

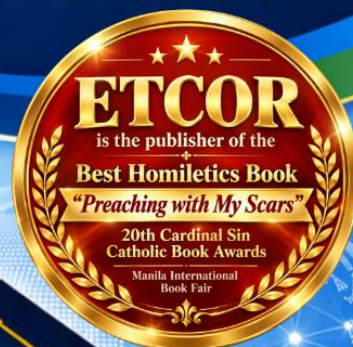
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Special education-related practices in regular Taiwanese schools through the lens of Filipino teachers

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Abstract

Aim: This research explored special education related-practices that are implemented in regular schools of Taiwan as perceived by 30 Filipino Teachers working at regular public schools in Changhua County, Taiwan. It also examined the challenges they encountered in implementing and adapting to inclusive educational practices and served as a basis for developing a Cultural Adaptation Guide to support their teaching practices in inclusive classrooms.

Methodology: The study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. Quantitative data were collected from 30 Filipino teachers through a researcher-made survey questionnaire, while qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 10 purposively selected participants.

Results: The findings showed that all areas of special education-related practices, including instructional strategies, classroom management, assessment and progress monitoring, and collaboration and support systems, were highly implemented. However, Filipino teachers encountered significant challenges, particularly language and communication barriers, limited access to specialized training in special education, and difficulties in adapting to Taiwanese educational norms and culture.

Conclusion: Despite Taiwan's established inclusive education framework, Filipino teachers' implementation of special education-related practices occurred alongside notable linguistic, cultural, and professional preparation challenges. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening teachers' adaptive resilience, cross-cultural communication, instructional adaptation, classroom management, and collaborative practices. The proposed Cultural Adaptation Guide may serve as a practical resource to support Filipino teachers in navigating inclusive classrooms and enhancing their capacity to address the needs of learners with disabilities in Taiwanese educational settings.

Keywords: *special education-related practices, inclusive education, Filipino teachers, cultural adaptation*

INTRODUCTION

Special Education (SPED) is intended to enable learners with disabilities to acquire sufficient support to accommodate their unique characteristics and be able to take part to the fullest extent possible in their general education classroom. This commitment to inclusive education has global roots, tracing back to the United Nations' 1975 Declaration of the Rights of Disabled Persons, which provided impetus for many countries — including Taiwan — to evaluate their own practices and expand educational opportunities for students with a variety of abilities. Taiwan's special education is guided by the United States' IDEA principles, specifically the principles of 'least restrictive environment' and 'access for all'. Although Taiwan has strong legal frameworks guiding SPED there is a gap between what policies mandate and how they are implemented at the school level. According to Sichrovsky (2021), these gaps stem from a combination of factors, including insufficient funding, a shortage of trained special education staff, and administrative burdens that limit schools' capacity to fully implement Individualized Education Plans for students with disabilities.

Furthermore, increased globalization of education has enabled more and more Filipino teachers to travel internationally for employment, including to Taiwan. This study addressed this gap by examining special education-related practices used in regular Taiwanese schools from the viewpoint of Filipino teachers, with the aim of informing

additional support and inclusive practices for learners with disabilities. Prior research has examined inclusive education, teacher preparedness, and foreign teachers' cultural adjustment in general. However, few studies have examined how Filipino teachers specifically adapt special education-related practices in Taiwanese regular schools, particularly regarding the language-of-instruction barrier.

Taiwan passed the Special Education Act in 1984, which established a system for identifying and providing support to students with disabilities based upon models used in the United States under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA).

On the other hand, many Filipinos are now recruited as foreign teachers in Taiwan through Taiwan's Bilingual 2030 Policy. Many Filipino teachers in Taiwan are hired by schools to teach English as opposed to being hired as SPED professionals. However, many of these teachers will be teaching learners with disabilities in an inclusive classroom setting.

Disability in Taiwan has often been viewed as an individual or family burden rather than a societal responsibility, rooted partly in Taoist and Buddhist cultural traditions, including the notion of karma (Chou et al., 2023). This framing has, in some cases, led parents to feel ashamed, perceiving their child's special needs as a consequence of personal or ancestral transgressions (Fang et al., 2024). Taiwan, like many other countries, primarily relied on institutional care for children with special needs prior to 1970s, reflecting low public awareness and lack of trained professionals.

The global campaign for disability rights was initiated in 1975 by the United Nations' Declaration of the Rights of Disabled Persons. This campaign had an impact on Taiwan as it provided impetus for Taiwan to evaluate their own practices and increase educational opportunities for students with a variety of abilities.

Current data reflects that inclusive options are still the primary means of assistance for students with disabilities as they attend a resource classroom while taking mainstream courses at around 76%, and around 9% are in SPED classrooms in general schools (Ministry of Education, 2023). Despite having an increase in legislation and structure to support teachers working in inclusive classrooms, teachers continue to have many barriers when it comes to working with students who require SPED services.

Taiwan began recruiting Filipino teachers because of their Bilingual 2030 policy, which aimed to increase Taiwan's international competitiveness through increasing the number of people who could speak English. In summary, educators who work in general education settings are faced with multiple areas of complexity when working to teach learners with disabilities. The complexities occur across instructional strategies, classroom management, assessing/monitoring progress, and collaborating with support systems.

This study contributes to scholarship on international teacher mobility, inclusive education, and cross-cultural teacher adaptation. It examines how Filipino teachers implement special education-related practices in Taiwanese regular schools. Practically, its findings form the basis for a proposed Cultural Adaptation Guide. This guide may help Filipino teachers navigate Taiwan's inclusive education system, inform administrators' professional development planning, and support future research on internationally mobile teachers in inclusive settings. Ultimately, this study aimed to improve the preparation of Filipino teachers to teach in inclusive educational environments and to enhance the quality of life for students with special needs in those environments.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

This section presents various literature reviewed to gather insights for the study. The review will explore multiple perspectives, approaches, and findings to provide a comprehensive overview of the special education-related practices and challenges in regular Taiwanese schools.

Filipino Teachers in Taiwan

The growing number of international and Filipino educators in Taiwan have added a new layer to the definition of inclusive education. According to Yeh (2024), although foreign teachers provide significant contributions toward enhanced instructional practices, they are also challenged by issues related to cultural adjustment, foreign language barriers, and lack of familiarity with Taiwan's special education system. These concerns are also relevant to classroom management, as Llaguno and Paulete (2026) examined the experiences of Overseas Filipino Teachers in Taiwan in managing challenging learner behaviors, highlighting the importance of teacher adaptation and context-sensitive classroom management practices.

Instructional Strategies

Fikes (2023) stated that educators or SPED teachers should develop appropriate teaching strategies that match each student's learning style, needs and abilities. This could also include a modification of the curriculum, a modification of classroom routines, use of visual aids, an incorporation of technology as an assistive tool, and/or the development of "stepping stone" approaches that break down large concepts into smaller, manageable pieces.

When teachers adapt their instruction to fit the learner's ability, there are increased levels of student engagement and participation; as a result, it can be concluded that flexibility in teaching methodology is an essential element to providing inclusive educational services to all students.

Classroom Management

The role of classroom management in supporting the process of effective learning cannot be overstated (Hattie, 2023) and its importance in the inclusive classroom was further emphasized by the same researchers. Classroom management ultimately helps learners develop and sustain new knowledge and skills. While there is a strong consensus on inclusion, research has shown that both inexperienced and experienced educators frequently report feeling inadequately prepared to provide for the needs of students with disabilities (Young, 2024).

Assessment and Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring helps ensure that all students have the opportunity to reach their individualized educational goals, which are adjusted, clear, measurable, and set within a reasonable time frame for each student (Nebraska Department of Education, 2022). Effective assessment is critical for learners with disabilities, as it supports an equitable educational environment and helps teachers develop, implement, and evaluate instruction for all learners. According to Tomlinson (2022), it is essential to use flexible, differentiated assessment techniques — such as oral presentation or project-based alternatives — so that learners with disabilities are not disadvantaged by traditional forms of evaluation.

Collaboration and Support System

Educational inclusion requires an intentional approach to create equitable systems in education that provide each learner with equal access, opportunity, and a sense of belonging (Ainscow, 2020). When educators understand how disability affects a student's behaviors and emotional responses, they are better able to address the student's individual needs. The importance of teacher participation and collaborative support is also reflected in Lugasana et al. (2026), whose study found that teacher involvement in school-wide decision-making was associated with collaborative governance, professional development, mentoring, and shared decision-making.

Friend and Bursuck (2025) have also noted that when staff members have access to preventative, proactive strategies such as training in restorative practices, trauma-informed practices, de-escalation techniques, behavior modification, and social learning; they are in a stronger position to help a student learn the necessary skills to function within the classroom, and to develop positive relationships with both peers and adults in the school environment.

Challenges in Implementing Special Education-Related Practices

According to Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 2004), the general education classroom was designated as the most appropriate environment for learners with disabilities under, and it emphasizes that education should occur in a "Least Restrictive Environment" (LRE) (Kauffman et al., 2023). Learners with disabilities have transitioned from being educated in SPED classrooms to being educated in an inclusive educational context. Although several initiatives and policies have been developed to support the implementation of inclusion, regular schools continue to experience many barriers and challenges to the effective integration of inclusion (Allam & Martin, 2021).

In an inclusive setting where teachers work together more collaboratively to address the unique needs of their students, teachers still report difficulties in managing learners with disabilities within a general classroom consistent with Liu and Huang's (2022) documentation of ongoing implementation challenges in Taiwan's inclusive classrooms.

Language of Instruction and Linguistic Accommodation

A growing body of research points to a significant gap in how English language teachers (ELTs) are prepared to teach students with disabilities. While Young (2024) has reported that many ELTs from an array of secondary educational institutions possess the foundation needed to provide inclusive instruction, they are often lacking in

formalized training related to differentiation and the implementation of universal instructional accommodations for students with disabilities. The importance of teacher readiness and competency in implementing specialized educational programs is likewise reflected in Perlas (2026), whose study examined the readiness, practices, and competencies of teacher-tutors implementing the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) program. These concerns are particularly relevant when teachers are expected to respond to specialized learner needs while working within contexts that require additional professional preparation.

Therefore, this study also indicates that the language-of-instruction barrier is not merely due to the difficulties involved in translating content into another language; rather it is indicative of a larger gap in teacher training that includes the provision of support to instructors that instruct students who possess additional learning needs while crossing a linguistic boundary. Taken together, these studies point to a gap directly relevant to this study: while existing literature on Filipino teachers in Taiwan has examined instructional strategies, classroom management, and assessment practices in inclusive settings, comparatively little research has directly addressed how the language-of-instruction barrier specifically shapes special education-related practices.

Development and Utilization of Support Manuals

The development of support manuals is used to promote teachers' professional competency to serve learners with disabilities in inclusive educational environments. These documents can collect best practices in teaching methods, assessing student learning, and classroom management, providing teachers who are new to serving learners with disabilities with the structure and support they need to assist these students. The importance of targeted professional development and institutional support is likewise emphasized by Jacob et al. (2026), who examined educators' professional development needs and implementation challenges and highlighted the need for responsive faculty development and stronger institutional support mechanisms.

Current research supports the need for accessible models of instruction that teachers can draw upon to adapt their lesson plans or assessments to meet the varying needs of students. Manuals can reduce inconsistencies in how effectively teachers use effective practices; provide long term, practical support for teachers; and fill the gap in providing the necessary ongoing support that training sessions do not provide.

Synthesis

Collectively, the studies reviewed show that inclusive education depends on well-prepared teachers who can adapt instruction, manage diverse classrooms, monitor student progress, and collaborate with support systems. Ochoa (2026), for example, documented teachers' experiences of teaching beyond their areas of specialization, including instructional difficulties, professional adaptation, coping strategies, and the importance of institutional support. However, most of this research examines these practices in general or domestic-teacher contexts, leaving unclear how internationally mobile teachers—who must adapt to a new language, culture, and education system simultaneously—experience the same practices. Evidence remains particularly limited on how the language-of-instruction barrier interacts with the other domains of practice, rather than being treated as a separate issue.

Filipino teachers in Taiwan represent an important population for addressing this gap: they are hired primarily as English teachers under the Bilingual 2030 Policy yet are frequently expected to implement special education-related practices without specialized training, placing them at the intersection of linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical adaptation. A mixed-methods approach is appropriate for this population because it allows the breadth of a survey across implementation areas to be paired with the depth of interview data needed to understand how and why these teachers adapt. Building on this literature, the present study contributes a focused examination of Filipino teachers' implementation of special education-related practices in Taiwanese regular schools, and translates these findings into a practical Cultural Adaptation Guide.

Theoretical Framework

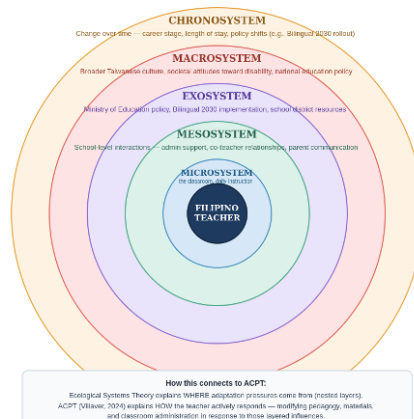
This study utilized two interconnected theoretical frameworks. The primary lens was Ecological Systems Theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979/2005), which explains development and adaptation as shaped by nested environmental systems. In this study, the microsystem corresponds to direct classroom practices such as instructional strategies and teacher-student interaction; the mesosystem corresponds to relationships among teachers, administrators, and support personnel; the exosystem corresponds to school policies and professional development opportunities; and the macrosystem corresponds to Taiwanese cultural norms, language, and national education policy.

This layered structure guided both the design of the survey questionnaire, which was organized around these same domains, and the interpretation of the challenges Filipino teachers reported at each level (See Figure 1).

To understand the actual daily "mechanics" that occurred with respect to how Filipino teachers were able to adjust their pedagogy daily, this study also employed Adaptive Cross Cultural Pedagogy Theory (ACPT), a framework developed by Villaver (2024) based on a small grounded-theory study of six Filipino exchange teachers, used here as a practical, sensitizing lens rather than an extensively validated theory. Major propositions of this theory are: (1) modification to pedagogical practices improve the classroom environment, (2) contextualization of instructional content improves the mutual understanding between teacher and student, (3) classroom administration procedures affect students' engagement and cultural awareness, and (4) developing educators' cultural competence allows for ongoing professional growth and development. ACPT was selected to complement Ecological Systems Theory by offering a population-specific lens: while Bronfenbrenner's theory explains where influences on teacher adaptation originate, ACPT offers a sensitizing lens for how Filipino teachers, specifically, translate those influences into day-to-day pedagogical decisions. Because ACPT originates from a small grounded-theory study rather than an extensively validated body of research, it was used in this study only as an interpretive lens for organizing and making sense of qualitative interview themes, rather than as a basis for the survey instrument's structure or for confirmatory hypothesis testing. This distinction is intended to prevent overstating the current empirical weight of ACPT while still acknowledging its relevance to the specific population under study (See Figure 2).

Figure 1

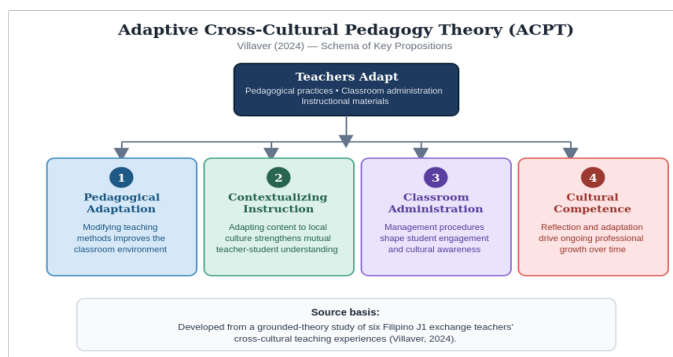
Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory Applied to Filipino Teachers' Cross-Cultural Adaptation



Note. Diagram adapted from Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory of Development.

Figure 2

Adaptive Cross-Cultural Pedagogy Theory Schema (ACPT Schema)



Conceptual Framework

In this research study, the views of Filipino teachers regarding the implementation of the special education-related practices in regular classes in Taiwan was explored. Additionally, this study also investigated how the special education-related practices were perceived and implemented in regular classroom settings in Taiwan. Further, this research analyzed the difficulties experienced by Filipino teachers in adapting to or putting into practice the special education-related practices, in regular classrooms in Taiwan. Ultimately, the product of this process is a cultural adaptation guide for Filipino teachers to utilize when they are teaching learners with disabilities within an inclusive classroom environment in Taiwan (See Figure 3).

Figure 3
Conceptual Framework



Statement of the Problem

The implementation of inclusive and special education-related practices in regular schools requires teachers to apply appropriate instructional strategies, classroom management approaches, assessment and progress-monitoring procedures, and collaborative practices to address the diverse needs of learners. For Filipino teachers working in regular Taiwanese schools, the implementation and adaptation of these practices may be influenced by differences in language, culture, educational norms, professional preparation, and familiarity with inclusive education system.

Although previous studies have examined inclusive education, teacher preparedness, and the experiences of foreign teachers, there remains a need to understand how Filipino teachers perceive and experience special education-related practices within the specific context of regular Taiwanese schools. Examining their perspectives is important because these teachers may encounter challenges that influence their ability to adapt instructional practices, communicate with colleagues and learners, participate in collaborative support systems, and respond to the needs of learners requiring special educational support.

Therefore, this study sought to explore the special education-related practices implemented in regular Taiwanese schools as perceived by Filipino teachers, determine the perceived level of implementation of these practices, identify the challenges they encounter in adapting to or implementing such practices, and use the findings as a basis for developing a Cultural Adaptation Guide that may support Filipino teachers in navigating Taiwanese inclusive educational settings.

General Objective

To explore the special education-related practices implemented in regular Taiwanese schools as perceived by Filipino teachers and to develop a Cultural Adaptation Guide based on the findings of the study.

Specific Objectives

Specifically, the study aimed:

- To determine the perceived level of implementation of special education-related practices in regular Taiwanese schools in terms of:
 - instructional strategies;
 - classroom management;
 - assessment and progress monitoring; and

- collaboration and support systems.
- 2. To identify the challenges encountered by Filipino teachers in adapting to or implementing special education-related practices in regular classrooms in Taiwan.
- 3. To develop a Cultural Adaptation Guide based on the findings of the study to support Filipino teachers in understanding and applying special education-related practices in Taiwanese educational settings.

Research Questions

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the perceived level of implementation of special education-related practices in regular Taiwanese schools as perceived by Filipino teachers in terms of:
 - 1.1 instructional strategies;
 - 1.2 classroom management;
 - 1.3 assessment and progress monitoring; and
 - 1.4 collaboration and support systems?
2. What challenges do Filipino teachers encounter in adapting to or implementing special education-related practices in regular classrooms in Taiwan?
3. Based on the findings of the study, what Cultural Adaptation Guide can be developed to support Filipino teachers in understanding and applying special education-related practices in Taiwanese educational settings?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a Convergent Parallel Mixed-Methods Design to examine special education-related practices in regular Taiwanese schools from the perspectives of Filipino teachers. The design was appropriate because the study required both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address the research problem comprehensively.

The quantitative component was used to determine the perceived level of implementation of special education-related practices in terms of instructional strategies, classroom management, assessment and progress monitoring, and collaboration and support systems. The qualitative component was used to explore the challenges encountered by Filipino teachers in adapting to and implementing special education-related practices within Taiwanese regular classrooms.

Quantitative and qualitative findings were compared by tracing each quantitative result to its related qualitative theme and identifying the resulting implication for the Cultural Adaptation Guide. The highest-rated challenge, language barriers ($M = 3.43$), converged with Theme 3's account of a compounding English-Mandarin language barrier, informing the Guide's bilingual co-teacher and Mandarin-instruction recommendations. The reported gap in SPED training ($M = 3.10$) similarly converged with Theme 3's finding of systemic training deficits, informing the Guide's recommendation for targeted SPED training modules. The relatively lower Instructional Strategies rating ($M = 2.97$) converged with Theme 2's account of simplified instructions and visual aids, informing the shared lesson-bank recommendation. Theme 4's account of psychological adaptation over time had no direct quantitative counterpart, representing a complementary finding that added depth beyond what the survey scales captured. No clear divergence between the two datasets was observed; the strands consistently reinforced or complemented one another.

Population and Sampling

The study involved thirty (30) Filipino teachers employed in regular public schools in Changhua County, Taiwan, who met the established inclusion criteria. Participants were selected through purposive sampling because the study required teachers with direct experience in implementing or adapting to special education-related practices in inclusive classroom settings.

To qualify for participation, teachers were required to: (1) be actively employed as a teacher in Taiwan; (2) have direct experience teaching learners with disabilities or learners requiring special educational support within an inclusive classroom setting; and (3) have at least one year of teaching experience in the Taiwanese educational environment. All thirty (30) participants completed the quantitative survey. From this group, ten (10) participants were subsequently selected for the qualitative component using maximum variation purposive sampling. The selection sought to include participants with varied professional and educational experiences relevant to the phenomenon under investigation.

Research Instruments

The study used two researcher-developed instruments: a survey questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide. The survey questionnaire was developed to assess the perceived level of implementation of special education-related practices in regular Taiwanese schools. The instrument covered four domains: (1) instructional strategies, (2) classroom management, (3) assessment and progress monitoring, and (4) collaboration and support systems. The questionnaire contained twenty-five (25) items rated on a 4-point scale (4 = Very Highly Implemented, 3 = Highly Implemented, 2 = Slightly Implemented, 1 = Not Implemented), interpreted using the following ranges: 3.26–4.00 (Very Highly Implemented), 2.51–3.25 (Highly Implemented), 1.76–2.50 (Slightly Implemented), and 1.00–1.75 (Not Implemented).

The items were developed based on relevant literature, inclusive education practices, and the specific objectives of the study. Before administration, the questionnaire and interview guide were validated by three experts in education, special education, and research methodology, who evaluated clarity, response-option appropriateness, item relevance, and alignment with the problem statement. Their feedback led to relocating the scale legend beside the items, revising the response format to better reflect implementation levels, expanding general items into classroom-observable indicators, and adding probing questions to the interview guide. A semi-structured interview guide was also developed to obtain a deeper understanding of the experiences and challenges encountered by Filipino teachers in adapting to and implementing special education-related practices in Taiwanese regular classrooms. The guide included open-ended questions aligned with the research objectives and was reviewed for clarity, relevance, and appropriateness before use.

Pilot Testing and Reliability of the Instrument

A pilot test was conducted online with ten (10) Filipino teachers in Taiwan who met the same inclusion criteria as the study's respondents (employment in a regular Taiwanese school with direct experience in special education-related practices), making them appropriate for assessing instrument clarity; these participants were excluded from the actual study. Pilot feedback led to minor wording clarifications in the survey questionnaire and minor adjustments to language, wording, and sequencing in the interview guide. The 25-item questionnaire obtained an overall Cronbach's alpha of .936 (excellent). By section, Implementation of Special Education-related Practices obtained .941 (excellent), with domain coefficients of .884 (Instructional Strategies, good), .745 (Classroom Management, acceptable), .926 (Assessment and Progress Monitoring, excellent), and .905 (Collaboration and Support Systems, excellent); Challenges in Implementing SPED Practices obtained .772 (acceptable). Pilot testing of the interview guide led to minor wording and flow adjustments.

Data Collection

Data were collected from Filipino teachers employed in regular public schools in Changhua County, Taiwan, during June 2026. Prior to participation, the researcher explained the purpose and procedures of the study and obtained written informed consent from all participants.

The researcher administered the questionnaire to thirty (30) qualified Filipino teachers, using printed or online versions per respondent preference; completion took approximately 10–15 minutes. For the qualitative component, ten (10) purposively selected participants participated in semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted either face-to-face or through online videoconferencing platforms, such as Google Meet or Zoom, depending on the participants' availability, location, and preference. Interviews were conducted face-to-face or via Google Meet/Zoom depending on participant preference, lasted approximately 30–45 minutes, and were audio-recorded with consent. All interviews were in English, so translation was unnecessary. The researcher manually transcribed each recording verbatim and checked it against the original audio for accuracy, after which participants reviewed their own transcripts during member-checking. Data collection continued until the researchers determined that the interviews generated sufficient depth and no substantial new themes relevant to the research questions were emerging.

Treatment of Data

Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately before being integrated during the interpretation of the findings. For the quantitative component, descriptive statistical methods were used. Frequency counts and percentages were used to summarize relevant participant characteristics, where applicable. Weighted means were computed to determine the perceived level of implementation of special education-related practices across the four

domains of instructional strategies, classroom management, assessment and progress monitoring, and collaboration and support systems, interpreted using the same ranges applied to the survey scale

For the qualitative component, interview data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis: familiarization with all ten transcripts, generation of initial open codes from participants' own language, grouping of codes into eleven sub-themes, and consolidation of sub-themes into four major themes connected to the study's research question on the challenges Filipino teachers encounter. Sub-theme frequency ranged from 7 to 8 of the 10 participants for the most common codes, supporting the representativeness of the identified themes. The two datasets were then compared to identify convergence, complementarity, and divergence, as described under Research Design. This comparison directly informed the proposed Cultural Adaptation Guide.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study to protect the rights, privacy, dignity, confidentiality, and well-being of the participants. Prior to data collection, ethical approval was obtained from NTC Ethics Review Committee. Permission to conduct the study was also obtained from the appropriate schools or educational authorities when required.

Participation in the study was voluntary. Before completing the survey or participating in the interview, each participant received information regarding the purpose of the study, the data collection procedures, the voluntary nature of participation, potential risks and benefits, and the right to decline participation or withdraw without penalty. Written informed consent was obtained before data collection. Participants' identities were protected through appropriate confidentiality procedures. Personally identifiable information was not included in the presentation of the findings, and pseudonyms or participant codes were used where necessary. Audio recordings, transcripts, survey responses, and other research materials were stored securely and were accessible only to the authorized researcher or research team.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study. Quantitative data were obtained through a researcher-made questionnaire administered to Filipino teachers currently teaching in Taiwan, while qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with selected participants. The findings are then presented according to the research questions of the study.

Special Education-Related Practices Implemented

Table 1

Summary of the Perceived Level of Implementation of Special Education-Related Practices

Domains	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Instructional Strategies	2.97	0.77	Highly Implemented
2. Classroom Management	3.17	0.75	Highly Implemented
3. Assessment and Progress Monitoring	2.91	0.81	Highly Implemented
4. Collaboration and Support System	3.04	0.83	Highly Implemented
Overall Mean	3.02	0.79	Highly Implemented

Table 1 presents the perceived level of implementation of special education-related practices in regular Taiwanese schools as reported by the participating Filipino teachers. The overall mean of 3.02 (SD = 0.79) was verbally interpreted as Highly Implemented, indicating that the participants generally perceived the identified practices as highly implemented across the four domains examined.

Among the four domains, classroom management obtained the highest mean score ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.75$), followed by collaboration and support systems ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 0.83$). Instructional strategies obtained a mean of 2.97

(SD = 0.77), while assessment and progress monitoring obtained the lowest mean among the four domains (M = 2.91, SD = 0.81), although both remained within the study's highly implemented range.

These findings suggest that, from the perspectives of the participating Filipino teachers, classroom management and collaborative support were relatively stronger areas of implementation, whereas instructional strategies and assessment and progress monitoring may require further attention. The lower relative mean for assessment and progress monitoring does not indicate poor implementation because it remained within the highly implemented range. Rather, it indicates that this domain received a comparatively lower rating among the four areas examined.

The findings have implications for instructional practice and teacher professional development. School leaders and teacher development providers may examine the specific practices within the relatively lower-rated domains to determine whether Filipino teachers require additional support in adapting instructional strategies and assessment procedures to the Taiwanese inclusive education context. Any interpretation of the findings should remain limited to the perceptions and experiences of the participating teachers.

Challenges Encountered by Filipino Teachers

Table 2
Perceived Challenges and Contextual Factors Affecting Implementation

Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Cultural differences in Taiwan affect my implementation of SPED-related classroom practices.	3.03	0.84	Agree
2. Differences in the Taiwanese educational system require significant adjustments in my teaching approach.	3.17	0.73	Agree
3. Limited specialization or professional training in SPED makes it difficult for me to support learners with special educational needs effectively.	3.10	0.87	Agree
4. Language or communication barriers affect my delivery of instruction to learners with special educational needs.	3.43	0.76	Strongly Agree
5. Limited instructional resources and support services make inclusive teaching more challenging.	2.90	0.87	Agree
Overall	3.13	0.84	Agree

Based on the perceptions of the thirty participating Filipino teachers, special education-related practices in regular Taiwanese schools were generally rated as highly implemented across the domains of instructional strategies, classroom management, assessment and progress monitoring, and collaboration and support systems. Among these domains, classroom management obtained the highest mean rating, while assessment and progress monitoring obtained the lowest relative mean, although all four domains remained within the study's highly implemented range. The findings also indicated that the participating Filipino teachers experienced several challenges in adapting to and

implementing special education-related practices. Language and communication barriers received the highest rating among the challenges examined. Cultural differences, adjustments to the Taiwanese educational system, and limited specialized preparation in special education were also identified as factors that may affect the participants' experiences. The qualitative findings further provided contextual insights into the participants' experiences of inclusive classroom practices, pedagogical adaptations, professional challenges, and strategies for adaptation. Taken together, the quantitative and qualitative findings served as the basis for the development of a proposed Cultural Adaptation Guide intended to support Filipino teachers in navigating linguistic, cultural, instructional, and collaborative aspects of special education-related practice in Taiwanese regular school settings.

The findings contribute to the discussion of teacher adaptation and professional support within inclusive and multicultural educational environments. They suggest that school leaders, teacher educators, and educational support providers may need to consider the linguistic, cultural, and professional contexts of foreign teachers when designing orientation and professional development initiatives related to inclusive education. The conclusions of the study are limited to the perceptions and experiences of the participating Filipino teachers and should not be generalized to all teachers, schools, or stakeholders within Taiwan's educational system. Further research involving larger and more diverse groups of participants may provide additional evidence regarding special education-related practices and the adaptation experiences of foreign teachers in Taiwanese educational contexts.

Qualitative Themes Underlying the Challenges

The researcher grouped together the open codes by category, to create clusters of similar ideas and meaning which formed the sub-themes, then reviewed and developed the cluster of sub-themes to produce four (4) major themes and eleven (11) sub-themes that were both internally consistent and distinct from one another.

Table 3
Thematic Analysis Codebook

Theme	Sub-theme
Theme 1: Structural Realities of Inclusion	Mandated Legal Protections & Inclusive Frameworks
	Co-Teaching & Multi-Tiered Support Systems
Theme 2: Classroom Accommodations & Pedagogical Adaptations	Instruction Simplification & Visual Scaffolding
	Gamified Kinesthetic Learning & Peer Pairing
	Substantive Assessment Adjustments over Content Modification
Theme 3: Multidimensional Challenges in Inclusive Environments	The Multi-Layer Language Barrier
	Systemic Deficits in Formal SPED Training
	Behavior Disruptions vs. Lesson Pacing
Theme 4: Professional Coping, Psychological Impact & Adaptations	Initial Trauma to Evolving Self-Efficacy
	Relational Agility & Strategic Synergy
	Deepening Intercultural Empathy

Main Theme 1: Structural Realities of Full Classroom Inclusion — spanning Taiwan's legal mandate for inclusion ("Special Education Act mandates legal protections and structural support," Participant 2) and the collaborative networks teachers rely on ("Build strong collaborative relationships with your local and international colleagues... admitting which part you need to work on," Participant 6).

Main Theme 2: Classroom Accommodations & Pedagogical Adaptations — teachers' instructional modifications: "I usually adapt my teaching by simplifying instructions... and providing visual aids" (Participant 1).

Main Theme 3: Multidimensional Challenges in Inclusive Environments — centered on a compounding language barrier: "The student is trying to learn English from me, but their primary support system or behavioral cues are in Mandarin, which I do not fully speak" (Participant 2).

Main Theme 4: Professional Coping, Psychological Impact & Adaptations — teachers' shift from initial strain to confidence: "It was quite overwhelming and honestly a little traumatic... Over time, however, I became more experienced and learned how to respond more confidently" (Participant 1).

These themes address the study's research question on the challenges Filipino teachers encounter; coding followed the process described under Treatment of Data, and data collection continued until saturation, as noted under Data Collection.

Proposed Cultural Adaptation Guide

Based on the quantitative and qualitative findings, a proposed Cultural Adaptation Guide was developed to address the key areas identified by the participating Filipino teachers. The guide is intended as a preliminary evidence-informed resource that may assist Filipino teachers in understanding and adapting to special education-related practices within regular Taiwanese school settings. The guide has not been evaluated as an intervention; its effectiveness requires further validation before conclusions can be made regarding impact. The Key Finding column reflects what the data showed; the Proposed Adaptation Strategy column reflects the authors' recommendations, not tested outcomes.

Table 4

Cultural Adaptation Guide for Filipino Teachers Implementing Special Education Related Practices in Taiwanese Regular Classrooms

Domain	Key Finding from This Study	Proposed Adaptation Strategy
Instructional Strategies	Instructional strategies were rated highly implemented overall ($M = 2.97$), the lowest of the four domains, suggesting room to strengthen differentiation practices.	Build a shared, pre-differentiated lesson bank by grade level and learning profile.
Classroom Management	Classroom management obtained the highest domain mean ($M = 3.17$), reflecting consistent use of structured routines and positive reinforcement	Maintain and reinforce existing positive-reinforcement routines, and supplement them with short, practical training in de-escalation and functional behavioral response.
Assessment and Progress Monitoring	Assessment and progress monitoring was highly implemented but had the lowest domain mean overall ($M = 2.91$).	Establish a simple, recurring bilingual progress-update format (e.g., a short translated template sent each grading period) and consider scheduling dedicated parent-conference time for learners with disabilities, separate from general parent-teacher days.
Collaboration and Support Systems	Collaboration and support systems were highly implemented ($M = 3.04$), reflecting the role of administrative support and teamwork.	Use existing administrative goodwill to formally schedule, rather than informally offer, professional development for foreign teachers, and ensure at least part of this training is delivered or translated in English.



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Language and Cultural Adjustment (cross- cutting)

Language and communication barriers received the highest agreement rating among all challenge items ($M = 3.43$, 'Strongly Agree'), the single most significant challenge identified in this study.

Provide targeted, classroom-relevant Mandarin instruction (behavior management and SPED terminology, not general conversation), and consider pairing incoming Filipino teachers with a bilingual co-teacher during their first year.

Conclusion

Based on the perceptions of the thirty participating Filipino teachers, special education-related practices in regular Taiwanese schools were generally rated as highly implemented across the domains of instructional strategies, classroom management, assessment and progress monitoring, and collaboration and support systems. Among these domains, classroom management obtained the highest mean rating, while assessment and progress monitoring obtained the lowest relative mean, although all four domains remained within the study's highly implemented range.

The findings also indicated that the participating Filipino teachers experienced several challenges in adapting to and implementing special education-related practices. Language and communication barriers received the highest rating among the challenges examined. Cultural differences, adjustments to the Taiwanese educational system, and limited specialized preparation in special education were also identified as factors that may affect the participants' experiences.

The qualitative findings further provided contextual insights into the participants' experiences of inclusive classroom practices, pedagogical adaptations, professional challenges, and strategies for adaptation. Taken together, the quantitative and qualitative findings served as the basis for the development of a proposed Cultural Adaptation Guide intended to support Filipino teachers in navigating linguistic, cultural, instructional, and collaborative aspects of special education-related practice in Taiwanese regular school settings.

The findings contribute to the discussion of teacher adaptation and professional support within inclusive and multicultural educational environments. They suggest that school leaders, teacher educators, and educational support providers may need to consider the linguistic, cultural, and professional contexts of foreign teachers when designing orientation and professional development initiatives related to inclusive education.

The conclusions of the study are limited to the perceptions and experiences of the participating Filipino teachers and should not be generalized to all teachers, schools, or stakeholders within Taiwan's educational system. Further research involving larger and more diverse groups of participants may provide additional evidence regarding special education-related practices and the adaptation experiences of foreign teachers in Taiwanese educational contexts.

Recommendations

School Administrators and Educational Leaders

School administrators and educational leaders may consider developing clearer orientation and support mechanisms for foreign teachers involved in inclusive classroom settings. Based on the relatively lower-rated areas identified in the study, professional support may give particular attention to instructional adaptation, assessment and progress monitoring, and responses to challenging classroom situations. Schools may also consider strengthening structured opportunities for collaboration between Filipino teachers, Taiwanese co-teachers, and relevant educational support personnel.

Teachers and Practitioners

Filipino teachers may consider participating in professional development activities related to differentiated instruction, inclusive classroom management, assessment practices, and culturally responsive pedagogy. Collaborative planning and communication with Taiwanese co-teachers may also provide opportunities for teachers to exchange strategies and improve consistency in instructional and classroom practices.

Policymakers and Educational Support Institutions

Educational policymakers and support institutions may consider providing professional development and orientation programs that address the language, cultural, and professional adjustment needs identified by the

participants. Because language and communication barriers emerged as the highest-rated challenge, relevant institutions may explore the provision of context-specific language support, particularly in relation to classroom communication, collaboration, and special education-related terminology. Educational support systems may also consider strategies that facilitate communication between teachers and families of learners requiring special educational support.

Teacher Education and Professional Development Providers

Teacher education institutions and professional development providers may consider incorporating intercultural competence, inclusive education, collaborative practice, and contextual adaptation into programs designed for teachers who work across different educational and cultural environments. Such initiatives may help prepare teachers for the professional adjustments associated with working in inclusive and multicultural school settings.

Curriculum Developers

Curriculum developers and instructional support personnel may consider developing or adapting teaching and assessment resources that can support differentiated and inclusive classroom practices. Particular attention may be given to resources that are accessible to teachers working across linguistic and cultural contexts.

Future Researchers

Future researchers may expand the investigation by including other stakeholders involved in inclusive education, such as Taiwanese teachers, school administrators, parents, and learners. Studies may also involve larger and more geographically diverse samples across different Taiwanese counties to determine whether similar patterns emerge in other educational contexts. Future research may further validate and evaluate the proposed Cultural Adaptation Guide to determine its usability, relevance, and potential contribution to the professional adaptation of Filipino teachers.

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