

School Leadership Contribution in The Implementation of Inclusive Education

PURACAN ROSEMARIE B.

Abstract — This study explores the level of implementation of inclusive education and the contributions of leadership to its success in schools, with the ultimate goal of proposing a comprehensive training plan. Specifically, the research investigates the demographic profiles of school heads and teachers, the perceived level of inclusive education implementation, and the role of leadership in facilitating inclusive practices. The study examines key factors such as age, sex, educational attainment, years of experience, and participation in relevant training for both school heads and teachers. Findings reveal that while there is moderate commitment to inclusive education, gaps persist in policy execution, teacher support, and resource allocation, particularly for students with disabilities. Leadership is found to be strong in policy advocacy but weak in translating these policies into consistent practices and resource provision. Notably, the study identifies a significant relationship between the perceived leadership contribution and the implementation of inclusive education among teachers, suggesting a need for improved leadership practices. Based on these findings, the study proposes a training plan that emphasizes transformational leadership, hands-on professional development for teachers, and strategic resource management. The plan aims to equip school leaders and educators with the necessary skills to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students.

Keywords — *Inclusive Education, Leadership, Professional Development, School Culture, Training Plan*

I. Introduction

Inclusive education has emerged as a global priority, advocating for equitable learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or socioeconomic status. Central to this initiative is the role of transformative school leadership—defined by vision-driven, collaborative, and equity-focused practices—which has been widely recognized as a catalyst in fostering inclusive school environments (Sharma et al., 2021). However, despite international and national efforts, many educational institutions continue to face significant challenges in effectively implementing inclusive practices, particularly in under-resourced and marginalized communities.

In the Philippines, systemic issues such as teacher shortages, inadequate instructional materials, and high dropout rates—especially among disadvantaged learners—continue to hinder inclusive education efforts (DepEd, 2023). Socioeconomic challenges, geographic barriers, and recurring natural disasters further complicate these efforts. Although initiatives like the Inclusive Education Act and the Every Child a Reader Program have been launched (DepEd, 2022), their successful implementation depends largely on the capacity of school leaders to create a culture of inclusivity and collaboration (Guzman & Cruz, 2021).

Specifically, in the Congressional District 2 of Bohol, schools encounter distinct barriers including limited resources, varied learner needs, and difficulties in engaging families and communities (Santos et al., 2023). School leaders are at the forefront of addressing these issues through inclusive policy development, teacher support, and stakeholder collaboration. However, there remains a lack of research examining how transformative leadership strategies are applied in this context and what challenges leaders face in promoting inclusive education.

This study aims to investigate the strategies and challenges associated with transformative school leadership in fostering inclusive education in Congressional District 2 of Bohol. It seeks to understand how school leaders implement inclusive policies, allocate resources, and engage stakeholders to support diverse learners. The findings will provide context-specific insights that can guide leadership development and inform more effective policy implementation.

Despite inclusive education being widely acknowledged as a fundamental right, existing literature tends to focus on policy frameworks and teacher preparation, often overlooking the pivotal role of school leadership. There is a need for deeper exploration into how leadership decisions and styles directly influence inclusive practices, especially in diverse socio-economic contexts. This research addresses this gap by highlighting the critical contributions of school leaders in advancing inclusive education.

Statement of the Problem

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the:

1.1 school head

1.1.1 age;

1.1.2 sex;

1.1.3 highest educational attainment;

1.1.4 designation/position;

1.1.5 years of administrative experience; and

1.1.6 number of relevant trainings/seminars attended?

1.2 teachers

1.2.1 age;

1.2.2 sex;

- 1.2.3 highest educational attainment;
- 1.2.4 years of teaching experience; and
- 1.2.5 number of relevant trainings/seminars attended?

2. As perceived by the respondent groups, what is the level of implementation of inclusive education in terms of:

- 2.1 equity and student participation;
- 2.2 teacher empowerment and classroom practices; and
- 2.3 school culture and learning environment?

3. As perceived by the school heads, what is the level of leadership's contribution to inclusive education in terms of:

- 3.1 policy implementation and advocacy.
- 3.2 teacher support and professional development;
- 3.3 resource allocation and accessibility; and
- 3.4 collaboration and stakeholder engagement?

4. Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondent groups and the level of implementation of inclusive education?

5. Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the school heads and their perceived level of leadership's contribution to inclusive education?

6. Is there a significant relationship between the respondent groups perceived level of implementation of inclusive education and the perceived level of leadership's contribution?

7. Based on findings of the study, what training plan can be proposed?

II. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the contributions of school leadership to inclusive education. The descriptive aspect aimed to profile school heads based on age, sex, educational attainment, designation, administrative experience, and relevant training. It also assessed their involvement in policy implementation, teacher support, resource allocation, and stakeholder collaboration. Leadership effectiveness in promoting equity, student participation, teacher empowerment, and positive school culture was evaluated using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

The correlational component explored the relationship between school heads' demographic characteristics and their leadership contributions. It analyzed whether variables such as age, educational attainment, experience, and training attendance significantly influenced their roles in inclusive education. Inferential statistical tools, including Pearson correlation, Spearman's rank correlation, and chi-square tests, were used to determine these relationships. By integrating both descriptive and correlational methods, the study provided empirical insights and a comprehensive understanding of how leadership attributes impacted inclusive education. The findings served as a foundation for designing a targeted training plan to enhance the effectiveness of school heads in fostering inclusivity.

Procedure

The study began by securing approvals from the Schools Division Office and participating schools, along with obtaining ethical clearance to ensure research integrity and respondent confidentiality. Research instruments were developed, validated, and pilot-tested for reliability and clarity. School heads were selected as respondents through appropriate sampling techniques, and survey questionnaires were administered either in person or online. Informed consent was obtained, and participants were given ample time to complete the survey.

Collected data were reviewed for accuracy and encoded using statistical software such as SPSS or Excel. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze demographic profiles and leadership contributions, while inferential statistics, including Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, assessed relationships between leadership factors and inclusive education. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Findings were presented through tables and charts and compared with existing literature. Based on the results, a training plan was developed to address leadership gaps, validated by experts, and prepared for implementation.

Data Processing

To ensure accurate interpretation, the study followed a structured data processing and analysis procedure. Completed survey questionnaires were collected, checked for completeness and consistency, and any invalid responses were excluded. Quantitative data were encoded into SPSS or Microsoft Excel for analysis. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to analyze the demographic profile of school heads and assess their contributions to inclusive education.

Inferential analysis employed Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to examine relationships between demographic factors and leadership contributions, while t-tests and ANOVA identified significant differences in effectiveness. Results were presented using tables, charts, and graphs for clarity, and were compared with existing literature to highlight trends and gaps. Expert consultation and peer review validated the findings, which were then compiled into a final report with conclusions and a proposed training plan for stakeholder feedback and potential implementation.

III. Results and Discussion

This section presented the demographic profile of the school heads in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, designation or position, years of administrative experience, and the number of relevant trainings or seminars attended. The results are summarized below.

The demographic profile of the school heads revealed valuable insights into leadership capacity for implementing inclusive education. A majority (50.0%) were aged 46 and above, indicating a mature and experienced leadership group with substantial institutional knowledge. Younger school heads were fewer in number, suggesting the need for leadership succession planning and professional development.

The gender distribution showed that 67.9% of school heads were female, suggesting that women played a significant role in educational leadership within the district. Their approach to collaboration and community engagement may influence the implementation of inclusive policies.

In terms of educational attainment, 46.4% had earned Master’s units and 32.1% held a master’s degree, reflecting a strong academic foundation. However, the low percentage of Doctorate holders (3.6%) highlighted the need for continued professional development at higher academic levels.

The positions held by school heads included Principals (35.7%), School In-Charge (39.3%), and Head Teachers (14.3%), reflecting varied leadership roles with significant administrative responsibilities. These roles were critical for policy execution and fostering inclusive school environments.

Administrative experience varied, with 42.9% having 6–10 years of experience and others having between 1 to 15 years. This range suggested a balance of seasoned leaders and those in need of further mentoring or development in inclusive practices.

Regarding training, 42.9% had attended 4–6 relevant seminars, while 25.0% had joined 7–9. This indicated moderate exposure to professional development but underscored the need for more focused training on inclusive education, as only a small proportion (17.9%) had attended 10 or more seminars.

Table 2 Frequency Distribution on the demographic profile of the school heads

Age	Frequency	Percent
46>	14	50.0
41-45	7	25.0
36-40	2	7.1
31-35	5	17.9
Total	28	100.0
Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	9	32.1
Female	19	67.9
Total	28	100.0

Highest Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percent
Doctorate Degree	1	3.6
Doctorate Degree-Units	5	17.9
Master's degree	9	32.1
Master's Degree-units	13	46.4
Total	28	100.0
Designation/Position	Frequency	Percent
Principal	10	35.7
Head Teacher	4	14.3
School In-Charge	11	39.3
Teacher In-Charge	3	10.7
Total	28	100.0
Years of Administrative Experience	Frequency	Percent
16>	2	7.1
11-15	7	25.0
6-10	12	42.9
1-5	7	25.0
Total	28	100.0
Number of Relevant Trainings/Seminars Attended	Frequency	Percent
10>	5	17.9
7-9	7	25.0
4-6	12	42.9
1-3	4	14.3
Total	28	100.0

This section presents the demographic profile of teachers in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, and number of relevant trainings/seminars attended. The findings are shown below.

The age distribution of teachers revealed that the majority were in the 31–40 age range, with 27.0% aged 31–35 and 25.8% aged 36–40, indicating a predominantly mid-career teaching staff likely equipped with substantial experience and readiness for educational reform. A smaller proportion (8.8%) of younger teachers highlighted potential for growth and development, especially through mentorship and targeted training in inclusive practices.

Gender distribution showed that 93.7% of teachers were female, suggesting a strong female presence in the workforce. This gender imbalance may have influenced the implementation of inclusive education, particularly in promoting collaborative and community-based approaches to teaching.

In terms of educational attainment, 52.8% of teachers held a master's degree, 20.8% had completed Master's units, and 22.6% held a bachelor's degree, reflecting a generally well-qualified teaching staff. However, only a small percentage had Doctorate-level qualifications (3.7% combined), indicating room for academic advancement and deeper specialization in inclusive education.

Teachers held varied designations, with the majority serving as School In-Charge (39.3%) and Principals (35.7%), followed by Head Teachers (14.3%) and Teachers In-Charge (10.7%).

These roles suggested that many teachers were engaged in leadership and administrative responsibilities, positioning them to influence the planning and implementation of inclusive education strategies.

Administrative experience was also varied, with 32.7% having 6–10 years of experience, 28.9% with 11–15 years, and 22.6% with 1–5 years. This indicated a strong leadership base, although newer administrators would benefit from further mentoring and training to effectively lead inclusive initiatives.

In terms of professional development, 36.5% of teachers had attended 4–6 relevant trainings, 24.5% had attended 7–9, and 14.5% had attended more than 10. While many were engaged in training, the data suggested a need to expand access to specialized training in inclusive education to ensure broader competence in addressing diverse learner needs.

Table 3 Frequency Distribution on the demographic profile of teachers

Age	Frequency	Percent
46>	29	18.2
41-45	32	20.1
36-40	41	25.8
31-35	43	27.0
25-30	14	8.8
Total	159	100.0
Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	10	6.3
Female	149	93.7
Total	159	100.0
Highest Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percent
Doctorate Degree	1	.6
Doctorate Degree-Units	5	3.1
Master's degree	84	52.8
Master's Degree-units	33	20.8
Bachelor's Degree	36	22.6
Total	159	100.0
Designation/Position	Frequency	Percent
Principal	10	35.7
Head Teacher	4	14.3
School In-Charge	11	39.3
Teacher In-Charge	3	10.7
Total	28	100.0
Years of Administrative Experience	Frequency	Percent
16>	25	15.7
11-15	46	28.9
6-10	52	32.7
1-5	36	22.6
Total	159	100.0
Number of Relevant Trainings/Seminars Attended	Frequency	Percent
10>	23	14.5
7-9	39	24.5
4-6	58	36.5
1-3	39	24.5
Total	159	100.0

Table 7 presented teachers' perceptions of the level of implementation of inclusive education across three key indicators: Teacher Empowerment and Classroom Practices, School Culture and Learning Environment, and Equity and Student Participation. The overall grand mean was 3.32 with a standard deviation of 0.84, indicating a moderate level of implementation.

Among the three indicators, Teacher Empowerment and Classroom Practices received the highest mean score ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 0.83$), suggesting that schools effectively empowered teachers and supported inclusive teaching practices. This finding aligned with Ainscow and Sandill's (2022) emphasis on the importance of teacher support in inclusive education.

Lower mean scores were recorded for School Culture and Learning Environment ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.93$) and Equity and Student Participation ($M = 3.16$, $SD = 0.76$), reflecting areas needing further improvement. The standard deviations indicated variability in implementation across different schools, suggesting inconsistencies in how inclusive environments and equitable access were achieved.

Overall, the moderate implementation highlighted both strengths and gaps. While there was a clear commitment to inclusion, school heads needed to strengthen efforts in resource allocation, continuous teacher development, and the cultivation of an inclusive culture. As emphasized by Ainscow and Sandill (2022), sustained leadership was essential to fully realize the goals of inclusive education.

Table 7 Summary Results on The Level of implementation of inclusive education

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Teacher Empowerment and Classroom Practices	28	3.56	0.83	High
School Culture and Learning Environment	28	3.23	0.93	Moderate
Equity and Student Participation	28	3.16	0.76	Moderate
Grand Mean	28	3.32	0.84	moderate

Legend	Range	Description
	4.21-5.00	Very High
	3.41-4.20	High
	2.61-3.40	Moderate
	1.81-2.60	Low
	1.00-1.80	Very Low

Table 11 summarized the teachers' overall perception of the implementation of inclusive education, revealing a grand mean of 3.36 and a standard deviation of 0.85, which indicated a moderate level of implementation. Among the three domains, "Teacher Empowerment and Classroom Practices" had the highest mean (3.66), reflecting strong teacher engagement and support for inclusive education. This result aligned with Sharma and Salend's (2021) assertion that teacher empowerment was central to successful inclusive practices.

Meanwhile, "School Culture and Learning Environment" ($M = 3.21$) and "Equity and Student Participation" ($M = 3.20$) were also rated at a moderate level, suggesting that although inclusive education was recognized, systemic supports such as accessible environments, clear

policies, and stakeholder collaboration were inconsistently implemented. The relatively high standard deviations indicated variability in responses, pointing to unequal practices across different school contexts.

These findings reinforced Dyson and Howes’ (2022) position that school leaders must address structural barriers to inclusion—not only by empowering teachers, but also by leading policy reform and fostering sustainable cultural transformation within schools.

Table 11 Summary Results on teachers’ perception on The Level of implementation of inclusive education

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Teacher Empowerment and Classroom Practices	159	3.66	0.76	High
School Culture and Learning Environment	159	3.21	1.00	Moderate
Equity and Student Participation	159	3.20	0.78	Moderate
Grand Mean	159	3.36	0.85	moderate

Legend	Range	Description
	4.21-5.00	Very High
	3.41-4.20	High
	2.61-3.40	Moderate
	1.81-2.60	Low
	1.00-1.80	Very Low

Table 15 synthesized the school heads’ perceptions of their leadership contributions to inclusive education, revealing a grand mean of 3.34 and a standard deviation of 0.71, indicating a moderate level overall. The highest-rated domain was policy implementation and advocacy ($M = 3.50$, High), suggesting that school heads saw themselves as most effective in promoting inclusive policies.

In contrast, teacher support ($M = 3.18$) and resource allocation ($M = 3.34$) were only moderately implemented, highlighting areas that needed more strategic attention. The data suggested a gap between policy advocacy and actual execution, pointing to the need for leadership that not only promotes inclusive ideals but also translates them into concrete actions.

These findings supported the insights of Sharma and Saloviita (2021) and Ainscow and Messiou (2022), who emphasized that collaborative and stakeholder-driven leadership was critical to achieving inclusive goals. To move beyond moderate implementation, school heads were encouraged to strengthen stakeholder engagement, align resources with needs, and ensure that inclusive policies were meaningfully enacted in classrooms and communities.

Table 15 Summary Results on school heads’ perception on The Level of Leadership’s Contribution to Inclusive Education

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Policy Implementation and Advocacy	28	3.50	0.63	High
Resource Allocation and Accessibility	28	3.34	0.70	Moderate
Teacher Support and Professional Development	28	3.18	0.81	Moderate
Grand Mean	28	3.34	0.71	Moderate

Legend	Range	Description
	4.21-5.00	Very High
	3.41-4.20	High
	2.61-3.40	Moderate
	1.81-2.60	Low
	1.00-1.80	Very Low

Table 19 summarized teachers’ perceptions of leadership contributions to inclusive education, yielding a grand mean of 3.21 and a standard deviation of 0.65, which reflected a moderate overall level. The domain of Policy Implementation and Advocacy received the highest rating ($M = 3.42$), indicating that teachers viewed school leaders as effective advocates for inclusive education policies.

However, Resource Allocation ($M = 3.12$) and Teacher Support ($M = 3.08$) were rated only moderately, highlighting a gap between policy promotion and its practical execution. These results suggested that while leadership was strong in vision, there was a need for more operational support, such as training, mentoring, and provision of inclusive teaching resources.

The findings aligned with Ainscow and Messiou (2022), who stressed that inclusive success required not only policy leadership but also active stakeholder engagement and resource mobilization. The moderate ratings emphasized the importance of systemic, school-wide efforts to bridge the gap between inclusive ideals and classroom realities.

Table 19 Summary Results on teachers’ perception on The Level of Leadership’s Contribution to Inclusive Education

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Policy Implementation and Advocacy	159	3.42	0.59	High
Resource Allocation and Accessibility	159	3.12	0.56	Moderate
Teacher Support and Professional Development	159	3.08	0.80	Moderate
Grand Mean	159	3.21	0.65	Moderate

This section presents the test of relationship between the profile of school heads and the level of implementation of inclusive education. The result is displayed below.

Table 20 presented the model summary of the regression analysis examining the relationship between school heads’ profiles and the level of implementation of inclusive education. The R value of 0.474 indicated a moderate positive correlation, while the R Square of 0.224 revealed that only 22.4% of the variance in implementation could be explained by the school heads’ demographic and professional characteristics.

However, the Adjusted R Square dropped to 0.003, suggesting that when accounting for the number of predictors, the explanatory power of the model was minimal. The standard error of 0.40945 indicated moderate variability in prediction accuracy.

These findings suggested that although there was some correlation, the school heads' profiles had a limited predictive influence on the actual implementation of inclusive education. The results implied that other unmeasured factors—such as institutional culture, policy enforcement, or external support—likely played a greater role in determining the success of inclusive education practices.

Table 20 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.474	.224	.003	.40945

Table 21 presented the ANOVA results for the regression model examining the relationship between school heads' profiles and the implementation of inclusive education. The analysis yielded an F-value of 1.012 with a significance level of 0.444, which was greater than the 0.05 threshold, indicating that the model was not statistically significant.

As a result, the study failed to reject the null hypothesis, meaning there was no significant relationship between the school heads' demographic and professional profiles and the level of inclusive education implementation. The small regression sum of squares (1.018) compared to the residual sum of squares (3.521) supported this finding, showing that the model explained only a minimal portion of the total variance.

These results suggested that individual characteristics of school heads did not significantly affect how inclusive education was carried out in their schools. Instead, the findings highlighted the need to focus on broader systemic, institutional, and policy-driven factors when assessing leadership contributions to inclusive education.

Table 21 ANOVA Analysis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.018	6	.170	1.012	.444
	Residual	3.521	21	.168		
	Total	4.539	27			

Table 22 presented the multiple regression analysis examining the influence of school heads' profiles on the level of implementation of inclusive education. Among the six variables analyzed, only designation/position emerged as a statistically significant predictor, with a beta coefficient of -1.559 and a p-value of 0.036, indicating significance at the 0.05 level. The negative beta suggested that as the leadership role became more formal (e.g., progressing from Teacher-in-Charge to Principal), the perceived implementation of inclusive education decreased. This result may imply that those in higher positions were more critical or more aware of policy shortcomings.

Other variables, such as age ($\beta = 1.001$, $p = .108$) and sex ($\beta = 1.027$, $p = .091$), although showing positive beta values, were not statistically significant. Likewise, highest educational attainment ($\beta = 0.096$, $p = .830$) and number of relevant trainings ($\beta = 0.125$, $p = .818$) showed both low beta values and high p-values, indicating a lack of predictive power.

Additionally, years of administrative experience yielded a negative beta ($\beta = -0.665$, $p = .333$), suggesting a possible inverse relationship with implementation levels, although this result was not statistically significant.

Overall, the findings reinforced arguments from Waitoller and Thorius (2020), who emphasized that effective inclusive leadership is not rooted in demographic or professional qualifications alone. Rather, transformative leadership involves active efforts to challenge exclusionary systems and embed inclusive values into school structures and practices.

Table 22 Multiple Regression Analysis on test of relationship between the profile of school heads and the level of implementation of inclusive education

Variables	Beata	p-value	Decision
Age	1.001	.108	Not Significant
Sex	1.027	.091	Not Significant
highest educational attainment designation/position	.096	.830	Not Significant
years of administrative experience	-1.559	.036	Significant
number of relevant training/seminars attended	-.665	.333	Not Significant
	.125	.818	Not Significant

This section presents the test of relationship between the school heads' perceived level of implementation of inclusive education and the perceived level of leadership's contribution. The results are displayed below.

The Pearson r correlation analysis examined the relationship between school heads' perceived implementation of inclusive education and their view of leadership's contribution. The correlation coefficient ($r = 0.202$) indicated a weak positive relationship, but the p-value (0.303) showed no statistical significance at the 0.05 level. This suggested that while leadership contribution appeared somewhat related to implementation perceptions, the connection was not strong or consistent.

The lack of significance was attributed to the small sample size ($N = 28$), which limited statistical power. Other factors, such as school infrastructure, availability of special education personnel, teacher attitudes, and community engagement, likely played a more direct role in shaping perceptions of inclusive education.

These findings aligned with Darma and Rusyidi (2015), who noted that inclusive education presents challenges beyond regular school operations due to diverse learner needs. Gu (2023) emphasized that leadership must actively shape school culture and continuously support teachers

to improve inclusive practices. Meanwhile, Sholihah and Chrysoekamto (2021) highlighted the pivotal role of principals in developing a vision for inclusive education.

Ultimately, the weak correlation underscored the need for a holistic perspective in assessing inclusive education, considering leadership alongside teacher capacity, school environment, stakeholder collaboration, and systemic support.

Table 29 Pearson r Correlation on the test of relationship between the school heads' perceived level of implementation of inclusive education and the perceived level of leadership's contribution

Variables		level of implementation of inclusive education	level of leadership's contribution	Decision
level of implementation of inclusive education	Pearson Correlation	1	.202	Not Significant
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.303	
	N	28	28	
level of leadership's contribution	Pearson Correlation	.202	1	Not Significant
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.303		
	N	28	28	

Discussion

Demographic Profile of the School Heads

The demographic profiles of school heads and teachers provided insights into both strengths and areas for growth in inclusive education implementation. Most school heads were aged 46 and above, reflecting leadership stability and extensive experience. Their strong representation in graduate-level studies contributed to a solid foundation for leading inclusion initiatives. However, the small proportion with doctorate degrees and limited participation in professional training indicated a need for further leadership development, particularly in handling systemic reforms.

Teachers, meanwhile, displayed strong qualifications and experience, with over half holding a Master's degree and many having 6 to 15 years of teaching experience. This background supported effective inclusive practices when guided by capable leadership. However, the low number of teachers with doctoral degrees and limited seminar participation pointed to a need for ongoing professional development in inclusive pedagogies. Additionally, the gender imbalance, with a majority being female, highlighted the potential influence of gendered leadership dynamics on collaboration and inclusivity in classrooms.

These findings suggested a promising outlook for inclusive education, provided that schools strengthened capacity-building efforts for both leaders and teachers. Ainscow (2022) emphasized that leadership played a key role in overcoming barriers such as inadequate training and systemic resistance. Moving forward, adopting collaborative leadership models, mentorship

programs, and equity-driven training would be essential. Schools needed to support leadership succession and ensure younger educators had access to advanced training, ensuring the long-term sustainability of inclusive education initiatives.

Level of implementation of inclusive education

The findings indicated a moderate level of inclusive education implementation, showing that while foundational principles were embraced, systemic execution remained inconsistent. Both school heads and teachers recognized efforts in equity and student participation, particularly through equal access to school activities. However, challenges persisted in policy clarity, targeted support for students with disabilities, and the development of truly inclusive school environments. Ainscow and Sandill (2022) emphasized that inclusion must be continuously nurtured through leadership, collaboration, and reflective practice.

High ratings for teacher empowerment and collaboration highlighted a shared commitment to inclusive education. Both groups valued professional development and shared teaching strategies, yet teachers expressed lower confidence in adapting instruction for diverse learners. This signaled a need for more hands-on, practical training to ensure empowerment translated into effective inclusion strategies.

School culture and learning environments showed moderate ratings, with inconsistencies in fostering emotional and physical safety, supporting students with special needs, and maintaining clear policies. Dyson and Howes (2022) argued that inclusion must be a whole-school transformation, requiring leadership commitment, policy alignment, and adequate infrastructure.

With grand mean scores of 3.32 for school heads and 3.36 for teachers, the study confirmed that inclusive education was moderately implemented but not fully realized. Moving forward, a strategic approach was necessary—one that positioned inclusive education as a central philosophy rather than an isolated initiative. Proactive leadership in policy development, teacher training, and stakeholder engagement would be essential. Given the variability in perceptions, differentiated support based on school-specific needs would ensure inclusion became a systemic norm rather than an uneven aspiration.

Level of leadership's contribution to inclusive education

The data showed that both school heads and teachers perceived leadership's strongest contribution to inclusive education in policy implementation and advocacy, with sub-means of 3.50 and 3.42, respectively. Leaders effectively promoted policies, ensured compliance, and advocated within communities, but policy execution and monitoring remained inconsistent. This highlighted the need to translate policy into structured programs and evaluations for full integration.

In teacher support and professional development, ratings were moderate—3.18 from school heads and 3.08 from teachers. While collaboration and budget allocation were recognized, gaps remained in mentoring and training opportunities. Leadership needed to institutionalize ongoing professional development to sustain effective inclusive practices.

Regarding resource allocation and accessibility, intent did not fully align with execution. While budgeting and staffing were acknowledged, assistive technologies and facility accessibility scored poorly, with teachers rating assistive tool provision at 2.38. This emphasized the urgent need for data-driven resource planning and strengthened partnerships to improve infrastructure for learners with disabilities.

Overall, grand means of 3.34 (school heads) and 3.21 (teachers) indicated a moderate leadership impact on inclusive education. While policies were in place, practical application through teacher development and targeted resources remained uneven. To achieve high impact, leadership needed to bridge policy and practice by institutionalizing systems, building educator capacity, and mobilizing resources through stakeholder collaboration.

Tests of Relationships of the Variables

The statistical analyses revealed a complex relationship between personal attributes of school leaders and teachers and the implementation of inclusive education. While leadership designation and age showed some significance, most demographic and professional characteristics lacked a strong or consistent influence on inclusive education outcomes. This emphasized that systemic and organizational dynamics played a more critical role than individual traits.

Regression analysis of school heads' profiles and implementation levels showed a moderate raw correlation ($R = 0.474$) but an extremely low adjusted R^2 (0.003), making the overall model insignificant ($p = .444$). Designation was the only significant variable, with a negative correlation—suggesting that higher-ranking leaders perceived more barriers in implementing inclusive practices.

Age was the only significant predictor of school heads' perceptions of their leadership contribution, indicating that older leaders perceived a greater impact on inclusive education. However, most other variables, including training and education, were statistically insignificant, suggesting that inclusive leadership relies more on perspective and action than credentials.

For teachers, no significant relationship was found between their profile and perceived implementation of inclusive education. A negative adjusted R^2 (-0.003) reinforced the idea that system-wide transformation—rather than demographic factors—was needed to improve inclusive practice. This aligned with scholars like Florian and Loreman, who emphasized the importance of strategic and ongoing professional development over generalized training.

A weak but significant correlation ($r = 0.189$, $p = .017$) among teachers suggested that leadership cues subtly influenced their perceptions. However, no significant correlation was found for school heads, implying a disconnect between leadership intentions and implementation outcomes. Closing this gap required improved communication, participatory decision-making, and visible leadership support.

IV. Conclusion

The study revealed that while inclusive education had strong potential, its full implementation remained a work in progress, with gaps in policy execution, professional development, and resource allocation. School heads and teachers showed moderate commitment, yet challenges persisted in supporting students with disabilities and providing assistive technologies. Leadership, particularly at the school head level, played a significant role in advocacy but struggled to translate policies into practical strategies. The findings suggested that inclusive education success depended more on systemic organizational efforts than individual traits, highlighting the need for ongoing professional development, collaborative leadership, and strategic resource distribution. Moving forward, fostering an inclusive school culture required a comprehensive approach that engaged stakeholders, invested in leadership transformation, and ensured equitable access to resources.

V. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the implementation of inclusive education:

- **Targeted leadership training** should equip school heads with practical strategies to translate policies into action.
- **Context-specific professional development** must support teachers in inclusive pedagogies and differentiated instruction.
- **Assistive technology and accessibility** should be prioritized through strategic resource planning and external partnerships.
- **Collaborative leadership** should empower teachers in decision-making and inclusive practice implementation.
- **School culture** must actively promote diversity, emotional safety, and inclusive participation.

- **Regular assessment systems** should ensure continuous improvement through teacher and student feedback.
- **Accessible professional development** should support all teachers, with mentorship for newer educators.
- **Gender dynamics in education** should be examined to promote inclusivity in leadership and teaching approaches.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ainscow, M. (2020). Promoting equity in education: Lessons from international experiences. Routledge.
- [2] Ainscow, M. (2022). Leading inclusive education: Challenges and strategies for school leaders. *Educational Leadership Review*, 30(4), 315-332.
- [3] Ainscow, M., & Messiou, K. (2022). The role of school leadership in fostering inclusive education through stakeholder engagement. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 26(4), 567-584.
- [4] Brown, K., Johnson, L., & Patel, R. (2022). The role of school leadership in ensuring equitable access to educational resources. *Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies*, 9(1), 45-61.
- [5] Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2022). Effective teacher professional development. Learning Policy Institute.
- [6] DepEd. (2022). Every Child a Reader Program: Strengthening inclusive education in the Philippines. Department of Education.
- [7] DepEd. (2023). The state of Philippine education: Addressing challenges through leadership and policy reforms. Manila: Department of Education.
- [8] Dyson, A., & Howes, A. (2022). The role of school leadership in enhancing accessibility and inclusive learning environments. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 88, 102537.
- [9] Florian, L., & Black-Hawkins, K. (2021). Inclusive pedagogy and school leadership: The role of transformative leadership in curriculum development. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 25(3), 267-284.
- [10] Florian, L., & Spratt, J. (2021). Inclusive pedagogy and the role of school leadership in resource allocation for inclusive education. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 49(5), 735-753.
- [11] Guzman, R., & Cruz, M. (2021). Transformative leadership in Philippine schools: A framework for inclusive education. *Philippine Journal of Educational Research*, 15(2), 45-60.
- [12] Kraft, M. A., & Papay, J. P. (2023). Developing teachers: The importance of professional learning environments in schools. *Harvard Educational Review*, 93(1), 45-72.
- [13] Larsen, M. I., & Rieckhoff, B. S. (2023). The impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture in primary schools—A systematic review of international literature. *Societies*, 13(6), 133. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc13060133>
- [14] Murphy, J., & Torre, D. (2021). Resource allocation and leadership: Strategies for equitable education. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 57(3), 312-335.

- [15] Pont, B. (2020). A literature review of school leadership policy reforms. *European Journal of Education*, 55(2), 154-168. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12414>
- [16] Santos, P., Reyes, L., & Dela Cruz, A. (2023). Challenges in implementing inclusive education in rural Philippine schools: The role of school leadership. *Southeast Asian Educational Studies*, 10(1), 30-50.
- [17] Sharma, U., & Loreman, T. (2021). Transformational school leadership and inclusive education: A global perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 57(2), 189-206.
- [18] Sharma, U., & Saloviita, T. (2021). School leadership and teacher collaboration in inclusive education: A global perspective. *Educational Review*, 73(6), 743-760.
- [19] Sharma, U., Forlin, C., & Loreman, T. (2021). *Inclusive education and school leadership: Global perspectives on policy and practice*. Springer.
- [20] Sun, J., & Leithwood, K. (2022). The impact of school leadership on teacher preparedness for inclusive education. *Journal of School Leadership*, 32(1), 45-63.
- [21] Waitoller, F. R., & Thorius, K. A. K. (2020). School leadership and systemic change for inclusive education. *Review of Educational Research*, 90(1), 85-112.
- [22] Riowati, R., Hendriani, W., & Paramita, P. (2022). School-Based Inclusive Education Management as a Quality Assurance System in Indonesia (Systematic Literature Review). *Jurnal Kependidikan: Jurnal Hasil Penelitian Dan Kajian Kepustakaan Di Bidang Pendidikan, Pengajaran Dan Pembelajaran*, 8(2), 437. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jk.v8i2.4363>
- [23] Sholihah, A., & Chrysoekamto, R. (2021). Penerapan Manajemen Pengembangan Minat dan Bakat untuk Meningkatkan Potensi Siswa di Madrasah. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v1i2.36>
- [24] Darma, I. P., & Rusyidi, B. (2015). Pelaksanaan Sekolah Inklusi Di Indonesia. *Prosiding Penelitian Dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.24198/jppm.v2i2.13530>.
- [25] Gu, Q. (2023). Leadership and policy: how principals of successful schools enact education policy for improvement. In *International Encyclopedia of Education (Fourth Edition)* (pp. 347–355). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-818630-5.05014-4>
- [26] DeMatthews, D. E., Kotok, S., & Serafini, A. (2020). Leadership Preparation for Special Education and Inclusive Schools: Beliefs and Recommendations from Successful Principals. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 15(4), 303–329. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1942775119838308>