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SEC Reg. No. 2024020137294-00  
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**iJOINED ETCOR**  
P - ISSN 2984-7567  
E - ISSN 2945-3577



**The Exigency**  
P - ISSN 2984-7842  
E - ISSN 1908-3181

## Multi-Dimensional Reflective Practices of Non-SPED Teachers: Toward Inclusive, Responsive, and Growth-Oriented Teaching

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**Received:** 09 May 2025

**Revised:** 10 June 2025

**Accepted:** 14 June 2025

**Available Online:** 15 June 2025

**Volume IV (2025), Issue 2, P-ISSN – 2984-7567; E-ISSN - 2945-3577**

<https://doi.org/10.63498/etcor376>

### Abstract

**Aim:** The study described the perceptions of non-SPED teachers regarding the impact of multidimensional reflective practices on promoting inclusive, responsive, and growth-oriented teaching.

**Methodology:** This study used a qualitative design through semi-structured interviews. The study consists of 15 non-SPED teachers from Zuni High School in Zuni, New Mexico, U.S.A.

**Results:** The results revealed three (3) main themes: professional growth and transformation through reflection, responsive teaching through deeper understanding of student needs, and improvement in classroom management and student engagement.

**Conclusion:** Non-SPED teachers perceive multi-dimensional reflective practice as a transformative approach that nurtures their growth both personally and professionally. Reflective practice makes them more self-aware, empathetic, and inclusive in their teaching approach.

**Keywords:** *reflective practice, multi-dimensional approach, non-SPED teachers, inclusive, responsive, growth-oriented*

### INTRODUCTION

A good starting point in exploring reflective practices is by asking, "Why do people engage in them?" Reflection in teaching is often viewed as a tool for identifying and addressing challenges or issues that arise in educational settings (Brookfield, 2017).

Reflective practice has become a focus of interest and a powerful movement in teacher education. The complexity of teaching requires teachers to question their practices for their own professional development in order to improve and to increase learner performance. Reflective practice is the ability to reflect on an action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning. (Mathew et al., 2017).

A central idea behind reflective practice is that experience alone does not guarantee learning; rather, intentional reflection on those experiences is necessary for meaningful growth. This approach is especially valuable in professional learning environments where individuals learn primarily through their own experiences rather than through structured instruction or the direct transfer of knowledge. It is the most important source of personal professional development and improvement. It is also an important way to bring together theory and practice; through reflection a person is able to see and label forms of thought and theory within the context of his or her work. A person who reflects throughout his or her practice is not just looking back on past actions and events, but is taking a conscious look at emotions, experiences, actions, and responses, and using that information to add to his or her existing knowledge base and reach a higher level of understanding (Mathew et al., 2017).

"Reflection" has become a buzzword in academia and has vast array of implications across fields, disciplines, and subdisciplines (Machost & Stains, 2023). Reflection entails considering past or present experiences, learning from the outcomes observed, and planning how to better approach similar situations in the future.



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An educational strategy known as inclusive education supports settings where each student may study and feel appreciated as a member of the wider society (Moriña, 2017). Inclusive education is recognized as the leading promising form of education for children with alternative development in the American school, as such organization of the educational process allows you to satisfy the educational needs of each special child (Bessarabova & Kurysheva, 2020). American concepts of inclusive education are grounded in the belief that creating an inclusive educational environment involves not only transforming the educational system but also reshaping the underlying philosophy of education to reflect the principles of freedom, justice and equality. A key characteristic of the American concepts is the focus on supporting children with diverse needs, not as the object of lifelong care of the family, but as independent, active individuals capable of making their own life decisions (Bessarabova & Kurysheva, 2020).

Moreover, Ricci et al. (2022) highlight that schools must move away from the idea that inclusion is the sole responsibility of special educators, but rather that inclusion is a shared practice across the school community. Thus, professional development opportunities that encourage stakeholders to reflect on their own practices and see inclusion through the perspectives of one another must be provided to achieve the goal of fully inclusive schools. Collaboration is a key part of providing effective support for my learners. Working in partnership with administrators, general educators, educational professionals, students, and their families, creates the strong foundation needed to support positive learning outcomes (McBrayne, 2022). The general education teachers or non-SPED teachers are part of the collaborative process.

As U.S. classrooms become more diverse, with students coming from various cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, languages, and socioeconomic statuses, teachers are increasingly expected to meet the unique needs of all learners, including those with special needs. This shift highlights the importance for adaptive and responsive teaching approaches. Thus to meet the demands of these complex and dynamic learning environments, teachers, including non-SPED majors must engage in multi-cultural reflective practice and examine their teaching approaches through personal, pedagogical, emotional, ethical, and socio-cultural contexts. Given this context, the study explored how non-SPED teachers engage in multi-dimensional reflective practices in the promoting inclusive, responsive, and growth-oriented teaching.

## Objectives

The study described the multi-dimensional reflective practices of non-SPED teachers.

It specifically answered the following questions:

1. How do non-SPED teachers perceive the impact of multi-dimensional reflective practices on promoting inclusive, responsive, and growth-oriented teaching?
2. What meanings may be formulated based on the perceived impact of multi-dimensional reflective practices of non-SPED teachers?
3. What themes emerged from the formulated meanings?

## METHODS

### Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative research design, a methodology for scientific inquiry that emphasizes the depth and richness of context and voice in understanding social phenomena. This methodology is constructive or interpretive, aiming to unveil the "what," "why," "when," "where," "who," and "how" (or the "5W1H") behind social behaviors and interactions, rather than merely quantifying occurrences (Lim, 2023). Qualitative research embraces openness and employs a variety of equivalent methods such as open-ended questions, in-depth and focus group interviews, and participant observation, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of the phenomena. This study described the perceptions of non-SPED teachers on the impact of multi-dimensional reflective practices in promoting inclusive, responsive, and growth-oriented teaching.

### Population and Sampling

The study's population consisted of 15 non-SPED teachers from Zuni High School in Zuni, New Mexico, U.S.A.

### Instrument

The primary instrument used in this study is an interview schedule. It contains a set of open-ended questions designed to guide the interview while allowing flexibility for follow-up questions. Interview questions

1433



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covered areas such as inclusive classroom strategies, student engagement, adaptive teaching, and personal/professional development.

### Data Collection

Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with selected teachers. The interviews were conducted face-to-face within the school premises, in a quiet and private space arranged by the school administration. All interviews were audio-recorded with informed consent.

### Treatment of Data

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. It involved familiarization with the data, coding, theme generation, and refinement.

### Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that all research protocols involving ethics in research were complied with for the protection of all participants and the institution involved in the conduct of the study. The researcher assured that the participants' consent was considered for their inclusion in the study. Furthermore, teachers' participation in the study did not have a bearing on their performance. Within the scope of the study, the researcher assured that there was negligible or minimal risk in the participation of the teachers in the research study. The participants were free to skip specific questions if they felt discomfort or inconvenience or if they believed they did not have the proper authority to answer such questions in the interview schedule. Additionally, the participants were not given incentives or monetary compensation for their participation in the study.

### RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Figure 1 shows the conceptual map of themes describing non-SPED teachers' perceptions on the impact of multi-dimensional reflective practices in promoting inclusive, responsive, and growth-oriented teaching. Multi-dimensional reflective practices of non-SPED teachers serve as the core catalyst, whereas these practices lead to three main thematic outcomes. These are: (1) Professional Growth and Transformation through Reflection, (2) Responsive Teaching through Deeper Understanding of Student Needs, and (3) Improvement in Classroom Management and Student Engagement. Each theme is elaborated through sub-themes that illustrate areas of growth and development in using the multi-dimensional reflective practices.

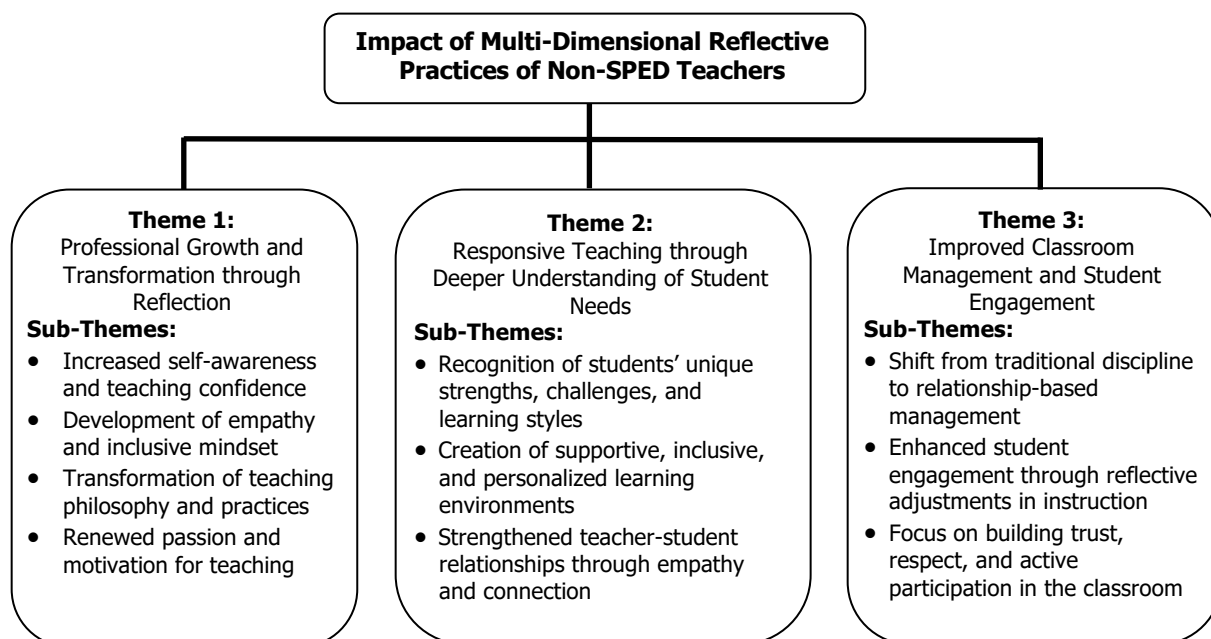


Figure 1. Conceptual Map of Themes





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### Theme 1

## Professional Growth and Transformation through Reflection

The first main theme, "Professional Growth and Transformation through Reflection," refers to becoming a more effective teacher by regularly reflecting on one's experiences, actions, and decisions and learning meaningfully from them. It is like thinking about what went right and wrong, how they felt, and discovering something about themselves. These realizations are not just thoughts; they help shape how teachers work, relate to others, and especially how they grow. The idea echoes Korthagen's (2017) assertion that personal and professional growth, like teachers' professional development, is entrenched in teachers' daily lives and is incorporated into the classroom context and constructed through experience and practice as a sustainable, recurring cycle of goal setting, planning, implementation, and reflection.

Professional Growth and Transformation through Reflection is detailed in four sub-themes, namely: (1) Increased self-awareness and teaching confidence, (2) Development of empathy and inclusive mindset, (3) Transformation of teaching philosophy and practices, and (4) Renewed passion and motivation for teaching.

**Increased self-awareness and teaching confidence.** Reflecting on both the positive and challenging teaching experiences can greatly improve self-awareness and boost confidence in one's teaching abilities, particularly in hard-to-learn learners with special needs among non-SPED teachers. The participants revealed a noticeable transformation in how they perceive and perform their teaching roles, marked by deeper self-awareness and growing confidence in their instructional practices. This shift often began with a simple, yet powerful habit: reflection.

One participant shared his experience by stating, *"I'm constantly reflecting on my practice now, and it's making a huge difference. I'm more aware of my students' strengths and weaknesses, and I'm able to adjust my instruction accordingly."* This shows how reflective teaching shapes the awareness and teaching confidence of a teacher, which directly impact student learning. Another participant remarked that self-awareness, as a result of reflective practice enabled her to recognize how the level of engagement directly impacts student relationships and learning experiences, *"By increasing my engagement, my students' needs has significantly increased my engagement with them and improved our relationships, allowing me to create a more supportive and personalized learning experience."* This indicates that reflection also enhances the emotional aspect of teaching, not just improves instruction. Furthermore, growth through reflective practice empowers teachers beyond classroom instruction. As one respondent emphasized, *"Training on multi-dimensional reflective practices has given me the tools and the mindset to become a more effective advocate for my students. I'm more confident in communicating their needs to other professionals and collaborating with families."* The confidence to advocate for students and collaborate with stakeholders is a clear outcome of reflective transformation. These insights show that when non-SPED teachers reflect on their instructional approaches, including their level of engagement, it helps them grow, adapt, and better respond to their students' needs, particularly those with special needs.

**Development of empathy and inclusive mindset.** The development of empathy and inclusive mindset is a result of reflection among non-SPED teachers. Makoelle (2019) stated that teachers need to reach out to all their students. The exercise of empathy is critical for this important pedagogical practice, particularly in relation to students with diverse cultures, abilities, and needs. The increase of diversity in classrooms as a result of the implementation of inclusive education has placed even more significance on the ability of teachers to provide an equitable provision of education that responds to the individual and collective needs of students in the classroom. It is questionable how far this can be achieved if a teacher lacks empathy and inclusive mindset.

Teacher participants spoke of a transformative journey. One teacher captured this transformation, stating, *"Becoming more aware of my students' individual needs has been a transformative journey in my teaching career. Through careful reflection and ongoing analysis, I've gained a deeper understanding of their unique learning styles, strengths, and challenges."* This journey describes that empathy is developed among teachers, even non-SPED teachers by being present and responsive to students' needs, particularly those with special needs. Another reflection pointed to how this awareness has had a lasting impact on teacher-student relationships. *"My students' individual needs has significantly improved my relationships with them. By understanding their unique learning styles, strengths, and challenges, I've been able to connect with them on a deeper level, building stronger bonds of trust and respect."* In this response, empathy is seen as a vital human experience that strengthens relationships between the teachers and students. The practice of reflection plays a significant part in nurturing this mindset. One teacher participant shared, *"I'm so much more confident in my ability to support my students' social and emotional needs now. The reflection process has helped me develop deeper empathy and a better understanding of the impact of*

1435



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*learning.* Reflective practice becomes a bridge observation and action. Furthermore, empathy leads to a shift in perspective. A teacher expressed this realization: *"I feel like I'm finally starting to see the whole child, not just the disability. Reflecting on my interactions with students has helped me build stronger relationships and create a more inclusive classroom environment."* This statement shows how non-SPED teachers develop an inclusive mindset through reflective practice, while valuing each child, especially those with special needs. Empathy and inclusive mindset are lived, felt, and built through reflective practices and seeing the child not just as learner, but as an individual.

The findings of the study validate Makoelle's conclusion (2019) that teacher empathy is key for the creation of inclusive learning communities where all students can feel they belong and be provided with meaningful learning experiences. Empathy enables teachers to affectively enter their students' worlds of learning and socio-emotional experience, to cognitively understand their struggles and needs from the students' own point of view, to let students know that they are understood and validated, and to actually offer support to students in effective and timely ways. It also conforms to the study of Whitford and Emerson (2018) who found that teacher empathy decreases the implicit bias of white teachers against black students which is important for the recognition of cultural differences and celebration of diversity in the classroom.

**Transformation of teaching philosophy and practices.** The transformation of teaching philosophy and practices signifies professional growth where reflection becomes the key factor for instructional beliefs and strategies. According to Machost and Stains (2023), reflective practices are a process and a time- and energy-intensive, but extremely valuable tool for educators when implemented with fidelity. Therefore, reflection is vital for efficacy as an educator and a requirement for educators to advance their lifelong journeys as learners.

Through reflective engagement, non-SPED teachers experienced transformation in their teaching philosophy and classroom practices. One teacher participant shared, *"My approach to my classroom management has completely transformed since I began reflecting deeply on my students' individual needs. I've moved away from my traditional styles and towards a more collaborative and understanding approach, focusing on building positive relationships and creating a safe space for learning."* This transformation shows the importance of knowing the students, especially those with special needs. Another participant highlighted how a multidimensional perspective helped her transformed teaching philosophy and practice, saying *"Multidimensional approach has really opened my eyes to the complex needs of my students. It's pushed me to think outside the box and develop more creative and individualized learning plans."* The transformative impact of reflection was emphasized by a teacher who stated that, *"The multidimensional approach, combined with the emphasis on reflection, has truly transformed my teaching. I'm now more patient, more understanding, and more effective in helping my students reach their full potential."* Another teacher shared that, *"My students' individual needs has completely transformed my approach to classroom management. Instead of focusing solely on rules and consequences, I've learned to understand the root causes of challenging behaviors, creating a more supportive and inclusive environment where everyone feels seen and heard. This shift has not only improved student behavior but has also deepened my understanding of human behavior and the importance of building genuine connections."* These reflections underscore a growing commitment to fostering inclusive classrooms where students are not only taught, but truly seen and heard. The perceptions of the non-SPED teachers reveal how reflection reshapes not only strategies but the heart of teaching itself.

According to Watts (2021), being able to effectively support children with special educational needs (SEN) in the classroom is an essential part of any teacher's job. In a mainstream setting, there are average of four children in every class who require support for special educational needs. Research suggests that the behaviour and practice of the classroom teacher has the greatest impact on the academic and social outcomes of children with SEN (Efthymiou & Kingston, 2017).

**Renewed passion and motivation for teaching.** Sustaining teachers' passion and motivation for teaching is essential to their well-being. Reflective practices allow teachers to examine their teaching methods, student engagement, and personal growth; they often rediscover meaning and purpose in teaching, and as a result, their passion and motivation are renewed. As a result, reflection becomes a reviving force, sustaining teachers' well-being and long-term commitment to the profession. The reflections of the non-SPED teachers highlight how engaging in reflective practices and student-centered training has renewed their passion and motivation for teaching. One teacher participant shared, *"The focus on student-centered learning and the power of reflection has made me feel more connected to my students and more invested in their success. It has reignited my passion for teaching."* This statement reveals how professional development that centers on reflection and student needs can deepen a teacher's emotional connection and investment in their work. Another teacher expressed gratitude for opportunities to grow, saying, *"I'm so grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow through trainings. The emphasis on reflection has*

1436





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*made me a more thoughtful and intentional teacher, and I'm excited to continue to implement these strategies in my classroom."* This conveys the transformative power of reflection not only in improving teaching strategies but also in promoting intentional approaches not only for SPED but also for non-SPED teachers.

The responses indicate how reflective practices among non-SPED teachers serve as a renewing force that rekindles passion and deepens commitment to teaching, particularly within inclusive environments, thereby embody the essence of professional growth and transformation through reflection. The findings of the study align with Lambs' (2025) assertion that teaching is both deeply meaningful and highly demanding. For non-SPED teachers working in inclusive environments, the challenges of evolving standards, administrative pressures, and the daily effort required to support diverse learners can easily lead to feeling disconnected from their original purpose. However, when these teachers take the time to reflect and rediscover their "why," they become better equipped to stay grounded, make intentional decisions, and reconnect with their core motivation. This renewed sense of purpose is especially vital in inclusive classrooms, where understanding and responding to the unique needs of all students requires both dedication and a heartfelt commitment.

## Theme 2

### Responsive Teaching through Deeper Understanding of Student Needs

The second main theme, "Responsive Teaching through Deeper Understanding of Student Needs" pertains to the necessity of checking in on every student in order to respond to their individual needs. Being an effective teacher means truly understanding students in terms of their academic, emotional, social, and cultural needs, and using this understanding to adjust how and what they teach. According to Fievre (2021), when teachers make a point of recognizing the diversity of their students, they can help all students make deeper connections to what they are learning. Beyond just finding the students' names, ages, friendship groups and family backgrounds, it is important to dig a bit deeper and discover their learning interests and strengths.

Responsive Teaching through Deeper Understanding of Student Needs is elaborated in three sub-themes, namely: (1) Recognition of students' unique strengths, challenges, and learning styles, (2) Creation of supportive, inclusive, and personalized learning environments, and (3) Strengthened teacher-student relationships through empathy and connection.

**Recognition of students' unique strengths, challenges, and learning styles.** When teachers recognize and nurtures their students' unique strengths, challenges, and learning styles, their instruction becomes more effective. They are likely to experience greater success with students when they know and can draw on their unique strengths, challenges, and learning styles compared to when focusing too heavily on correcting or accommodating their weaknesses. In most instances, the unique strengths of some students are obvious and easy to spot.

One teacher participant shared, *"My students' needs has been a real journey for my personal and professional growth. I truly see each student as an individual with unique strengths, challenges, and learning styles."* This response indicates that the non-SPED teacher has a deep awareness of diversity in the classroom and how this awareness promotes inclusivity and further shapes the teacher's teaching pedagogy.

Another teacher remarked, *"Becoming more aware of my students' individual needs has been a transformative journey in my teaching career. Through careful reflection and ongoing analysis, I've gained a deeper understanding of their unique learning styles, strengths, and challenges."* These insights manifest that non-SPED teachers are learning to move beyond one-size-fits-all methods to more reflective and responsive instruction.

Also, a teacher emphasized, *"I'm constantly reflecting on my practice now, and it's making a huge difference. I'm more aware of my students' strengths and weaknesses, and I'm able to adjust my instruction accordingly."* This suggests that non-SPED teachers reflect on their practices and adjust their instruction based on their understanding of their students' strengths and weakness, especially those with special needs.

Lastly, one teacher affirmed, *"Students' individual needs has been instrumental in my professional growth, allowing me to refine my teaching skills and create a more engaging and effective learning environment that caters to the diverse needs of each student."* This statement highlights the value of understanding each student's individuality, which benefits not only the students but also the professional growth of the teacher. Recognizing the unique characteristics of every learner, especially those with special needs, prepares teachers to be consistently ready to support their students whenever the need arises. Getting to know who are the students as individuals can help the teacher deliver an inclusive, respectful and accepting classroom environment.



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The responses clearly show that non-SPED teachers can recognize and respond to the diverse learning of every learner, particularly those with special needs, thus making them more effective and empathetic teachers. The results of the study validate the findings of Adaza et al. (2022) that despite the everyday struggles and hardships of non-SPED teachers in implementing inclusive education, they implement different strategies to address these challenges. This reflects teachers' commitment to understanding and addressing the unique needs, strengths, and learning styles of all learners, particularly those with special needs.

**Creation of supportive, inclusive, and personalized learning environments.** According to Child Hppe Philippines (2025), inclusive learning environments do not only benefit students with special needs or marginalized backgrounds; they enhance the overall learning experience for everyone. By fostering an atmosphere of acceptance and mutual respect, these classrooms help students develop empathy, social awareness, and problem-solving skills. Deeper understanding of students' needs through reflective practices empowers teachers to develop more responsive pedagogical approaches that support both the academic and emotional well-being of each learner. With reflective practices, teachers can identify barriers to learning, which can be used as basis to re-align instructional method. It further promotes inclusive and personalized learning environments for all learners.

One teacher participant shared, *"Individual needs has been a powerful catalyst for my professional growth, allowing me to foster deeper student engagement by creating a more inclusive and personalized learning environment."* This statement implies that by recognizing and responding to students' needs, a teacher's professional growth is also developed. For non-SPED teachers in general education classrooms, reflecting on student diversity is essential, as it opens pathways to meaningful learning engagement. Another teacher remarked, *"Instead of focusing solely on rules and consequences, I've learned to understand the root causes of challenging behaviors, creating a more supportive and inclusive environment where everyone feels seen and heard."* With reflective practices, teachers can develop a sense of safety and belonging that benefits every learner.

Another teacher respondent stated, *"My approach to my classroom management has completely transformed since I began reflecting deeply on my students' individual needs. I've moved away from my traditional styles and towards a more collaborative and understanding approach, focusing on building positive relationships and creating a safe space for learning."* This transformation is attributed to reflective practices of the non-SPED teacher, which foster growth and flexibility. In an inclusive setting, where SPED non-SPED students are taught and learn together, the shift to a more collaborative and understanding approach cultivate a space where all students feel valued and supported. Therefore, reflection becomes a bridge between awareness and action. One teacher also said, *"My Classroom management has become much more than just keeping students quiet. While i am reflecting on my students' needs , taught me to create a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected."* This response speaks to a deeper understanding that classroom management is more about care. Teachers, including non-SPED teachers, through their reflective practice are able to listen and respond to their students, thus creating a classroom environment that affirms every student's worth.

When teachers engage in reflective practice, they do not only adjust classroom methods, but more importantly, they transform their mindsets. Even non-SPED teachers who practice reflection, will ensure that every child or every learner, regardless of their ability or background feel supported and truly included. The findings conform to study of Aryal (2024) that reflective teaching is worth trying. It is necessary that teachers reflect, analyze, and adjust or change their practice whenever it is necessary; otherwise, thinking would actually become a waste of time. What really will make the difference when reflective practice is performed is the fact that the results are empowering in helping teachers become better teachers. Gustafsson et al. (2021) stated that the desire for improvement is believed to build reflective capacity, thereby fostering confidence.

**Strengthened teacher-student relationships through empathy and connection.** Strong, positive relationships between teachers and students in the classroom are fundamental to promoting student engagement, social-emotional development, and academic growth. Teachers can foster such relationships by establishing personal connections with their students, making sure their students feel cared for and supported, establishing high expectations for student success, and providing constructive guidance to ensure their students are meeting those expectations (Rimm-Kaufman, 2019). Building on the significance of strong teacher-student relationships, reflective practices are vital for non-SPED teachers in mainstream classrooms, as it enables them to continuously adapt their strategies to better support the diverse needs of their learners, especially those with special needs.

One teacher participant shared, *"Building strong rapport with my students has become a cornerstone of my teaching philosophy."* This means that through teachers' reflective practices, they were able to think deeply about their students' learning students and emotional needs. This practice enables them to create an environment where students, particularly those with special feel supported. Another teacher participant mentioned, *"My students'*

1438





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*individual needs has significantly improved my relationships with them."* This signifies that recognizing and adapting to the diverse needs of the students, even non-SPED teachers can establish trust between them and their students. Empathy can be nurtured through meaningful interaction and thoughtful reflection.

It was also emphasized by a teacher participant that, *"My students' needs has significantly increased my engagement with them and improved our relationships."* This means that as teachers reflect more deeply on each of their learners, they develop genuine relationship with them, and as a result, they become more supportive in providing inclusive classroom environment. Interestingly, one teacher participant remarked, "I feel like I'm finally starting to see the whole child, not just the disability." This shows the transformative impact of reflective practices, as it illustrates how teachers may initially focus on the limitations of learners, especially those with special needs, rather than recognizing their full potential. Through reflection, non-SPED teachers are able to genuinely embrace inclusive teaching.

With these responses, reflection serves as the bridge as it connects teachers to the emotional and cognitive worlds of their students. Non-SPED teachers, who are normally feel unprepared for inclusive classroom environment, reflective practice becomes an empowering process because it develops connection and fosters empathy. The findings of the study corroborate to the result of Somma and Bennett (2020) that overall pedagogical reflection is one of the highlights of the teachers' change process, along with positive performance of students with disabilities and the growth and development of the other students. Also, the study by Schmidt et al. (2019) on the ABCs of Inclusive English Teacher Education, they identified levels of reflective competence that enable them to meet the diverse needs of most learners in heterogenous EFL classrooms.

### Theme 3

#### Improved Classroom Management and Student Engagement

The third main theme, "Improved Classroom Management and Student Engagement," refers to the impact of reflective practices that have led to a more organized and dynamic classroom where both teaching and learning effectively happen. This theme reflects how reflective practices significantly impact academic achievement but also to a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. According to Juma (2024), self-reflection is a critical aspect of professional development for teachers, serving as a powerful tool for continuous improvement and growth. By engaging in thoughtful introspection and analysis of their teaching practices, teachers can gain valuable insights into their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for development. Improved classroom climate is one of the key points highlighting the importance of self-reflection in the teaching profession.

Improved Classroom Management and Student Engagement is expounded in three sub-themes, namely: (1) Shift from traditional discipline to relationship-based management, (2) Enhanced student engagement through reflective adjustments in instruction, and (3) Focus on building trust, respect, and active participation in the classroom.

**Shift from traditional discipline to relationship-based management.** This sub-theme discusses how non-SPED teachers, through reflective practice, have moved from rule-centered approaches to a more empathetic strategies, which promote supportive classroom environment. According to California Department of Education (2015), innovative school leaders have shifted away from reactionary and punitive discipline methods, recognizing that such approaches are often ineffective in reducing problematic behavior. Instead of resolving issues, they frequently lead to unintended, harmful consequences for both the students being disciplined and their peers.

One teacher participant shared, *"My students' individual needs has completely transformed my approach to classroom management. Instead of focusing solely on rules and consequences, I've learned to understand the root causes of challenging behaviors, creating a more supportive and inclusive environment where everyone feels seen and heard."* This response from the teacher implies a shift in perspective – from enforcing discipline to fostering empathy. Non-SPED teachers began to view student behavior not as disruption, but an expression of unmet needs or struggles. Another teacher participant remarked, *"My approach to my classroom management has completely transformed since I began reflecting deeply on my students' individual needs. I've moved away from my traditional styles and towards a more collaborative and understanding approach."* This suggests how reflective practice encouraged teacher to adapt relational strategies by actively listening to students and involving them. Through reflective practice, teachers became more compassionate.

Furthermore, one teacher participated stated, *"My classroom management has become much more than just keeping students quiet. While i am reflecting on my students' needs , taught me to create a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected."* This shows that effective classroom management

1439





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E - ISSN 2945-3577



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P - ISSN 2984-7842  
E - ISSN 1908-3181

is not always about silence or control, but about cultivating a sense of belongingness to each learner. While focusing on nurturing relationships, non-SPED teachers are able to provide inclusive environment to every learner, regardless of ability.

**Enhanced student engagement through reflective adjustments in instruction.** This sub-theme explores how non-SPED teachers, through continuous reflective practices, have modified and adjusted their instructional pedagogy to better connect with their students, particularly learners with special needs in mainstream classrooms. Reflection enables them to adjust instruction and therefore, enhanced student engagement.

According to one teacher participant, *"Individual needs has been a powerful catalyst for my professional growth, allowing me to foster deeper student engagement by creating a more inclusive and personalized learning environment."* This shows that through reflection on student differences, it led to instructional changes, something that is more supportive to students' diverse needs. Another teacher remarked, *"I'm constantly reflecting on my practice now, and it's making a huge difference. I'm more aware of my students' strengths and weaknesses, and I'm able to adjust my instruction accordingly."* This indicates that being more aware of students' strengths and weaknesses will allow teachers to modify instruction. With the application of reflective practice, it could support a dynamic and responsive instruction to all learners, particularly those with special needs. Meanwhile, adjusting instruction based on students' unique needs will result in more effective student engagement.

The responses underscore how reflection empowers mainstream teachers such as non-SPED to adjust their strategies, leading to an improved classroom management and student engagement. The results of the study validate the findings of Lefebvre et al. (2023) that the reflection supported by the use of these tools, has led to a change in the way teachers view their teaching. Planning, activity variation, student characteristics, teacher-student relationship and classroom management have been identified as reflective practice outcomes connected to factors that can influence learning. Indeed, reflection on teaching practice has been recognized to improve teaching skills and responding to learners' needs particularly those with special needs. Also, the findings conform to the study of Shaheen et al. (2021) who found out that reflective teaching practice has positively affected students' academic engagement. Hayam-Jonas (2016) reported similar results in her study, stating that reflective teaching practices had a positive impact on students' academic achievement and engagement in various tasks. These reflective practices involved students in multiple activities such as homework, assignments, and quizzes, which in turn enhanced their academic engagement.

**Focus on building trust, respect, and active participation in the classroom.** As an impact of reflective practice, non-SPED teachers have placed importance on building trust, fostering mutual respect, and encouraging active participation which are all key elements in improving classroom management and student engagement. Nolan (2020) explored that conventional relationship 'grammar' includes mainly academic relationships between students and teachers and recognizing nonacademic relationships as a vehicle to know students on a more personal and meaningful level, supporting trust building, cultural connections, and individual interests. Respondents said that without true established relationships, students will not trust the teacher. Also, they stated that the trust that develops is crucial to learning. Trust derives from an understanding of one another's goals and efforts, along with a sense of mutual obligation, grounded in a common mission (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019). Connecting hand-in-hand with trust is a sense of belonging.

One teacher reflected, *"Reflecting deeply on their individual needs and learning styles, I've been able to create a classroom environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and supported. This has not only improved classroom management and student engagement but has also significantly enhanced my teaching skills, allowing me to connect with my students on a deeper level and foster a love of learning."* In a mainstream classroom, this insight shows that the willingness of non-SPED teachers to reflect on their practices could foster inclusion and safe space where students can actively engage in learning, especially those with special needs.

Another teacher participant shared, *"Understanding my students' unique learning styles, strengths, and challenges, I've been able to connect with them on a deeper level, building stronger bonds of trust and respect."* This shows how reflecting on the unique traits of each learner can lead to meaningful relationships in the classroom. By taking the time to understand the needs of all students, the teacher builds stronger connections with them. This, in turn, creates a positive environment where trust, respect, and active participation can flourish.

## Conclusions

Non-SPED teachers perceive multi-dimensional reflective practice as a transformative approach that nurtures their growth both personally and professionally. Reflective practice makes them more self-aware, empathetic, and inclusive in their teaching approach. These practices help them better understand the unique needs

1440



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of their students, especially those with special needs, create supportive learning environments, and improve classroom management. Reflection fosters a greater sense of purpose among non-SPED teachers, strengthens connections, and enhances responsiveness – all of which are important for inclusive and growth-oriented classrooms.

## Recommendations

The study recommends that schools shall prioritize providing structured opportunities and support systems for non-SPED teachers to engage in multi-dimensional reflective practices. Training programs that encourage reflection, inclusion, and student-focused strategies can help non-SPED teachers grow in their roles in special education. These programs can boost their confidence, deepen their empathy, and equip them to better support diverse learners, making classrooms more inclusive, responsive, and meaningful for every student.

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