



BEST PRACTICES OF EFFECTIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOL SETTINGS FOR IMPROVING LEARNING OUTCOMES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to identify best practices in effective special education programs in mainstream school settings within the Division of Pampanga to improve the learning outcomes of students with disabilities during the School Year 2025-2026. The researcher used a descriptive-quantitative research design, employing a questionnaire for SPED teacher-respondents selected through total enumeration. Descriptive statistics were used to characterize the respondents' profiles, identify best practices in special education programs, and assess learning outcomes, while inferential analyses were used to determine significant differences, relationships, and predictors of learning outcomes. The findings revealed that the special education teacher-respondents are mostly aged 36–40 years old, with the majority having Master's degrees, 11 to 13 years of teaching experience, and 6 to 15 training/seminars attended related to special education. There is strong positive agreement that Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), differentiated instruction, collaboration between educators, assistive technology, and peer support are the best practices consistently implemented in mainstream school settings. There is also a strong positive agreement that students with disabilities are showing encouraging learning results. A moderate positive relationship ($r = 0.420$) was found between best practices and learning outcomes. Collaboration among educators ($\beta = -0.358$, $p = 0.007$), assistive technology ($\beta = 0.484$, $p = 0.001$), and peer support ($\beta = 0.372$, $p = 0.007$) significantly predict learning outcomes.

KEYWORDS: Special Education Programs; Mainstream School Settings; Students With Disabilities; Learning Outcomes; Assistive Technology; Peer Support

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The participation and meaningful learning of students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms are central to inclusive education. Recent research indicates that inclusive education is more likely to be successful when supported by positive teacher–student relationships, favorable teacher attitudes, responsive instructional practices, accessibility, and appropriate learning support (Subban et al., 2022). Evidence-based practices that support the academic, social, and emotional outcomes of students with disabilities include peer-mediated instruction, systematic instruction, visual and video supports, prompting, and self-management (Strnadová et al., 2024).

Effective, inclusive education also requires teacher competence. A systematic review of 75 publications indexed in Scopus and Web of Science emphasized the need to develop specific teacher competencies and provide appropriate professional development to facilitate the inclusion of students with special educational needs (Nistal Anta et al., 2024). Assistive technology can also enhance access to instruction and learning tasks. In the Philippines, Campado et al. (2023) examined the use of AT in the educational process for students with SEN and disabilities, emphasizing its potential to improve classroom teaching.

Republic Act No. 11650 (2022), or the Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act, mandates by providing appropriate

educational services and support to learners with disabilities in the Philippines. The law promotes individual planning and the provision of services according to the specific requirements of learners. These provision underscore the significance of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), differentiated instruction, teacher collaboration, assistive technology, and other support systems in inclusive educational environments.

Within this policy and research context, the present study focuses on the implementation of effective special education practices by SPED teachers in mainstream schools in the Schools Division of Pampanga. IEPs establish individualized learning objectives and appropriate accommodations; differentiated instruction enables teachers to adapt lessons and learning activities to learners' needs; collaboration with general education teachers promotes shared responsibility for instruction; assistive technology facilitates access to learning; and peer support can promote social interaction and participation. Collectively, these practices provide instructional, technological, collaborative, and social support for students with disabilities.

Effective special education programs in mainstream school settings, therefore, require coordinated instructional, technological, collaborative, and social support. Examining these practices in relation to the learning outcomes of students with disabilities can provide a basis for understanding the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream classrooms and for strengthening practices that support



learners' academic performance, social integration, and emotional wellbeing.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study aims to identify the best practices of effective special education programs in mainstream school settings to improve the learning outcomes of students with disabilities, as perceived by SPED teachers.

1. What is the profile of the SPED teacher-respondents in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience in SPED, and trainings/seminars attended related to special education?
2. What are the best practices of special education programs in mainstream school settings as perceived by SPED teachers in terms of Individualized Education Plans (IEPS), differentiated instruction, collaboration between educators, assistive technology, and peer support?
3. What is the level of learning outcomes of students with disabilities as perceived by SPED teachers in terms of academic performance, social skills development, and emotional wellbeing?
4. Is there a significant difference in the best practices of special education programs in mainstream school settings as perceived by SPED teachers when grouped according to respondents' profiles?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the best practices of special education programs in mainstream school settings and the learning outcomes of students with disabilities?

1.3 Hypotheses

1. H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the perceived implementation of best practices in special education programs in mainstream school settings in terms of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), differentiated instruction, collaboration with general education teachers, assistive technology, and peer support when SPED teachers are grouped according to their profile variables.

2. H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the best practices of special education programs in mainstream school settings and the learning outcomes of students with disabilities.

1.4 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study examined the relationship between selected special education practices and the learning outcomes of students with disabilities, as perceived by SPED teachers in selected public elementary schools in the Schools Division of Pampanga during School Year 2025–2026. The practices examined were Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), differentiated instruction, teacher collaboration, assistive technology, and peer support.

The study was limited to selected public elementary schools and SPED teachers. Parents, students, general education teachers, and administrators were excluded. Private schools, other school divisions, administrative governance, infrastructure, budget allocation, parental involvement, and long-term learner outcomes were beyond the scope of the study. As the data were based on teachers' perceptions collected at a

single point in time, the findings reflect perceived practices and learning outcomes and do not establish causal effects.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES AND STUDIES

2.1 Thematic Review of Related Literature

An inclusive education approach means that regular schools need to have educational and supportive infrastructure designed to cater to the needs of children with special needs from academic, social, and developmental perspectives. Some of the latest research has proven that inclusion requires a combination of personalized learning, differentiated instruction, teachers' collaboration, assistive technologies, and social supports. The latest systematic literature review of works indexed in Scopus and Web of Science demonstrated that these strategies may help achieve academic, social, and psychological goals. However, poor teacher training, insufficient funds, and student-to-teacher ratios are some obstacles that may hinder this process (Wang, 2026).

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a structured approach for assessing students' educational needs, setting educational goals, and determining the accommodations and assistance required. As reported by McKenna et al. (2024), 13 peer-reviewed papers have been summarized, highlighting problems with the IEP and its implementation and emphasizing the importance of meaningful, individualized planning rather than treating IEPs as mere documentation.

Differentiated education is an opportunity for teachers to modify instruction, materials, processes, and support based on students' individual abilities. As described by AM et al. (2023), 49 core papers were systematically reviewed and meta-analyzed, along with 63 effect sizes, demonstrating that differentiated teaching has a significant positive effect on learning. Inclusive mainstream education is another example of personalized, scaffolded learning for children with special educational needs (Wang, 2026).

Another important element in excellent special education programs is teacher collaboration. General and special education teachers work together to plan collaboratively, coordinate instructional support, and problem-solve. A meta-synthesis of co-teaching research suggested collaboration between general and special teachers may assist students with and without disabilities in general education classes, but also identified issues related to role clarity and implementation (Strogilos et al., 2023). Recent studies also indicate that teacher cooperation and partnerships with other education professionals are critical features of inclusive support systems (Wang, 2026).

Assistive Technology (AT) may also provide instructional access for learners with disabilities. The comprehensive research by Fernández-Batanero et al. (2022) shows that technological support can help with educational access and inclusion. However, certain obstacles hinder its proper use, including teacher education and resource constraints.



Peer-mediated help also promotes inclusive learning by increasing engagement, participation, and pleasant social connections amongst students with and without impairments. A systematic review of reviews, including 357 unique studies, reported positive social and behavioral outcomes for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, with the largest effects in peer engagement and in initiating social interaction in peer-mediated interventions (Bowman-Perrott et al., 2023). Additionally, research suggests that peer-mediated interventions help children without disabilities who are actively involved, without impeding the social benefits of inclusive peer participation (Travers & Carter, 2022).

2.2 Review of Empirical Studies

According to recent empirical studies, the success of including children with special needs in the classroom setting depends on integrating all five categories of support: instructional, collaborative, technological, social, and customized. According to Aftab et al., teachers hold a positive attitude toward co-teaching, differentiation, and Universal Design for Learning.

While the implementation of IEPs is an important element of the educational process for addressing individual students' needs, Kurth et al. (2022) found no differences in IEP quality across school contexts, and a large proportion did not meet quality standards.

In addition, the literature suggests differentiated instruction as an appropriate, responsive strategy for accommodating learners. It has been shown that teachers employ different strategies and activities, along with diverse assessment techniques, to meet the varied needs of their pupils. Nonetheless, several constraints may affect the process, including lack of time, classroom Management, resources, and professional training. These findings suggest that competent teachers and sufficient institutional support promote differentiated learning.

The involvement of both partners' teachers is as critical in a co-located inclusive education setting. Increased support for students with diverse needs can be attained through collaborative planning and problem-solving, and in-service support, as proposed by research on co-teaching; nevertheless, unclear teacher roles and planning time, as well as differences in training experience among teachers, can serve as constraints to their co-operation (Aftab et al., 2023).

Assistive Technology (AT) may facilitate easier accessibility and participation of learners. The results of research done in the Philippines by Campado et al. (2023) indicate that teachers believed that the use of AT motivated learners; however, AT could not be accessed due to the following factors: resource inadequacy, technical issues, learner behavior, and teacher incompetence.

Peer-mediated methods and studies of inclusive environments further indicate that inclusion encompasses academic, social, and emotional outcomes. Peer-mediated interventions can promote social engagement and interaction among students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (Bowman-Perrott et al., 2023). However, academic effects may vary

according to classroom and instructional conditions. Therefore, the effectiveness of inclusive education should be evaluated using broader outcomes than academic achievement alone.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The research is based on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory. The two ideas provide complementary perspectives for understanding effective methods in special education in general schools.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Rose and Meyer (2002) first introduced UDL as a framework for highly flexible learning environments that accommodate student heterogeneity. It relies on multiple forms of interaction, representation, action, and expression, which provide opportunities for students to both learn and demonstrate their learning in various ways. Numerous studies have recently proposed UD L as an alternative to ameliorate access and inclusion in education.

Social constructivism theory. Vygotsky (1978) found that social interaction and cooperation lead learners to acquire knowledge, and that external help is provided by more knowledgeable others, such as teachers. ZPD is the gap between a student's abilities and their performance when they act alone. His abilities are in cooperation with more mature individuals (such as the teacher). This leads the teacher to use effective methods of teacher teamwork, team teaching, peer support, and scaffolding activities that can foster further learning in students, thereby achieving effective participation and higher learning outcomes for all students in the classroom.

Inclusionary Special Education: IEP, Social constructivist, and UDL. The use of UDL, coupled with social constructivism as the overarching theoretical framework, to examine the impact of IEP-driven instruction, differentiated instruction, team and collaborative teaching practices, assistive technology, and peer instruction on academic, social, and emotional gains for students with disabilities within inclusive mainstream classroom environments.

2.4 Research Gap and Justification

Although earlier research has pointed to the usefulness of IEPs, differentiated teaching, teacher collaboration, assistive technology, and peer support in inclusive education, these practices have been studied in isolation. There is less data on their collective implementation and association with the academic, social, and emotional results of kids with disabilities in mainstream classes.

In the Philippine context, prior research has addressed issues in teacher training, resources, policy implementation, and collaboration, but localized empirical evidence from the Schools Division of Pampanga remains lacking. Also, there is a need for quantitative research that captures the viewpoints of SPED instructors who directly implement these approaches.

The present study aims to address these gaps by examining the five practices and their associations with students' academic achievement, social integration, and emotional wellbeing. Universal Design for Learning and Social Constructivist



Theory guide this study, which provides localized evidence to support professional development, program improvement, and more effective inclusive education practices in mainstream schools in the Philippines.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design to identify the best practices of effective special education programs in mainstream school settings and their perceived relationship to the learning outcomes of students with disabilities, as perceived by SPED teachers. Descriptive research is the systematic description of the characteristics, conditions, and patterns of a phenomenon without manipulating variables, and quantitative research involves the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data to describe variables and examine their relationships (Slater & Hasson, 2024).

This study presented the profile of SPED teachers about their age, sex, highest level of education, number of years of experience in teaching SPED, and the training or seminars they have attended. This study also measured five special education practices: IEPs, differentiated instruction, collaboration with general education teachers, assistive technology, and peer support. It also identified the learning outcomes of students with disabilities in terms of academic performance, social skills, and emotional wellbeing. This design enabled the researcher to determine the current use of these practices and the possible relationships among the variables without inferring causation.

Population, Sampling Techniques, and Research Locale

The study utilized 60 SPED teachers in 15 public elementary schools offering SPED programs in the Schools Division of Pampanga for the SY 2025-2026. The sampling technique used is total enumeration, whereby all SPED teachers identified within the study's scope are included.

The study was conducted in the Schools Division of Pampanga, DepEd Region III. The schools were selected for providing special and inclusive education to learners with disabilities through tailored instruction, specialized learning materials, and other auxiliary services. The site was selected to explore the effects of implementing IEPs, differentiation, teacher collaboration, assistive technology, and peer support on students' academic performance.

Research Instrument

The research used a questionnaire developed by the researcher, comprising three parts. Part 1 involved the demographic characteristics of the SPED teachers, including age, gender, level of education, SPED teaching experience, and training or seminars taken related to SPED teaching. Part 2 involved the investigation of five special education practices, namely: IEP, differentiated instruction, teacher collaboration, assistive technology, and peer assistance. Lastly, Part 3 included an evaluation of students' perceived learning outcomes in

academic, social, and emotional areas. There were seven Likert scale statements in Parts 2 and 3 for every variable.

Validity and Reliability Measures

Validity and reliability of the researcher-made questionnaire were determined. Content validity was assessed by education and special education experts to ensure that the items were clear, relevant, and suitable for achieving the study's purpose. Pilot testing was conducted, and the instrument's internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Items that satisfied the criterion of acceptable reliability were kept.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher gathered the data systematically by obtaining permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of Pampanga and the school heads. With permission in place, consent was sought from the SPED teacher-respondents, who were provided with all the information about the study.

The researcher administered the authorized questionnaires to the respondents, and adequate time was provided for them to respond. The surveys were collected, checked, and prepared for analysis. Then the data were encoded and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Conclusions, findings and recommendations were formed from the study of the data.

Data Management and Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected was reviewed, coded, cleaned, and validated before being processed in SPSS. Descriptive statistics were employed to present the profiles of the respondents, the special education procedures implemented, and the reported learning outcomes. These included frequency counts, percentages, mean, and weighted mean.

Inferential analysis applied the proper test of difference to discover differences in practices based on the profile of respondents. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (r) was used to analyze the link between special education practices and students' learning outcomes, and multiple regression analysis was conducted to discover which practices were significant predictors of the outcomes. All inference tests were conducted at the 0.05 level of significance.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the SPED teacher-respondents in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience in SPED, and trainings/seminars attended related to special education.

As indicated in **Table 1** below, the majority of respondents were 36-40 years old ($f = 31$; 51.7%), while the majority were male (55.0%, $f = 33$). With regard to the highest education attained, the largest number was among respondents with master's degrees (68.3%, $f = 41$). Most of the respondents have 11-13 years of teaching experience in SPED (56.7%, $f = 34$), and the highest number attended 6-10 SPED-related trainings/seminars (48.3%, $f = 29$).



Table 1
Profile of the kindergarten teachers

		f	%
Age	25 years and below	1	1.7
	26 - 30 years old	3	5.0
	31 - 35 years old	6	10.0
	36 - 40 years old	31	51.7
	41 - 45 years old	8	13.3
	46 - 50 years old	4	6.7
	51 - 55 years old	5	8.3
	56 years old and above	2	3.3
	Total	60	100.0
Sex	Male	33	55.0
	Female	27	45.0
	Total	60	100.0
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	6	10.0
	With Master's Units	41	68.3
	Master's Degree Graduate	8	13.3
	With Doctoral Units	4	6.7
	Doctoral Degree Graduate	1	1.7
	Total	60	100.0
Years of Teaching Experience	1 - 3 years	1	1.7
	4 - 6 years	9	15.0
	7 - 10 years	14	23.3
	11 - 13 years	34	56.7
	14 - 16 years	2	3.3
	Total	60	100.0
Trainings/Seminars Attended related to Special Education	Below 5	1	1.7
	6 - 10	29	48.3
	11 -15	20	33.3
	16 - 20	9	15.0
	21 - 30	1	1.7
	Total	60	100.0

This supports the argument for including teacher characteristics and professional development factors in a study of perceptions of best practices in SPED. Notably, a previous study (Aftab et al., 2023) examined the contributions of teacher and workplace characteristics to perceptions of inclusion, while another study (Kilag et al., 2025) identified teacher training and insufficient resources as impediments to the successful implementation of SPED in the Philippine educational landscape.

Composite Mean on the best practices of special education programs in mainstream school settings as perceived by SPED teachers in terms of Individualized Education Plans (IEPS), differentiated instruction, collaboration between educators, assistive technology, and peer support.

Table 2

Composite table on the best practices of special education programs in mainstream school settings as perceived by SPED teachers

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Individualized Education Plans (IEPS)	3.63	0.41	Strongly Agree
Differentiated Instruction	3.61	0.45	Strongly Agree
Collaboration Between Educators	3.62	0.47	Strongly Agree
Assistive Technology	3.56	0.38	Strongly Agree
Peer Support	3.60	0.52	Strongly Agree
Best Practices of Special Education Programs In Mainstream School Settings	3.61	0.31	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4 (3.50 - 4.00) – Strongly Agree 2 (1.50 - 2.49) – Disagree
3 (2.50 - 3.49) – Agree 1 (1.00 - 1.49) – Strongly Disagree

As shown in **Table 2**, the five domains of special education practices were generally highly agreed upon, with a mean of 3.61 (SD = 0.31) across the overall practice area. IEPs were

rated with the highest mean score, followed by collaboration between school personnel, differentiated instructions, peers, and technology support, with the following mean scores: 3.63



(SD = 0.41), 3.62 (SD = 0.47), 3.61 (SD = 0.45), 3.60 (SD = 0.52), and 3.56 (SD = 0.38), respectively. Therefore, there is a consistently high implementation rating of the practice among special education practices in mainstream school settings, with technology being a comparatively lower-rated area.

The aforementioned result is consistent with several studies in the literature that address differentiated instruction, co-teaching, technology application, and peer assistance for inclusive education, all of which have significant benefits, especially differentiated instruction, which has been shown to significantly influence teaching and learning. In spite of the fact that the impacts of teaching and learning are clear. Asriadi et al (2023) find a beneficial impact of differentiated instruction learning in the classroom. Furthermore, Vembye et al. (2024) have found literature in favor of collaborative and co-teaching approaches to teaching. Fernández-Batanero et al. (2022) found that the use of technology can contribute to accessibility and inclusion, but there are certain barriers to implementing such

technology. Recent studies by Martin et al. (2026) have found that peer support is a well-documented practice for peer interaction and students' academic engagement.

Composite Mean on the level of learning outcomes of students with disabilities as perceived by SPED teachers in terms of academic performance, social skills development, and emotional wellbeing.

As shown in Table 3, SPED teachers have a very strong agreement regarding the perceived level of learning outcomes of learners with special needs (M=3.58, SD=0.41). Emotional wellbeing obtained the greatest worth (M=3.65, SD=0.40) among the different other two constructs, achievement in studies (M=3.54, SD=0.61) and development of social skills (M=3.54, SD=0.54) respectively, individually also support study related issues i.e. Offering academic support have scored highest (M=3.73, SD=0.52) and getting indulged in various activities of academic like recitation and writing found the most lowest (M=3.47, SD=0.65).

Table 3

Composite table on the level of learning outcomes of students with disabilities as perceived by SPED teachers

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Academic Performance	3.54	0.61	Strongly Agree
Social Skills Development	3.54	0.54	Strongly Agree
Emotional Well-Being	3.65	0.40	Strongly Agree
Level of Learning Outcomes of Students with Disabilities	3.58	0.41	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4 (3.50 - 4.00) – Very High 2 (1.50 - 2.49) – Low
3 (2.50 - 3.49) – High 1 (1.00 - 1.49) – Very Low

This is aligned with what was established by Dalgaard et al. (2022), whose systematic review focused on the impact of inclusion on academic performance, socio-emotional development, and wellbeing, and noted the significance of considering multiple perspectives when measuring the learning outcomes of students with special education needs. Szumski et al. (2022) also found that an inclusive environment did not harm students' academic outcomes, underscoring the importance of inclusive learning environments for students.

Significant difference on the best practices of special education programs in mainstream school settings as perceived by SPED teachers in terms of Individualized Education Plans (IEPS), differentiated instruction, collaboration with general education teachers, assistive technology, and peer support and social skills development when grouped according to respondents' profile.

Table 4

Significant difference in the best practices of special education programs in mainstream school settings as perceived by SPED teachers when grouped according to respondents' profiles

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	Remarks
Age - Best Practices of Special Education Programs In Mainstream School Settings	4.115	60	0.000	Reject	Significant
Sex - Best Practices of Special Education Programs In Mainstream School Settings	-25.941	60	0.000	Reject	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment - Best Practices of Special Education Programs In Mainstream School Settings	-12.630	60	0.000	Reject	Significant
Years of Teaching Experience in SPED - Best Practices of Special Education Programs In Mainstream School Settings	-1.439	60	0.156	Accept	Not Significant
Trainings/Seminar Attended Related to SPED - Best Practices of Special Education Programs In Mainstream School Settings	-8.873	60	0.000	Reject	Significant



Table 4 shows that the results did not have significant impacts for some variables and that the perceived best practices in SPED were inconsistent across variables. The identification of SPED best practices, however, varied statistically significantly depending on the respondents' age group ($t=4.115$, $p<.001$), gender ($t=25.941$, $p<.001$), level of education ($t=12.630$, $p<.001$), and number of SPED seminars or training attended ($t=8.873$, $p<.001$). Based on these factors, the null hypothesis was rejected. The SPED teacher's years of teaching experience did not, however, differ statistically significantly ($t=1.439$, $p=.156$). As a result, the null hypothesis was not disproved.

This implies that age, number of training experiences, and teachers' characteristics influence teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education, which aligns with the findings of Kiely et al. (2022), who found that teachers' perceptions of inclusion vary with their work experience and teacher-training background. The present study found a trend similar to that of Tristani & Bassett-Gunter (2020), who reported that teachers' training programs improved teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and abilities regarding inclusion.

Significant relationship between the best practices of special education programs in mainstream school settings and the learning outcomes of students with disabilities.

Table 5.

Correlation between the best practices of special education programs in mainstream school settings and the learning outcomes of students with disabilities

		Level of Learning Outcomes of Students with Disabilities
Best Practices of Special Education Programs In Mainstream School Settings	Pearson Correlation	.420**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
	N	60

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table 5 shows the relationship between best practices in special education for inclusive classrooms and students' learning outcomes. Showed that there was a moderate positive relationship and significant relationship between special education's best practices in inclusive classrooms and learning results ($r=.420$, $p=.001$, $N=60$). This suggests that higher reported implementation of SPED best practices is associated with more favorable learning outcomes among students with disabilities. Accordingly, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship was rejected at the 0.01 level of significance. The finding indicates that the implementation of IEPs, differentiated instruction, collaboration among educators, assistive technology, and peer support is positively associated with students' learning outcomes. However, because the analysis is correlational, the findings do not establish a causal relationship between SPED best practices and learning outcomes.

The significant positive association demonstrated in the current research is supported by evidence that effective inclusive and special education strategies lead to positive outcomes for disabled students. According to King-Sears et al. (2021), a meta-analysis identified co-teaching as the strategy leading to higher academic achievement for students with disabilities. Likewise, in their systematic review, Fernández-Batanero et al. (2022) state that assistive technology can be used to improve the inclusion of students with disabilities. Furthermore, Stefanidis et al. (2023) identified academic achievement as one of the areas impacted by co-teaching classrooms. The results of these studies support the current finding ($r = .420$, $p = .001$), which indicates that the greater the implementation of SPED best practices, the better the expected learning outcomes. Still, correlation cannot be interpreted causally.

V. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

This research study identified best practices in special education programs in general schools and their influence on the learning outcomes of children with disabilities. It is found that SPED teachers strongly agree that IEPs, differentiation, collaboration, assistive technology, and peer interaction are present. Children with disabilities demonstrated good learning outcomes in academic achievement, social skill development, and emotional wellbeing. There were considerable differences in perceptions of best practices by age, gender, education level, and SPED training, whereas no differences were observed in teaching experience. A significant positive correlation between best practices and learning outcomes ($r = .420$, $p = .001$) was established. Moreover, there was a statistically significant prediction of learning outcomes by collaboration among educators, assistive technology, and peer interaction.

Conclusions

The study shows that successful SPED techniques are well implemented in mainstream school settings and are associated with favorable learning outcomes among children with disabilities. The demographic and professional characteristics of teachers, including age, sex, educational attainment, and SPED-related training, may influence their opinions of these activities. The substantial link between best practices and learning outcomes also implies that higher levels of implementation of inclusive practices are associated with better student outcomes. Educator cooperation, assistive technology, and peer support were important predictors of learning outcomes of the practices studied.

Recommendations

There is additional policy and research implications identified are that schools need to better implement SPED evidence-based practices, such as collaboration between teachers, use of



assistive technology, and peer support, administrators need to promote ongoing professional development, sufficient instruction resources, opportunities for SPED and general education teachers to work together, increase student participation and stakeholder use, and make sure students with disabilities have access to adequate support services. Subsequent researchers could replicate this investigation with a much larger, more diverse student population and use longitudinal designs or mixed methods.

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