

5. Ongoing exposure needs to be given to mainstream students who are involved with special education students.	3.51	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.66
6. The involvement of non-governmental organizations is necessary to support the success of the program.	3.48	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.62
7. The provision of appropriate classrooms, furniture and textbooks is necessary in implementing the Inclusive Education Program.	3.52	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.69
8. Special education teachers need to work with subject teachers in mainstream classrooms to diversify more effective teaching methods.	3.49	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.62
9. Parties involved in inclusive programs may provide additional classes for special education students who are sitting for examinations.	3.23	Agree	High preparedness	5.06
10. A mentoring program between special education teachers and mainstream teachers is necessary to exchange views and suggestions for improve	3.52	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.59
OVERALL MEAN	3.50	Strongly agree	Very high preparedness	6.43

An author [25] revealed that a high level of agreement for the strategy aspect which also in line with finding that addressed all the content in co-teaching component has an impact on teachers understanding in setting goals, addressing challenges and also adapting teaching strategies to be used in the inclusive classrooms. An author [26] added also that teaching and learning strategies should be given priority in designing the inclusive education based on the student's needs and following the development of teaching techniques in education sphere. To determine the attitude level of the teachers towards the implementation of inclusive education, they have been asked about their experiences in having learners with special education needs in their classroom and how they view them as learners with special education needs. Both T2 and T7 expressed that having those learners with special education needs were challenged for them and at the same time a blessing because they can also learn from them. That agreed to Kaur, J. and Arora, B. (2014) upon saying that inclusion is about making sure that each and every student feels welcome and that their unique needs and learning styles are attended to and valued. They further added that the philosophy behind inclusive education is to promote opportunities for all children to participate to learn and have equal treatment, irrespective of their mental and physical abilities. It indicates that other teachers were technically problematic in catering the learners with special education needs to include them in the regular classroom for a reason that not all could be in same level of learning performance which made the teachers feel hard to embrace inclusive education. It is relevant to findings of [27] that there are factors influence teachers' attitudes towards inclusion by expressing negative attitude due to factors such the severity of the disabilities and the students with special needs, lack of training and knowledge on inclusive process and concepts, and the general class size. The factor seems to be the problems experienced by the teachers as it revealed her thoughts that it would be difficult to cater the learners with special education needs with the regular students at the same time. It was further revealed that teachers expressed a sense of

fear when dealing with students with severe level of disabilities and when class size was larger. Their response indicates that their attitude towards the learners with special education needs were very good to the point that they view them as needed to be provided a support and accommodations according to their needs and treat them fairly without discrimination. That view is in accordance with the Salamanca Statement that special attention should be paid to the needs of children and youth with severe or multiple disabilities. They have same rights as others in the community to the achievement of maximum independence as adults and should be educated to the best of their potential towards the end. Accordingly, the guiding principle that informs in the Salamanca Statement Framework is that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. Thirdly, to determine their skill in the implementation of inclusive education, teachers were asked about how they assist learners with special education needs and their comment about the preparation given to them during training in handling learners with special education needs in inclusive education. It indicates that resources and equipment were very essential in terms of assisting the learners with special education needs despite being skillful with teachers on handling learners with special education needs—it would be very difficult for them to do so when there are no resources to be provided according to the needs of the learners with special education needs. An author [28] found out that in meeting individual student's needs, the educators described challenges they have faced involving meeting the needs of individual students and finding the "balance" between supporting the students to participate in class activity and meeting that individual academic needs. Educators felt only somewhat prepared to individualize and pace instruction and provide accommodations for students with significant disabilities in inclusive setting. An author [29] found in her study that working one-on-one with the students allowed both teachers to create specific plans with their students to help them be successful. For their comment about preparations during training in handling learners with special education needs, T4 and T6 expressed their comment by saying that there is a need for cooperation with other stakeholders like the community, parents, Local Government Units, and other stakeholders that could help with the success implementation of inclusive education. Teachers were not able to do it alone, therefore additional support particularly the school administrators, parents and LGUs so that they could easily raise their concerns towards the better implementation of the inclusive education program. An author [30,31] found out that limited engagement with the local leaders and key stakeholders were considered as barriers in implementing a comprehensive inclusive education. An author [32] revealed in their findings that most common problems encountered by the school and teachers were the in-denial mental state of parents. They further revealed that conducting an orientation to the parents and tapping the LGUs for financial assistance to support the program were strategies in addressing the problems encountered in the Special Education programs. According to the Salamanca Statement, to fully realize the goal of successful education of children with special education needs is not the task of the Ministries of Education and schools alone. It requires the cooperation of families, and the mobilization of the community and voluntary organizations as well as the support of the public at large. Local administration should encourage community participation by giving support to representative associations and inviting them to take part in decision-making. It added also that mobilizing and monitoring mechanisms composed of local civil administration, educational, health and development authorities, community leaders and voluntary organization should be established in geographical areas small enough to ensure meaningful community participation. Lastly, to determine the strategy level of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education, teachers were asked about their practices in inclusive education in their classroom, how they address the barriers in inclusive education to promote inclusive education and their suggestion that may help or improve the implementation of inclusive education. For their practices in inclusive education, It indicates that teachers were recognizing, acknowledging, supporting and welcoming the individual capacity of their learners with special

education needs. Teachers were able to provide learning experiences according to their needs which help them to succeed and have positive impact to their overall learning experiences. As Howard Gardner made mentioned in his Multiple Intelligence theory that different intelligences may be independent abilities—a person can be low in one domain area but high in another. All of us possess the intelligence but in varying degrees of strength and skill. In addition, The Vygotsky's concept of zone of proximal development helped the learners to be able to determine and perform the concepts better which they cannot understand through themselves with the guidance and assistance of teachers. That is where it formed the teacher-learner relationship which formed the zone of proximal development where teachers are the assistance and guidance that lead the learners learn things around them and would help to accomplish the tasks assigned to them. For addressing the barriers in promoting inclusive education, that indicates that teachers should be prioritized in terms of making them well- equipped through sending them into various seminars and trainings relevant to the inclusive education program so that they would be able to get ready in addressing the issues and concerns upon the implementation of inclusive education. In addition, giving them the necessary resources during implementation would also loosen up their difficulty in embracing inclusive education together with the cooperation of other stakeholders so that they could help hand in hand towards achieving an effective and efficient implementation of inclusive education. An author [33] revealed their findings that the practices of implementing inclusive education lays on the teachers' perspective, skills, and experience on the technique in teaching and accommodating students with disability in mainstream context of learning institution. Equipping teachers with the basic of inclusive education by disseminating the concept of Universal Design Learning and Differentiated Instructional Strategies should impose since the numbers of students' diversity are growing.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the gathered data and information, the following major findings are formulated such as: First the demographic profiles of the respondents revealed that majority of the teachers in Lanao del Sur II were female (86%) and college graduate (77%); one of them (1%) was specialized in Special Education and had rare number of inclusive seminars attended during their teaching career (29%). Second, the teachers' awareness in the implementation of inclusive education had a very high awareness with an average weighted mean of 3.46 and standard deviation of 6.17 which means that teachers of Lanao Del Sur II were very much aware regarding the implementation of inclusive education. Third, the teachers' preparedness in the implementation of inclusive education in terms of skills (WM: 3.30 and SD: 5.73) and strategies (WM: 3.50 and SD: 6.43) shown a very high preparedness while in terms of knowledge (WM: 3.11 and SD: 5.72) and attitude (WM: 3.08 and SD: 6.07) were in high preparedness. Overall, the respondents were in level of high preparedness in the implementation of inclusive education. Lastly, the qualitative data revealed that there is minimal awareness and knowledge of the respondents in terms of their understanding about inclusive education. Some of them expressed an attitude of getting challenged and problematic in handling learners with special education needs but show willingness to take the challenge. They have expressed also that lacking of resources and equipment, not enough trainings and seminars, lack of support from the other stakeholders like parental involvement and Local Government Units coordination with the schools had affect their skills and strategies to fully embrace the implementation of inclusive education. Based on the findings of the study, that has established the following conclusions such as: Majority of the teachers' respondents were female, college graduate and had rare number of inclusive seminars attended. The study concludes that in terms of quantitative results, there is a very high awareness and high preparedness of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education. However, in terms of qualitative results, there is a minimal awareness and knowledge of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education based on its concept, their level of

preparedness in terms of attitude had shown somewhat preparedness but low preparedness in terms of skill and strategies. Furthermore, it also concludes that the success implementation of inclusive education relies on teachers along with their awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills and strategies. Teachers who are the main implementer of the inclusive education program shall be provided with a support from other involved parties in order to fully embrace and implement the program effectively. Therefore, teachers should have a relevant trainings and seminars so they could be more exposed to the program as well as be able to provide accommodations and resources so that they could be able to uplift their skills and strategies in handling learners with special education needs and at the same time be able to assist learners according to their needs. Finally, these results implied that there is a need for more studies related to the especially the challenges encountered during implementation of inclusive education, parental awareness and involvement in the inclusive education and the assessment of stakeholder's participation in the inclusive education program so that inclusive education would be implemented effectively and efficiently for the following school years.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were formulated as such:

- First, according to Greek philosopher Heraclitus "Change is the only that does not change." Therefore, teachers are encouraged to go further studies through enrolling masters and doctoral degree related to educational management so that they would be able to have deeper understanding and uplift their professionalism in scrutinizing the teaching-learning process especially that inclusive education is being implemented i.e. to cater the learners with special education needs combining to regular learners in one classroom.
- Making themselves prepared all the time does not mean being always around in the four corners of the classroom but go beyond their comfort zone through continuing learning like pursuing graduate studies and getting updated to the new trends in education so that they would be well-equipped in their field all the time.
- Second, the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education should have conducted a further assessment regarding the implementation of inclusive education particularly by securing that the concerns and needs of teachers would be addressed like providing more exposure through seminars, workshops and trainings relative to the program and be able to provide the necessary resources needed by their learners with special education needs so that the teachers would not be able to get stressed in catering those learners with special education needs. Third, the parents of the learners with special education needs who serve as partners of teacher in enhancing the learning capability of their children are advised to cooperate, coordinate and communicate with the school particularly the teachers so that they would be able to discuss on how to address the necessary things needed by the learners with special education needs so that their children would learn accordingly. Their attachment for the learning of their children by assisting the teachers from time to time will help boosting the learning capability of the learners with special education needs knowing that parents are the first teachers of their children.
- Fourth, the schools division superintendent and school heads are encouraged to conduct an orientation about the implementation of inclusive education by inviting other stakeholders particularly the Local Government Units and other concerned agencies by explaining how badly need their support and coordination with the program for its successful implementation especially in terms of financial assistance needed to cater the proper equipment and materials

required for every learner with special education needs in order for them to learn effectively and efficiently.

- Then, the Local Government Units (LGUs) and other concerned agencies are advised to provide help and assistance with the implementation of inclusive education program so that the teachers will not get problematic in providing necessary materials upon catering the learners with special education needs. It's always lack of resources that hinders the successful implementation of every program like the inclusive education.
- Lastly, the future studies are encouraged to conduct a further study relative to inclusive education with an additional coverage such as challenges encountered during implementation of inclusive education, parental awareness and involvement in the inclusive education and the assessment of stakeholder's participation in the inclusive education program so that inclusive education would be implemented successfully for the following years.

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