

Doctoral Dissertation

**Teacher Competence and Commitment Towards Implementing Inclusive
Education in Myanmar**

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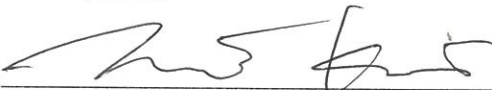
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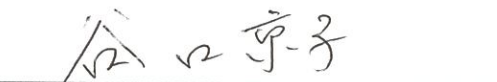
We hereby recommend that the dissertation by Ms. PAN SU AUNG entitled "Teacher Competence and Commitment Towards Implementing Inclusive Education in Myanmar" be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION.


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ABSTRACT

Introducing a new channel for all children under the name of “Inclusive Education” poses several challenges, and its successful implementation hinges profoundly upon the competence and unwavering commitment of teachers. Therefore, this study explored the essential competencies of inclusive education teachers in Myanmar and also investigated how teachers perceive themselves as competent and committed to inclusion and their relationships. The grounded theory qualitative research design was used to provide a theory or concept grounded on the comprehensive description of the experiences. Purposive sampling was used, and a total of 20 teachers under the Ministry of Education and Non-charity organization participated in semi-structured interviews. Data were analyzed using NVivo Software, and the analysis process was guided by Corbin and Strauss (2015), consisting of three sequential coding processes called Open, Axial, and Selective coding.

Based on the result of the analysis, this study proposed a six-domain competency framework for inclusive education teachers grounded on knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These domains were (1) knowledge of inclusive education, (2) supporting all learners, (3) classroom and behavioral management, (4) inclusive instruction and techniques, (5) cooperation and collaboration, and (6) professional ethics. In general, more than half of the teachers felt less competent with respect to inclusion, especially in using inclusive instruction and techniques, managing classroom and behavioral challenges inclusively, and in cooperation with special education teachers. In addition, most of the teachers still lacked knowledge of inclusive policies and regulations practiced in their own regions supporting a charity and religious model of inclusion. They showed positive attitudes towards inclusion, and they used available resources for inclusion, such as gestures, readable fonts, pictures for teaching, and moral and civic education for behavioral management. However, half of the teachers hesitated to participate in professional development training.

With respect to commitment of teachers toward IE, most of the teachers were not willing to implement it in their classrooms, and some teachers still doubt the benefits of IE. However, they are teaching children with disabilities in their classrooms because of their strong sense of responsibility as a teacher and their obligation to do so, not because of their acknowledgment of the right of education for these students. In addition, this study showed a relationship between teachers' perceived competence and commitment towards IE, in spite of any influencing factors.

The proposed framework has several implications for policymakers, educationalists, teachers, teacher educators, curriculum developers, parents, and children in creating a more inclusive society. This study highlighted the significance of a competency framework for teachers in diverse and inclusive classrooms and suggested creating a context-specific competency framework aligned with educational objectives.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
CWDs	Children with Disabilities
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
EC	Education Colleagues
ECDC	Eden Center for Disabled Children
EFA	Education for All
GEM	Global Education Monitoring
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDA	International Disability Alliance
IE	Inclusive Education
MIMU	Myanmar Information Management Unit
MOE	Ministry of Education
MSWRR	Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement
NCTE	National Council for Teacher Education
NESP	National Education Strategic Plan
PISA	The Program for International Student Assessment
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDT	Self-determination Theory
SEA-TCF	Southeast Asia Teacher Competency Framework
STEM	Strengthening Pre-service Teacher Education in Myanmar
TCSF	Teacher Competency Standard Framework
TCT	Teachers' Council of Thailand
TE4I	Teacher Education for Inclusion
TECs	Teacher Education Colleagues

TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

If teachers understand what inclusion means and leave their comfort zone, taking advantage of opportunities to develop skills for children to help them recognize and respect diversity, they can be agents of change.

Maria Teresa Moreno Zavaleta, Peru

Successful implementation of inclusive education, a cornerstone of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), hinges profoundly upon the competence and unwavering commitment of teachers (Sharma & Pace, 2019; Siri et al., 2020). However, teachers have not felt ready for this new educational transition. Even after decades of practice, they felt compelled to accommodate students with special learning needs in their classes (UNESCO, 2020). This lack of preparedness to adopt inclusive education can be exclusively attributable to teachers lacking the necessary knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes. Moreover, even though much prior research has explored the attitudes of teachers (AlMahdi & Bukamal, 2019; Alquraini, 2012; Aung & Sakurai, 2023; Bhatnagar & Das, 2014; Hammond & Ingalls, 2003), very few studies have focused on the necessary competencies for teachers and their dedication to inclusive education that might result most successfully in inclusive education. Consequently, the primary purpose of this study is to explore the essential competencies for inclusive education teachers in Myanmar, as well as how teachers' perceptions of competence influence their commitment to implementing inclusive education. This chapter discusses the research background, problem statement, research questions, and significance of the study. Finally, this chapter concludes with the definitions of key terms and an overview of the organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The education of children with disabilities has been in the spotlight since the late nineteenth century under the term “Inclusive Education,” especially after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Convention on the Rights of the child (1989). Contrary to expectations, this inclusive strategy made it possible to designate a single location where children with disabilities received additional support. Consequently, during the nineteenth century, there was a growth in the number of specialized schools for children with various forms of disability (Hassanein, 2015). It has been seen as another form of discrimination because it is used to distinguish between people (Hassanein, 2015).

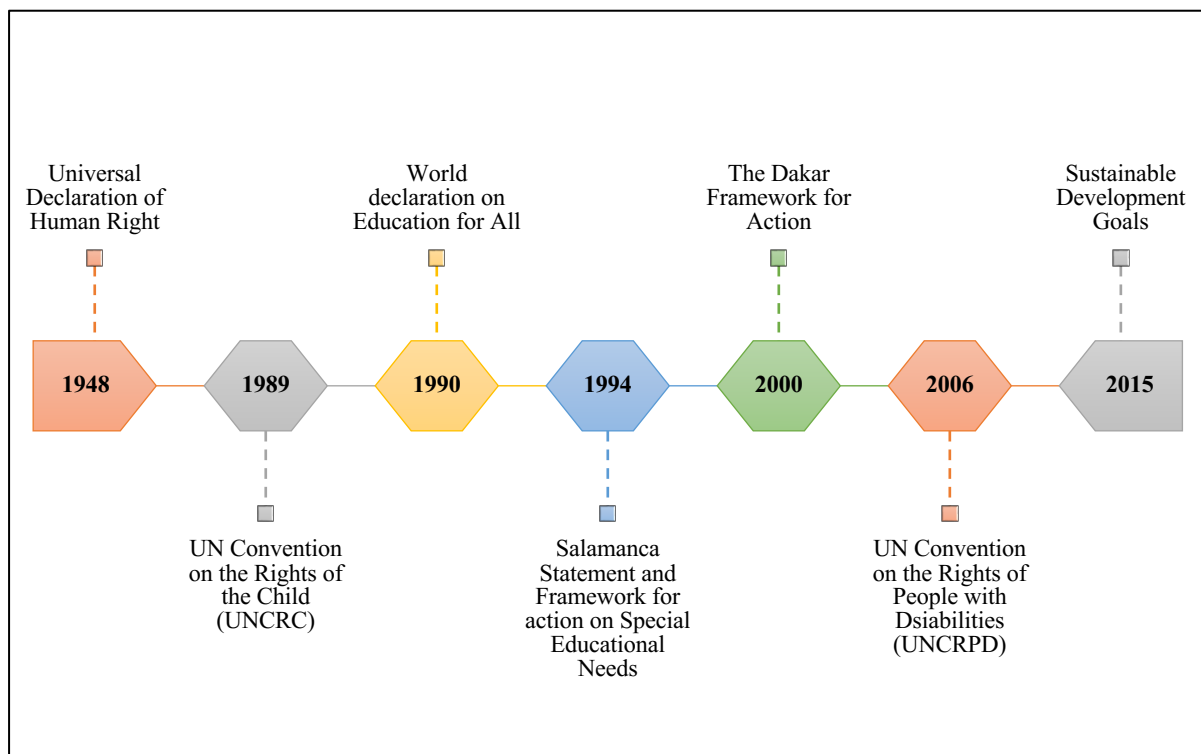
However, in 1994, there was a movement towards inclusive education following the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action from the World Conference on Special Needs Education. The statement clearly identified the rights of children with disabilities in regular classrooms and called for improving the education system taking into account diverse learning needs and soliciting the participation of parents, communities, and organizations in its implementation. The Dakar Framework for Action (2000) reaffirmed the previous declarations and highlighted inclusive education by committing to provide free and compulsory primary education for all, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

The most important movement was the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2006, which has been ratified by 181 countries. Article 24 states that “Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live (p.17).” It is one of the most significant pledges to inclusive education, and it emphasizes the equal right of individuals with disabilities to access not just education, but also political, social, cultural, and economic issues. It empowers prior agreements and statements by expanding on the concept of human rights to include nondiscrimination, community

involvement, access to quality education at all levels, and health care for those children with disabilities (International Disability Alliance, 2020). Nine years later, international communities moved towards inclusive education through the adoption of Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030. One of the SDGs is to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” With this global commitment, many countries stepped forward to implement this vision. However, the process of implementation is still underway.

Figure 1.1

International Commitment Towards Inclusive Education (IE)



Until now, the world community has worked towards establishing universal equality and quality education for everyone without prejudice. However, many nations are unable to transform these laws into policies and practices, and in the majority of countries, national laws do not reflect the expanded version of international treaties (UNESCO, 2020). For instance, the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) determined that only 17% of participating

countries educate children with disabilities in an inclusive setting, mostly in Europe, Northern America, and Oceania, while most countries in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean provide education in a segregated setting (UNESCO, 2020). It is also worth noting that even in high- and middle-income countries, 25% of teachers reported a significant need for training in how to accommodate students with special needs. Therefore, a substantial effort should be devoted to the success of inclusive education in the future.

Despite the widespread adoption of inclusive education as a contemporary educational trend, the term "Inclusive Education" has failed to be defined in a way that is universally agreed upon (Madhesh, 2023). Over the years, it has been defined narrowly, i.e., including children with disabilities in regular classrooms along with children without disabilities, but it has also been defined more broadly. UNESCO (2008) defined inclusive education as:

“a process that involves the transformation of schools and other centers of learning so as to cater for all children – including boys and girls, students from ethnic minorities, those affected by HIV and AIDS, and those with disabilities and learning difficulties” (UNESCO, 2008: 5).

Jahnukainen (2015) also noted that the absence of a standardized definition for inclusive education stems from the overlap and ambiguity in the terminology used, including terms such as "integration," "mainstreaming," and "placement," the interpretations of which vary among countries and educational systems. In light of these different perspectives, the implementation has been approached in different ways; nonetheless, all of these definitions are grounded in the right to education for all children. For instance, in the background paper commissioned for the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report, Inclusion, and Education, the authors discussed different perspectives concerning the formal definition of inclusive education in five countries.

For instance: “Argentina emphasizes inclusion as a process that advance social justice, while Ethiopia and Ghana envision a system that succeeds in providing education for all. Laos

underlines inclusion as improving quality, and Zanzibar makes a difference between inclusion of children and adults in education” (Lehtomaki, et al., 2020, p.3). On the other hand, many countries, including Myanmar, still implement inclusive education without adopting a specific definition (UNESCO, 2021).

Even though Myanmar does not follow a clearly delineated definition of inclusive education, its meaning was elaborated in the text of a teaching training course as follows:

“The concept of inclusion is based on the notion that schools should, without question, provide for the needs of all the children in their communities, whatever the level of their ability, disability, educational need or other form of diversity” (Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2017, p. 583, as cited in Ministry of Education, 2023)¹.

Inclusive Education Background in Myanmar: Myanmar, a country in Southeast Asia, has also been working towards the implementation of inclusive education since the late twentieth century. In line with other countries, Myanmar ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1991 and committed to another international framework, “Education for All (EFA)” in 2000, as the first significant step toward educating children with disabilities. In 2011, Myanmar ratified the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and enacted the New National Education Law in 2015, with a clear statement on the rights of children with disabilities in chapter five, “Every person with disabilities shall have the right to access the education on an equal basis with others” (The Union of Myanmar, 2015, p.8).

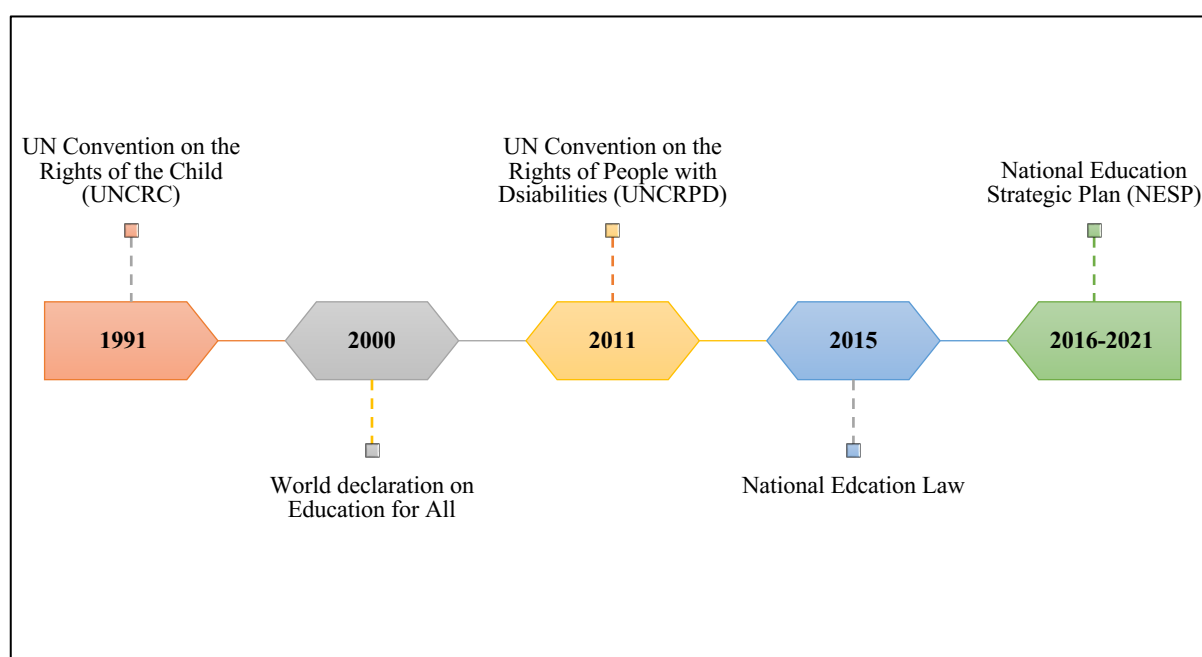
Consequently, the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP), running from 2016 to 2021, was implemented to ensure SDG Goal 4, and the Ministry of Education committed to the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real for Person with disabilities in Asia and the

¹ <https://mmteacherplatform.net/en/elibrary/resource/year-2-semester-2-training-manual-annexes-booklet>

Pacific.” The Incheon Strategy declared that expanding early diagnosis, intervention, and education of children with disabilities is important for their all-around development and for higher level provision of education and training (United Nations, 2012). Myanmar likewise adhered to international commitments and strived to provide equitable access to education for everyone.

Figure 1.2

Commitment Towards Inclusive Education in Myanmar



After a 30-year gap, the nation's first housing and population census was carried out in 2014 to provide all responsible stakeholders with essential information about the whole population in all areas. As part of its pledges to ratify international treaties, the government of Myanmar included questions in the census asking people to self-report their levels of four types of disabilities: visual, hearing, walking, and memory/attention (Department of Population Ministry of Immigration and Population, 2015). The results of the census indicate that around 2.3 million people have at least one kind of disability. Five years later, the 2019 Inter-censal Survey was conducted by the Ministry of Labor, Immigration and Population. According to the

2019 study, there was an increase in the population of individuals with disabilities. Around six million people reported having one kind of disability, which accounted for 13% of the total population as of 2019, which is the highest percentage of the population with disabilities among Asian countries (See figure 1.3). The most prevalent type of disability is visual disability (2.9 million), followed by physical disability (2.5 million), intellectual disability (2 million), hearing disability (1.1 million), and others (1.7 million). Most of the people with disabilities were from rural areas (4.3 million), especially in the western part of the country in the Chin, Ayeyarwady, Rakhine, Magway, and Kayin regions (See Table 1.1). The adoption of six function categories by the Washington Group Short Set of Questions² may contribute to the rising prevalence of individuals with disabilities. In contrast, the 2014 survey only focused on four domains.

Table 1.1

Disability Prevalence Rate by Sate/Region, by Types of Disability in Myanmar

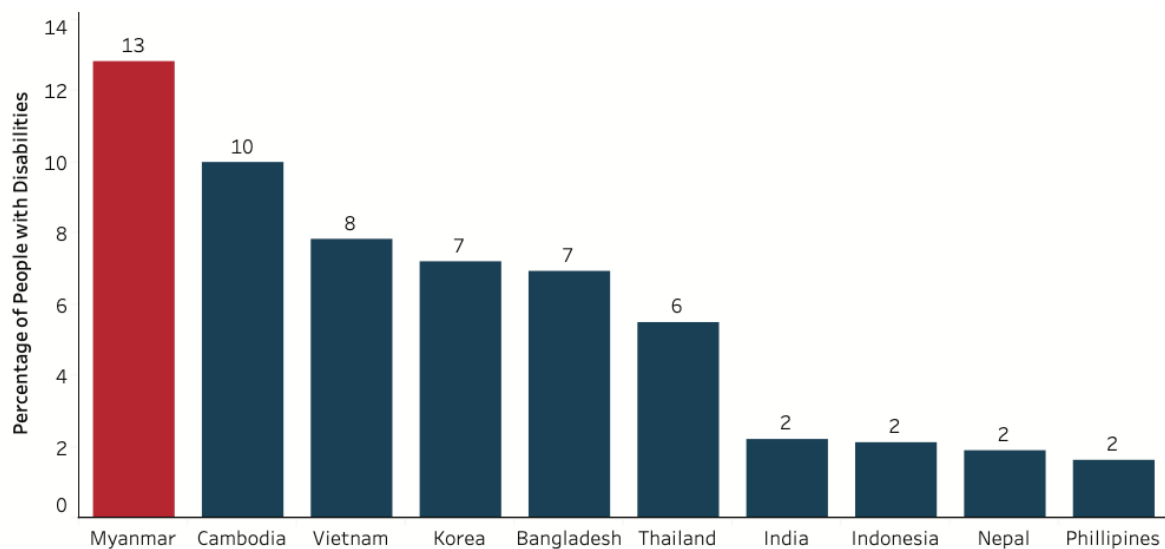
State/Region and District	Total population		Prevalence rate by type of disability (percent)						
	Total	With any of the six disabilities	Disability prevalence rate	Seeing	Hearing	Walking/ Climbing steps	Remembering/ Concentrating	Self-care	Communication
UNION	46,463,285	5,968,986	12.8	6.3	2.4	5.4	4.4	1.9	1.6
KACHIN	1,421,335	126,467	8.9	4.9	2.3	3	3.4	1.3	1.7
KAYAH	274,458	29,729	10.8	3.8	2.3	3.9	4.9	2.3	1.6
KAYIN	1,394,545	231,931	16.6	8.6	3	8.1	6.4	2.1	1.7
Chin	434,771	89,692	20.6	10.5	6.2	8.7	8.5	2.6	4.3
SAGAING	4,825,519	463,913	9.6	4.8	1.8	3.9	3.3	1.6	1.3
TANINTHARYI	1,274,646	147,753	11.6	5.3	2.3	5.1	4.4	1.8	1.9
BAGO	4,405,382	553,243	12.6	6.2	2.2	5.5	4.4	1.6	1.4
MAGWAY	3,482,645	593,010	17	7.9	2.7	6.5	7.1	2.5	1.8
MANDALAY	5,651,062	574,486	10.2	5	2	4.5	2.4	1.3	1
MON	1,725,611	262,771	15.2	6.9	2.3	5.8	5.6	2.7	2
RAKHINE	2,914,271	505,503	17.3	7.1	3.8	6.8	7.8	4.3	2.6
YANGON	7,210,592	896,242	12.4	6.5	1.8	5.6	3.1	1.3	1.2
SHAN	4,814,943	415,135	8.6	3.6	2	3.6	2.9	1.2	1.4
AYEYAWADY	5,561,248	963,663	17.3	8.8	3	7.5	6.7	2.8	2.1
NAY PYI TAW	1,072,257	115,449	10.8	6.6	1.9	3.8	2.7	1.2	1

Source: The 2019 Inter-censal Survey (<https://www.dop.gov.mm/en/publication-category/2019-inter-censal-survey>)

² The Washington Group Short Set of Questionnaire comprises questions on six core functional domains: seeing, hearing, walking/climbing steps, remembering/concentrating, self-care and communication. The questions were asked to everyone aged 5 years and over (The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, 2019, p.93).

Figure 1.3

Percentage of Population with Disability in the Asia Region (MMIU, 2021)



Myanmar's education system is not at all inclusive for children with disabilities (Myanmar Information Management Unit, 2021). There were 9,738 elementary school students, 11,536 middle school students, and 47 high school students enrolled in the 2011–2012 school year (MOE, 2014, as cited by UNESCO, 2015). In 2016, the Situation Analysis of Children with Disabilities in Myanmar was conducted firstly to provide a systematic understanding of the experiences of children with disabilities and their families through a collaboration among the Department of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement, and UNICEF. This situational analysis found that 67 percent of children with disabilities were not enrolled in school, and the incidence of dropout escalated with the child's age (UNICEF, 2016). Children with intellectual disabilities were less likely to attend school than children with other types of disabilities (ECDC & VSO, 2015). According to the report Disability in Myanmar (2014-2019), around 600,000 children aged 3 or over stopped schooling because of illness, injury, or disability, and around 200,000 children had never attended school before, mainly in

the Chin State and the Ayeyarwady Region. In addition, the special schools were located only in the Yangon and Mandalay regions, resulting in lack of access to education in rural areas.

In moving toward inclusive education, two stand-alone Ministry systems were practiced in Myanmar. Most children with disabilities were first enrolled in one of the special schools and then transferred to the nearest mainstream school when they were ready for inclusion. However, all the special schools were under the control of Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement (MSWRR), while all the general education schools were under the Ministry of Education (MOE). Existing studies also point out the lack of cooperation between these two ministries for the education of children with disabilities (Waite, 2015; Aung & Sakurai, 2023).

In addition to these two ministries, the role of the organizations is very important in moving towards inclusive education in developing countries. In Myanmar, many different organizations are working for inclusive education, including Save the Children, Voluntary Service Oversea, UNICEF, The Leprosy Mission in Myanmar, the Eden Center for Disabled Children, etc. (Hauschild & Htet, 2015). Among them, the Eden Center for Disabled Children (EDCD) is the leading non-government organization promoting the rights of children with disabilities in Myanmar. The ECDC has initiated many inclusion-related activities in Myanmar, including advocacy programs, training for teachers and social workers, disseminating social models of disability, preparing resources for both teachers and parents, etc. In addition, it is also the only service available for children with physical and intellectual disabilities. EDCD worked together with international organizations on many inclusive education projects and also published in many inclusive-related international journals. Projects by ECDC involving children with disabilities are attached in Appendix A.

1.2 Problem Statement

As mentioned above, the opportunities for education for children with disabilities in Myanmar are still very limited. Although the religious beliefs, physical environment, and attitudes of students with and without disabilities present major challenges for implementing inclusive education in Myanmar (Aung & Sakurai, 2022), there appear to be other hurdles to overcome for teachers to include children with disabilities in their classrooms:

Lack of public awareness of inclusive education: Lack of public awareness among teachers and family members is a major barrier to inclusion of children with disabilities in general education schools. There is a widespread misconception that children with disabilities cannot attend general schools and learn alongside their children without disabilities, especially in rural areas. Research conducted in Kalay and Dawei by ECDC also revealed that parents of children with disabilities do not have awareness of inclusive education in general schools and believe that special education is the only place for their children to have access to education. It also showed that teachers lack awareness of the social model of disability and perceive the child as a problem (ECDC, 2020). Having a child with special needs is a huge concern, and parents may be hesitant to discuss it with their neighbors because of stigmatization manifesting as “Karma,” “pity,” “compassion,” “shame,” and “suffering” (Ware & Schuelka, 2019). As a result, there is a lack of transparency on the availability of resources for the education and rehabilitation of children with disabilities.

For instance, EDCD conducted a study to identify the barriers to education in general schools in the western part of the Sagaing Region. Parents of children with disabilities knew nothing about inclusive education programs and instead were focused on special education. In addition, teachers had no idea of the kinds of disabilities their students faced (EDCD & VSO, 2015). A similar study in Myanmar conducted by Tonegawa (2022) also found that Myanmar parents living in rural areas were not aware of the educational opportunities for their children

with disabilities. As a result, further research is required to raise community members' knowledge of inclusive education, particularly the rights of children with special needs.

Lack of proper training for teachers: In addition to the public awareness, lack of proper training for both in-service and pre-service teachers for inclusion presents a difficult challenge for teachers. In the move toward a more diverse and inclusive society, there is increasing pressure on teacher education programs to provide teachers capable of handling the challenges of diverse needs. Teacher education colleagues and universities are the main sources that can provide teachers competent to include children with different types of disabilities in general schools. Teachers today need to be equipped with a wide range of experiences and resources to help them succeed in the classroom. However, in practice, teachers lack access to education that promotes diversity and inclusion. The 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report found that very few countries met the benchmark of providing enough inclusion training for teachers (UNESCO, 2020). In Southeast Asian countries, for instance, Hosshan et al. (2020) reported on the difficulties of locating qualified human resources to implement inclusive education policies. Myanmar, like many other Asian countries, is suffering from a severe shortage of qualified professionals (Aung & Sakurai, 2023).

However, there have been numerous modifications in the education sector in Myanmar since the enactment of the National Education Law (2014), which was amended in 2015. It requires that teacher-preparation programs structure their curricula with consideration of inclusive education, and its implementation can be seen in the new curriculum developed by the UNESCO project (Phase II) “Strengthening Pre-service Teacher Education in Myanmar (STEM)” from 2017 to 2020. The main goal was to improve “the policies, management of institutions, teacher education curriculum and its roll-out, with special attention to inclusiveness” to address Myanmar’s shortage of qualified teachers in primary and middle schools (UNESCO, Myanmar, 2020). The goal of this initiative is to accomplish Sustainable

Development Goal 4 by enhancing training of pre-service teachers so that they can effectively engage students with a wide range of learning styles and abilities.

The implementation of STEM has led to the introduction of the first and second year of the new four-year Education College (EC) curriculum at all 25 education institutions. Additionally, teacher educators have received training on the updated curriculum. It was found that this newly updated EC curriculum pays attention to the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classrooms. For example, inclusive education and special education were briefly addressed during the first year/second semester of EC (See Figure 1.4). However, in the second year/second semester, the course was provided with a more comprehensive and specific curriculum. The content encompasses the responsibilities of the teacher in establishing an inclusive learning environment and offers precise tactics to guarantee that students with diverse disabilities are made to feel physically, emotionally, and intellectually embraced in the classroom (See Figure 1.5). Each session necessitates student teachers to engage in classroom discussions about learning activities, allowing for increased active participation.

However, according to the result of the final evaluation of the STEM phase II project, pre-service teachers believed that teacher education should pay more attention to inclusive education, and teacher educators still lack confidence in developing inclusive classrooms due to a lack of knowledge and experience. More capacity building needs to take place to ensure a change in the mindset on inclusive education over the long term. The evaluation report concluded that “current beliefs, knowledge, and practices related to inclusion and equity among EC management and TEs are very varied and while knowledge is relatively widespread, attitudes and practices still need to shift, especially regarding people with disabilities” (p.23). Teacher educator awareness about inclusion is still very limited (UNESCO, Myanmar, 2020). In addition to the pre-service training, in-service training should be provided to those teachers who are currently implementing inclusive education in the general education classrooms.

Figure 1.4

First year / second semester Student Teacher Textbook at Teacher Education Colleges in Myanmar

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Figure 1. 5

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Lack of properly defined competencies for inclusive education teachers: Implementation of inclusive education undoubtedly depends on training competent teachers. However, determining the necessary competencies for being an inclusive education teacher is still a matter of debate. Many previous studies argued the importance of having a positive attitude and the necessary knowledge and skills for the successful implementation of inclusive education (Abba & Rashid, 2020; Dingle et al., 2004; Durdukoca, 2021). In reality, most of the teachers were not trained using well-prepared curricula and programs, and there should be a well-defined set of necessary skills and knowledge for inclusive education teachers. Yet, there is still little attention on developing basic competencies for inclusive teachers.

Furthermore, every education system should have its own context-dependent competency framework. Kuyini et al. (2016) argued that different contexts need different competencies depending on their policies, socio-cultural environment, education system, etc., which differ, for example, in a European context (Profile of Inclusive Education Teacher by European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education), an African context (Kuyini et al., 2016), and an Asian context (Deng et al., 2017). Teachers who work under the unique political, socio-cultural, belief, and education system of Myanmar might have different ideas of competencies necessary to be effective teachers. No such studies have been conducted as of yet.

Lack of commitment of teachers towards implementing IE: Teachers were hesitant to include students with disabilities in their classrooms, even though the Myanmar school system has embraced inclusive education since the passage of the National Education Law in 2015. The effectiveness of inclusive education implementation is inadequately supported by national and policy-level commitments. The commitment of every individual in the community is essential for the effective execution of inclusive education. Teachers must be firmly committed to fostering a diverse classroom with students who have a variety of learning needs, regardless of whatever obstacles they may encounter. However, there have been a number of obstacles that

have made it difficult for teachers to fully commit to including students with disabilities in their classrooms. For instance, in Myanmar, teachers would still rather send students with disabilities to special schools if given the choice because of their lack of concept of inclusive education (ECDC, 2020). In a similar vein, Aung and Sakurai (2022) documented that despite having favorable attitudes and beliefs regarding the advantages of inclusive education, teachers in Myanmar continued to hold the view that special education is the most appropriate form of instruction for children with disabilities. As in Myanmar, previous studies have shown that teachers around the world still feel hesitant to include children with disabilities in their classrooms (de Boer et al., 2011; Galović et al., 2014; Sharma et al., 2009; Yada & Savolainen, 2017). Prior research has also highlighted teachers' unwillingness to implement inclusive education in the classroom; further investigation is required to determine the reasons for this lack of commitment among teachers.

1.3 Research Questions

The main objective of this study is to explore the relationship among teachers competence and commitment towards implementing inclusive education in Myanmar.

The research aims to explore the following specific objectives:

- (1) What are the basic competencies of inclusive education teachers in Myanmar?
- (2) How do teachers perceive their competence with respect to the implementation of inclusive education in their classroom?
- (3) What is the state of teacher commitment toward implementing inclusive education?
- (4) Is there any relationship between teachers' perception of competence and their commitment to inclusive education?

1.4 Significance of the Study

The current study has several implications. One of the unique aspects of this study is that it provides the competency framework for inclusive education teachers suitable to the context of Myanmar. Many previous studies have documented the requirement for different competency frameworks for different disciplines (Abba & Rashid, 2020; Bhatnagar & Das, 2014; Deng et al., 2017; Dingle et al., 2004; Durdukoca, 2021; Hamill et al., 1999; Jadhav, 2020; Majoko, 2019), which also highlights the need for competency frameworks for teachers working in inclusive classrooms. The provided competency framework in this study contributes in several ways.

First, the suggested competency framework is useful for researchers, policymakers, and educationalists in different ways. The identification of required basic competencies relevant in the context of Myanmar will be advantageous in developing basic competency frameworks for inclusive education teachers in Myanmar and ultimately in the Southeast Asian context. The research transcends barriers to inclusive education and further enriches the theoretical basis for the related research, providing a general guideline for improving the quality of professional development of inclusive education teachers. Therefore, it can have a guiding role and reference value for the construction of an inclusive teacher competency framework and standard nationwide.

Secondly, this framework has value for teacher educators and educationalists who are in the position of creating or improving the curriculum of the teacher education program. This empirical research addresses the realistic perception of basic competencies of being an inclusive education teacher among special education teachers and general education teachers. It provides a reference for the national education departments and teacher education programs to develop policies on the implementation of inclusive education and to implement inclusive teacher education programs for all teachers. Thus, this study proposes the most suitable

curriculum needed to equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills. Finally, it will add to the body of scientific knowledge in the field of inclusive education for other researchers who are interested in developing competency frameworks for teachers in inclusive classrooms.

In addition to the above-mentioned advantages, this study makes other theoretical contributions. Based on the literature review, most of the previous studies explored teachers' perceptions of their competence towards implementing inclusive education (Arvelo-Rosales et al., 2021; Bukvić, 2014; Das, 2013; Durdukoca, 2021; Rabi & Zulkefli, 2018). However, there is still a lack of evidence exploring the impact of inclusive education teacher competence. Some of the previous studies documented the effect of competence on other job-related factors such as performance (Everwijn et al., 1990), job satisfaction (Akram et al., 2015), organizational commitment (Suantara et al., 2020), etc. Previous studies explored the relationship between competence, commitment, and self-efficacy (Coladarci, 1992; Owan et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2021). However, not many studies have explored the relationship between teachers' perception of competence and commitment toward implementing inclusive education. Therefore, this study supports the Bandura's self-efficacy theory and Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory which both argue the impact of satisfaction of innate psychological needs on behavior or performance.

In summary, this study highlights the critical role that teachers' perceptions of their own competence plays, as well as the relationship between teacher competence and their commitment to inclusive education. Therefore, the findings of this study suggest ways for policymakers and educationalists to improve or modify current policies, curricula, and approaches to foster more qualified and committed human resources to achieve SDG goal 4.

1.5 Definitions of Key Terms

- **Inclusive Education (IE):** Inclusive Education is “a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, culture and communities, and reducing exclusion with and from education” (UNESCO, 2005, p. 13). In the 2015 amended National Education law, inclusive education was defined as “a programme that creates opportunity for persons who lack access to education, including disabled persons, to learn through formal or non-formal education”³. In the current study, inclusive education refers to the right of all students with disabilities to obtain the same educational services provided to non-disabled students in the same classrooms with celebration and acceptance of difference and diversity (Loreman and Deppeler, 2002).
- **Inclusive education teacher:** In this study, inclusive education teachers are professionals who are responsible for establishing welcoming and non-discriminatory learning environments, where children with disabilities can receive education alongside their non-disabled peers in a general education classroom. (UNESCO, 1994).
- **Disability:** According to the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disability, “Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which when interacting with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation on an equal basis with others.” (UN, 2006, Article 1, p.4). In this study, disability includes “those children who experience environmental or attitudinal behaviors due to their lack of long-term physical, visual, hearing, intellectual, mental, and/or sensual impairments by birth or after birth.” (Myanmar, 2017)⁴.

³ Law amending the National Education Law, unofficial translation, 2015 Paragraph 2, c)

⁴Myanmar (2017). *Initial report submitted by Myanmar under article 35 of the Convention, due in 2014: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1308049?ln=en&v=pdf>

- **Competence:** Competence is the state of being able, or the generic capability which is a necessary requirement to perform. (Mulder, 2017)
- **Competency:** Competency is a subset of generic competence; it is a coherent cluster of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that can be utilized in a specific performance context. (Mulder, 2017)
- **Teacher Competence:** “Teacher competence for inclusive education is defined as being a complex combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow a teacher to successfully respond to pupils’ diversity in the classroom” (Crick, 2008, as cited in Vantieghem et al., 2023).
- **Teacher Competency:** Teacher competency was defined as any single knowledge, skill, professional value, or attitude judged relevant to the successful practice of teaching. (Medley, 1977)
- **Commitment:** Commitment refers to a psychological state that characterizes the employee’s relationship with the organization and has implications for the decision to continue in the organization. (Meyer & Allen, 1991)
- **Teacher Commitment towards IE:** Teachers’ commitment towards inclusive education refers to “teachers’ pledge to be devoted to and did their utmost in their work so that each and every student may reach the maximum potential and acquire the array of competencies needed for full participation in society.” (Sharma & Pace, 2019)

1.6 Organization of the Study

This study consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 outlines the research context, significance, and questions that will be addressed in the study. Chapter 2 highlights how prior research has focused on the role of teachers in inclusive education and describes the basic abilities that IE teachers should possess. It also explains how teachers’ perception of competence affects their

commitment to IE practices. Chapter 3 covers the theoretical basis of the study and how the adopted theories correspond to the research questions. The conceptual framework of this study is also provided. This study's research design and data, such as the research setting and participants, are described in Chapter 4. It explains the methods of data collection, sampling, and analysis adopted in this study. The findings corresponding to each research question are reported in Chapter 5. Finally, Chapter 6 discusses the findings in context by referencing previous studies and the theoretical background. Limitations and recommendations for further studies are also provided.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of how previous studies have touched upon the aspect of teachers in the field of inclusive education. Firstly, the term “competency” is introduced based on some well-known competency theories, and an explicit description of essential knowledge and skills to becoming a successful teacher is provided. Then, definitions of teacher competency and commitment are elaborated. After that, moving to inclusive education (IE), whereby the concept of "competencies" in IE and the core skill sets that should be had by IE teachers worldwide are laid forth. Next, this chapter explains teachers' commitment and concludes with a review of prior research that looked at how teachers' perceptions of their own competence affected their commitment to inclusive education practices.

2.1 Teachers

Commonly, the act of transferring one's experience and knowledge to another is known as “teaching,” and the person who does so is termed a “teacher.” In every civilization, teachers are held in high regard for the invaluable role they play in shaping the future of their communities. In South Asian culture, teachers are often referred to by the honorific “Guru,”⁵ which connotes a position of power and influence (Everwijn et al., 1990). The premise is that teachers play a pivotal role as guides and leaders in shaping the future of their students and the larger community. Teachers are entrusted with the lives of their students and are therefore held to a high standard of knowledge and moral rectitude. It is remarkable to find in the culture of Myanmar Society the enduring influence of teachers on their students' lives. As teachers are

⁵ “The idea of guru is widespread in living traditions of South Asia, secular and religions, indicative of the existence of formally recognized role of pedagogues and educational systems in pre- and postcolonial times.” (Sayed & Sarangapani, 2021, p.1205).

members of the five-infinite venerable⁶ including the triple gems (Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha) and parents, they have high status in the society. Kobakhidze (2020) argued that “teachers exhibit certain sacred qualities, such as being moral leaders, sacrificing their personal lives to education and being an object of worship and veneration” (Kobakhidze, 2020, p.8). Consequently, the roles and obligations of teachers are greatly expanded and unforeseeable. Therefore, John Dewey argued that teaching is not a career for individuals who lack understanding, knowledge, and empathy (Simpson et al., 2005).

Many educationalists illustrate the complexity of teaching from various vantage points, such as the art and science of teaching, and the social, cognitive, and personality dimensions of teaching. Rajagopalan (2019) frames the art and science of teaching as a process that needs logical, mechanical, or procedural approaches to achieve objectives and also emphasizes the teachers’ creative and artistic abilities in creating a meaningful learning environment. Teaching includes analyzing content and objectives, structuring teaching methods, discovering teaching-learning strategies, and testing learning outcomes (Rajagopalan, 2019). Rajagopalan’s idea of teaching echoes the educational philosopher John Dewey, who also elaborated on the nature of teaching as follows:

"I believe that the art of thus giving shape to human powers and adapting them to social service, is the supreme art; one calling into service the best of artists; that no insight, sympathy, tact, executive power is too great for such service" (John Dewey, EW 5: 94, as cited in Simpson et al., 2005, p-19).

John Dewey’s ideas of teaching is more than art and science, and he demonstrated the most complex characteristics of teachers by using metaphors, such as "Artist," "Lover," "Wise

⁶ “Myanmar Society is probably one of the few societies in the world that show such high esteem for their teachers. Teachers are regarded as being on the same plane as the Buddha, the greatest of all teachers, the Dhamma, the path leading to the cessation of suffering, the Sangha, our mentors on the path to Niravana, and one’s parents who have brought us into this world, nourished and educated us to be able to stand on our own feet.” (Myo Myint, 2015, 149-150).

Mother," "Navigator," "Gardener," "Educational Pioneer," "Servant," "Social Engineer," "Composer," "Wise Physician," "Builder," "leader," and "classroom teacher" (Simpson et al., 2005). His compelling image of teachers elaborates on the roles and responsibilities of a teacher in a broader context of the philosophy of education.

Some educational philosophers have portrayed teaching from a more socially-oriented perspective. One definition of such social teaching comes from Klauer (1985). He contended that teaching is best understood as a two-way interaction between a teacher and one or more pupils. By interacting, both the teachers and the students affect each other's actions. To a similar extent, Hamza et al. (2010) suggested that teaching is a cooperative social activity in which students' cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor capacities are fostered via conversation and engagement with the teacher. Jean Piaget's and L.S. Vygotsky's educational philosophies provided the theoretical underpinnings for these social interaction approaches to teaching.

To begin with, Jean Piaget supposed that individuals develop knowledge by interacting with their own experience and their own ideas (Brau, 2018). He believed that learning occurs when a person adapts to the environment via what he called "assimilation" and "accommodation." Therefore, teaching methods will be tailored to each student's cognitive ability (Blake & Pope, 2008). As a result, teachers must keep in mind that teachers' ability to create an environment that meets the needs of specific students is very important and teachers must adjust lessons to avoid student discontent. Similar to Piaget's ideas, Vygotsky argued that an individual could learn more with the help of a more experienced and knowledgeable person to further growth (Brau, 2018). His ideas of the "Zone of Proximal Development" focus on the social aspects of acquiring knowledge. Teaching is not teacher-centered, and teachers are the facilitators, while small groups, cooperative learning, and scaffolding will be used to help students learn more. Vygotsky's teaching and learning approach has had a

considerable impact on the "early literacy" program. Play and formal education, in his opinion, are both effective methods of teaching and learning (Blake & Pope, 2008).

Although both Piaget's and Vygotsky's ideas of teaching emphasize the importance of "interaction" or "cooperation," there are still differences between them. Piaget puts more emphasis on an individual's development and ability to build upon their own experiences to learn something new. However, Vygotsky recognizes the level of development in children more, as well as the role of interactions among peers or with more knowledgeable individuals to learn more advanced skills, and his ideas of teaching agree well with this 21st century classroom environment.

In addition to the social point of view, Klauer (1985) proposed the theory of teaching from a cognitive perspective. He proposed five important functions of teaching: (1) Motivation, (2) information, (3) information processing, (4) storing and retrieving, and (5) transfer of information. Teaching must promote learner motivation by providing interesting problems or stimulating objectives. It requires analyzing what a student is required to learn and which processes are required for learning to take place (Klauer, 1985). Given these points, the teaching profession requires cognitive, social, and novel personality traits. Teaching is a very intricate and challenging profession. Those entrusted with the education of students need a diverse set of skills, including expertise in the subject matter, empathy, the ability to effectively manage the classroom, dedication, and a burning desire to make a difference in their students' lives.

Teacher characteristics outlined by Stronge (2007) may be divided into the following distinct groups: the teacher as a person, classroom management and organization, planning and arranging for education, executing instruction, assessing student development and potential, and professionalism. In addition, emotional and mental stability, knowledge of the subject, a positive attitude, insight, objectivity, etc., were also considered as characteristics of a good

teacher (Zango et al., 2010). In the same way, twelve characteristics of effective teachers were listed as follows: prepared, positive, holds high expectations, creative, fair, displays a personal touch, cultivates a sense of belonging, compassionate, has a sense of humor, respects students, is forgiving, and admits mistakes (Walker, 2008). Positivity, adaptability, tolerance, and a willingness to respond to pupils' needs are all qualities that should characterize a teacher (Hamza et al., 2010). There was still no consensus on what makes a good teacher and what constitutes successful teaching, regardless of the many perspectives presented. However, it is necessary for this complicated profession to have its own set of standards or qualifications in order to ensure consistent quality. Accordingly, many nations have devised locally relevant competency frameworks for teachers that outline essential teaching knowledge and skills.

2.2 Competency and Competence

According to the existing literature, the term “competence” does not have a single, universally accepted meaning, but many people have found it difficult to differentiate between “competence” and “competency.” Mulder (2017) made a distinction between these two concepts as “Competence is the state of being able, or the generic capability which is a necessary requirement to perform; the set of characteristics which enable performance,” while “A competency is a part of generic competence; it is a coherent cluster of knowledge, skills, and attitudes which can be utilized in real performance contexts” (Mulder, 2017, p.14). The word competence was widely used in every organization to express the ability or capability of an individual, and competencies were also prescribed as a basic set of knowledge and skills in every profession. For example, a framework for teacher competencies has been developed in every country, and competent teachers must master these competencies.

When looking at the origin of the term competence, it originated from the Latin word “competens,” and Kileme and Hartig (2007) argued that the use of the term in social science has three independent origins: sociology, linguistics, and psychology (as cited in Glaesser,

2019). Firstly, Weber used competence from the sociological point of view in the sense of being responsible for specific tasks (Vonken, 2017). Then, Chomsky (1965), a well-known linguistic educationalist, originally used the word to describe the cognitive system's function in language ability. As defined by Chomsky, competence includes both "knowledge" and the "ability to use knowledge," particularly the application of grammatical principles to the production and comprehension of verbal communication (as cited in Taylor, 1988).

In psychology, White (1967) defined competence as "an organism's capacity to interact effectively with its environment" (Howland & McGuire, 1968, p. 297). It is not something one is born with, and it is not something that can be learned or that develops with age. It is what happens when an organism's capacity to adapt to its environment is gradually altered via learning. Competence, in White's (1959) opinion, cannot be sufficiently driven by energy sources like desire or impulses, which do not fully account for man's capacity to deal with his environment. Competence, in its more common meaning of achieved capacity, is important, but he emphasized that it is also crucial to make competence a motivating idea. According to White, competence is "directed, selective, and persistent, and it is continued not because it serves primary drives, which indeed it cannot serve until it is almost perfected, but because it satisfies an intrinsic need to deal with the environment" (White, 1959, p.318). He contended that exploration is something a person may keep doing after most of the interesting things to do have already been discovered, even though any further gains in competence would be negligible. Based on the various definitions of competence (White, 1967; Chomsky, 1965; Vonken, 2017), competence can be defined as the ability of an individual to achieve particular levels of performance.

When looking at the characteristics of competence, it is a "context-dependent ability construct" (Klieme et al., 2008). It is not static or congenital. It can be developed through a learning experience where the individual interacts (Weinert, 2001) and through training or

intervention (Klieme, et al., 2008). These ideas also echo Bandura's theory of competence. Bandura (1990) stated, "Competence is not a fixed property that one does or does not have in one's behavioral repertoire. Rather, it involves a generative capability in which cognitive, social, and behavioral skills must be organized and effectively orchestrated to serve innumerable purposes." (p-315). Therefore, competence is not something acquired by an individual's innate ability but is acquired through learning in the respective domain.

Competence is a latent concept, and performance is mostly used as an indicator of it. In order to study this latent construct, Kileme et al., (2008) argued for a cognitive model that elicits a performance reflecting that underlying competence. These model structures may explain competence in certain areas in terms of underlying fundamental skills and knowledge. These can also be identified as competence levels that specify the unique situational demands that a person at a distinct level may master. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an example of competency work that assesses the reading, mathematics, and science literacy of 15-year-olds. PISA's notion of competence places a greater emphasis on the acquisition and application of skills than on the acquisition of knowledge.

Sternberg (2002, 2003) and Gardner (2011) also proposed the need for different models of competencies in different areas. They stated that developing competencies in one area does not inevitably lead to developing competencies in other areas, although there may be some transfer depending on the connection between areas, a point that has also been made about intelligence (as cited in Elliot et al., 2017). Consequently, the development of competency models in many educational fields is essential. Many countries have developed their own unique teacher competency frameworks that match the nation's educational goals and background. In this instance, defining competency in a teaching setting, especially for inclusive education, becomes the study's top concern.

2.3 Teacher Competency

In order to adapt to the ongoing reforms in the educational system, educators will need to acquire new skills and knowledge, as well as improve their mastery of the basics. However, there are still inconsistencies in how teacher competency has been defined. Some teachers focus on developing the skills essential for teaching, while others recognize that becoming an effective educator requires consideration of a wide range of factors. For example, Messick (1984) considered teachers' competence as the mastery of teaching as "what an individual knows and can do in a subject area however that knowledge and skill are acquired, whether through instruction or experience or whatever" (as cited in Glaesser, 2019, p.217). Similarly, in early 1977, Medley defined teacher competency as any single knowledge, skill, or professional value attitude that was judged relevant to the successful practice of teaching. According to Medley, there are five components of teacher competency, including pre-instruction, presentation, learning environment, student learning, and professionalism. However, Kunter et al. (2011, 2013) defined the multi-dimensional model of teachers' competence as including "not only cognitive aspects, such as skills and knowledge but also beliefs related to learning, motivation and self-regulation" (as cited in Cate et al., 2018).

In light of this divergent perspective on competence, there is an urgent need for some fundamental quality assurance principles in a continuously evolving system. Many countries put much effort into building teacher competency frameworks. For example, the Commission of Europe identified three major aspects of teacher competencies, including knowledge and understanding, skills, dispositions (beliefs, attitudes, values, and commitment) from a political and research point of view (European Commission, 2013). Similarly, professional standards and competences were laid out for the African teachers as professional knowledge and understanding, professional skills and practices, professional values, attributes and

commitment, professional partnership, and professional leadership (Nwokeocha, 2022). The competencies were categorized into four levels: beginner, proficient, expert, and distinguished⁷.

In 2017, the Teachers' Council of Thailand (TCT) call for development of the Southeast Asia Teacher Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) to improve the quality of teachers. In SEA-TCF, there are four main competencies of teachers: Knowing and understanding how to teach, helping students learn, engaging the community, and becoming a better teacher every day. One Southeast Asian nation, Myanmar, has adopted the international norm by creating the Teacher Competency Standard Framework (TCSF) with four categories: professional knowledge and understanding, professional skill and practices, professional values and dispositions, and professional growth and development (Dabrowski & Spink, 2020). In order to increase the quality of the education system, teacher competency frameworks have been developed in the majority of countries.

However, most competency frameworks were inferred from the four pillars of education of the 21st century. According to the UNESCO (1996) report, "Learning: the treasure within," Jacques Delors said learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together: these four pillars should guide the actions of educators to develop learning appropriate to the transformations experienced from reality. These four pillars of learning call for teachers' knowledge, skills, values, and cooperation competencies that underpin most teacher competency frameworks. Even though different competency frameworks for teachers in different contexts have been developed, competencies for inclusive education teachers are still being researched.

⁷ In terms of the Nigerian education system, those with a teaching certificate would be considered beginners, those with a bachelor's degree would be considered proficient, those with a master's degree would be considered experts, and those with a doctorate would be considered distinguished (Teaching Registration Council of Nigeria, 2019).

2.4 Commitment

Each person's dedication is crucial to the prosperity of the society as a whole. There have to be highly devoted people in every field if we expect to see less employee turnover and a better quality of work. It is the same for those who work in education. Previous researchers have indicated that teachers' commitment to their work significantly improves teacher performance (Halim et al., 2019; Siri et al., 2020) and emotional attachment to students (Mărgărițoiu, 2015), and could improve the well-being and achievement of children (Aindra et al., 2022). Given these points, teacher commitment is receiving more attention in every country to ensure the life-long progress of civilization. But in reality, there is a shortage of literature examining teachers' commitment, which hinders cultural comparability and the identification of underlying determinants of commitment (Razak et al., 2009). Razak and his colleagues showed that commitment receives much more attention in business and organizational studies than it does with respect to teachers.

When looking at the definitions of commitment, many educators view commitments from different perspectives: attitudinal (Mowday et al., 1982), behavioral (Reichers, 1985), and psychological (Becker, 1960). Mowday et al. (1982) defined organizational commitment as the relative strength of individual identification and involvement in specific organizations, including trust, support for organizational goals and values, a strong desire to use genuine efforts in the interest of the organization, and a strong will to maintain membership in the organization (Siri et al., 2020). However, Reichers (1985) provided a behavioral perspective on commitment by saying that it is a result of the costs and incentives associated with participation in an employing organization or profession (as cited in Razak et al., 2009). According to the psychological view of Becker (1960), a committed person “engages in consistent lines of activity” (p.33), and he urged that commitment is established “when a person, by making a side bet, links extraneous interests with a consistent line of activity” (p.32). So,

what ultimately determines whether or not a person stays in their job and makes an effort to benefit the organization is their level of commitment, which is a combination of their attitude, behavior, and interest in the organization.

Recently researchers have extensively agreed with Meyer and Allen's commitment perspective and have adopted their commitment model (Owan et al., 2022; Siri et al., 2020). Meyer and Allen (1991) defined commitment as “a psychological state that (a) characterizes the employee’s relationship with the organization, and (b) has implications for the decision to continue in the organization” (p.67). Affective, continuous, and normative commitment are the three pillars of the concept developed by Meyer and Allen (1991). Affective commitment is a state of being emotionally engaged in and satisfied with one's work environment, including one's objectives and policies. Continuous commitment is staying in one's profession while knowing full well the negative effects that quitting would have on one's life. The term "normative commitment" describes an individual's sense of responsibility to make restitution by remaining in their chosen field (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

In addition to the components of commitment, previous studies also characterized the different directions of commitment. Wang et al. (2021) proposed five types of teacher commitment: commitment toward the teaching profession, students, academic subjects, schools, and teacher unions. Razak et al. (2009) came to a similar conclusion, classifying teachers' commitment into five categories: to the school, to the student, to the teaching work, to the profession, and to a set of knowledge, attitudes, and abilities. Their direction of commitment sometimes could affect the different aspects of the student’s achievement. Teachers may be committed to teaching, their school, or their students, and their pattern of behavior varies depending upon which commitments are stressed. A commitment to students may contribute to a warm, supportive climate that is likely to reduce the dropout rate, while a commitment to teaching may contribute to student academic achievement (Firestone & Pennell,

1993). Nonetheless, a strong sense of professional commitment was seen as the best predictor of other job-related concerns, such as turnover and retention.

However, it is quite difficult to increase teachers' commitment to their profession, and this is especially apparent for the teachers who are at the forefront of implementing multiple innovative movements in the educational system. In a study of American schools, 70 percent of teachers who worked in schools with a high percentage of minority children left their positions after five years (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Similarly, many special education teachers left the profession due to their lack of experience and competence (Billingsley, 2004). Sharma and Pace (2019) also argued the importance of teachers' commitment to embracing all children in inclusive education effectively.

Teachers' commitment towards inclusive education refers to a "teachers' pledge to be devoted to and do their utmost in their work so that each and every student may reach the maximum potential and acquire the array of competencies needed for full participation in society"(Sharma & Pace, 2019, p.2). Committed teachers are highly needed to implement inclusive education, but several factors challenge the ability of teachers to commit to inclusive education. Prior research has indicated that the severity of disability in students, the educational qualifications and experiences of teachers, and the organization they work for significantly influence their commitment to inclusive education. (Cox., 2000; Bansal., 2006). For instance, private school teachers in India demonstrated more commitment to achieving inclusive education compared to their government counterparts. (Bansal., 2016). Furthermore, Cox (2000) discovered that special education teachers in Florida showed a higher level of commitment to adopting inclusive education compared to general education teachers. The attitudes, emotions, and personal beliefs of teachers play a crucial role in determining their level of commitment to inclusive education. As a result, research is needed to explore teachers' roles in IE implementation, which may reveal obstacles teachers face in their efforts to commit

to inclusion. The following section describes researched and under-researched facets of teachers.

2.5 Overview of Teacher-related Studies in Inclusive Education

During the last decade, teacher roles and responsibilities were very much broadened, and they became more complicated than in the late twentieth century following the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (Sakurai, 2021). The statement declared that developing the education system with diverse learning needs in regular schools is the most effective way of creating a welcoming society that can combat discriminatory attitudes (UNESCO & Ministry of Education and Science, Spain, 1994). Therefore, including children with special needs in general education classrooms, called “inclusive education,” has also become a global trend toward ensuring equality and equity. Over the past decade, it has gained popularity around the world, with 164 nations signing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2022). As this new paradigm emerged, many researchers around the world have shifted attention toward the current demand of the education system called “No one left behind” and “No discrimination.”

Simultaneously, there was a dramatic increase in the number of studies on inclusive education. The literature review revealed a dramatic uptick in research on inclusive education over the course of a decade (from 23 studies in 1996 to 124 studies in 2012), with the majority of studies originating from the United States, Spain, Australia, England, South Africa, and only a smaller proportion from Asia (See Fig 2.1 and 2.2). The current situation of inclusive education and the difficulties it faces have been the subject of numerous studies. Research has been conducted on areas such as parental and stakeholder perspectives, principal opinions, student attitudes, and the effects of policy and practice. However, the majority of prior research has focused on teachers, who are the frontline practitioners in inclusive classrooms. (Al-Zyoudi, 2006; Desombre et al., 2019; Ehsaan et al., 2018; Emam & Mohamed, 2011; Walker, 2008).

The following mind map depicted a comprehensive overview of prior research on the topic of inclusive education (See Fig 2.3).

Major and intensively studied research themes related to teachers are teachers attitudes towards inclusive education (AlMahdi & Bukamal, 2019; Alquraini, 2012; Bhatnagar & Das, 2014), teacher self-efficacy (Li & Cheung, 2021; Malinen et al., 2012; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014), teacher professional development (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Forlin et al., 2015), teacher agency (Mu et al., 2015), etc. Certain areas, however, still require additional investigation. Very little is paid to issues like teachers' beliefs about their own competence to carry out inclusive education, commitment towards inclusion, performance, teachers' emotional and mental preparedness, and so on. The level of teacher competency and the dedication of those competent teachers towards inclusion are two of the most important and still mostly unexplored areas for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Therefore, the following sections detail how teacher competence and commitment contribute to a "no rejection" education system.

Figure 2.1

Number of Previous Studies on Inclusive Education by Year

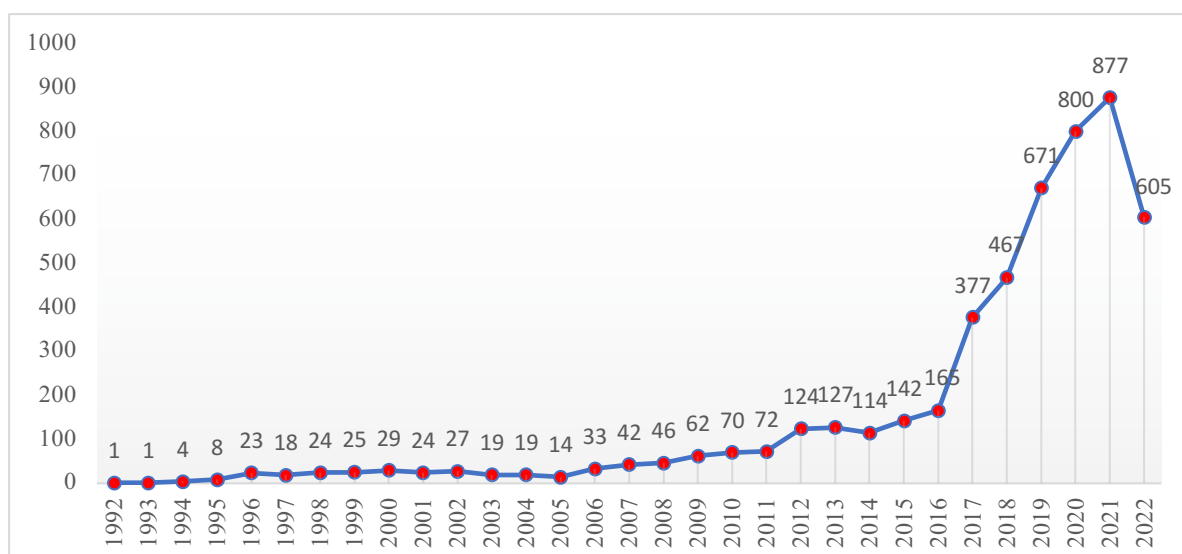
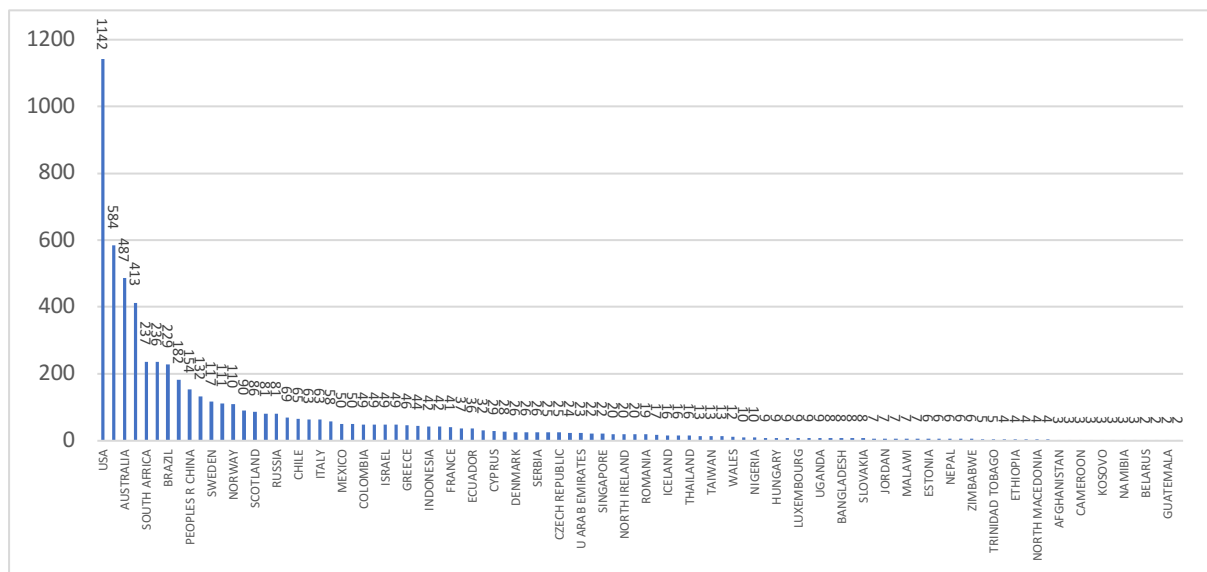


Figure 2.2

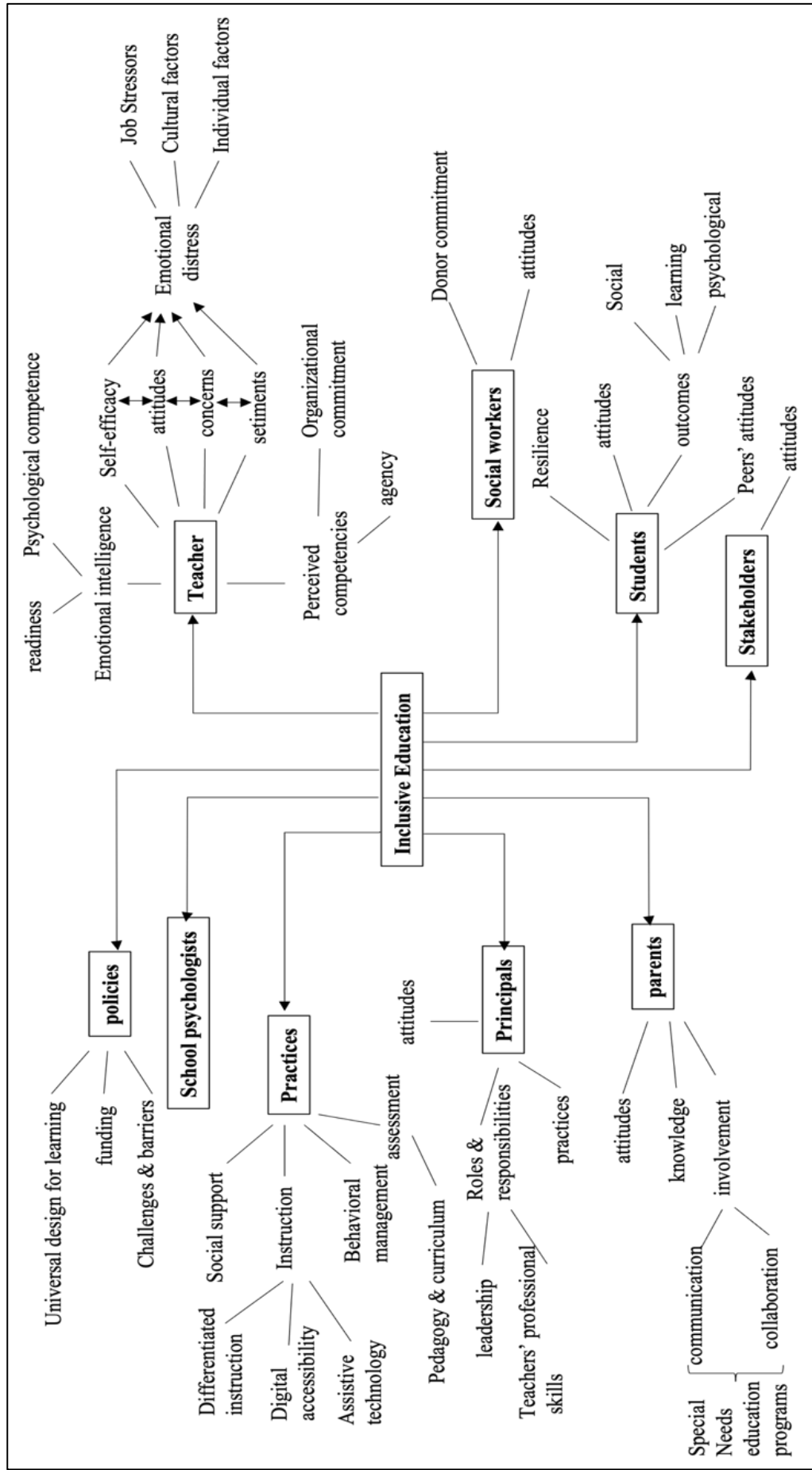
Previous Studies on Inclusive Education in Different Countries



Note: The above figures show the previous studies related to inclusive education in different countries and publication years. The data were extracted from the Web of Science as of November 2022.

Figure 2.3

Mapping related to Previous Inclusive Education Studies



2.6 Competencies of Inclusive Education Teachers

Inclusive Education, which provides children with and without disabilities with the same quality education with the same curriculum in the same classroom, focuses on the individual needs of each student and effective participation in all aspects of school life. Without a doubt, this new paradigm poses numerous challenges to anyone in both developed and developing countries seeking to create a non-discriminatory and inclusive environment. Teachers, particularly mainstream teachers, who are the main pillars of this implementation, face several difficulties in making it a reality. Essentially, it tests the teachers' knowledge and skills in accepting children with special needs, and it places a high value on the teachers' own belief in their ability to meet the children's individual needs. Many previous studies have reported that competent teachers are the cornerstone of effective IE implementations (Abba & Rashid, 2020; Dingle et al., 2004; Durdukoca, 2021; Kuyini et al., 2016; Majoko, 2019; Rabi & Zulkefli, 2018).

In inclusive education settings, teachers are facing the diverse needs of children with disabilities who are posing several challenges, stressful situations, and unexpected problems. Therefore, inclusive teachers need to possess the necessary knowledge and skills and, most importantly, the capacity to use them when needed. According to Alegre and Villar (2019), inclusive education teachers must have both content and pedagogical knowledge, the ability to manage student behavior, and the ability to collaborate and cooperate with various professionals (as cited in Arvelo-Rosales et al., 2021). Personal competence (attitudes, motivation, desire, values) and professional competence (knowledge, skills) are also required for an excellent inclusive education teacher (Bukvić, 2014). Implementing inclusive education would be pointless without the competence of teachers. Rabi and Zulkefli (2018) also argued that teacher competency is critical to the successful implementation of inclusive education programs.

But in reality, many teachers are not well prepared for this paradigm shift (Abba & Rashid, 2020; Arvelo-Rosales et al., 2021; Makoele & Burmistrova, 2021). For example, previous studies pointed out the lack of teachers' necessary competency, knowledge, and skill to welcome children with disabilities in their classrooms (Das, 2013; Zulfija et al., 2013). As a result, most teachers resist accepting children with disabilities in their classrooms (Hosshan et al., 2020). Possible explanations may be either because of the lack of proper training for the newly acquired position or because of training that is short, low-quality, and has limited curriculum coverage. In Kazakhstan, for example, pre-service teachers were not trained with a coherent and well-articulated strategy for inclusion, and the majority of the training was in the form of seminars and videos at teacher training institutions (Makoele & Burmistrova, 2021).

As a result, many disabled children in many countries still do not have access to inclusive education due to a number of obstacles. According to the global report of the International Disability Alliance (IDA) (2020), the literacy rate disparity between children with and without disabilities has widened over time. Children with disabilities were out of school not because of their abilities but because of a lack of readiness in the education system, especially teacher preparation programs. The curriculum of the teacher education program needs to be upgraded to improve the competencies of mainstream teachers with respect to changing policies. However, the question of what the basic competencies of inclusive education teachers are in a different context remains unanswered.

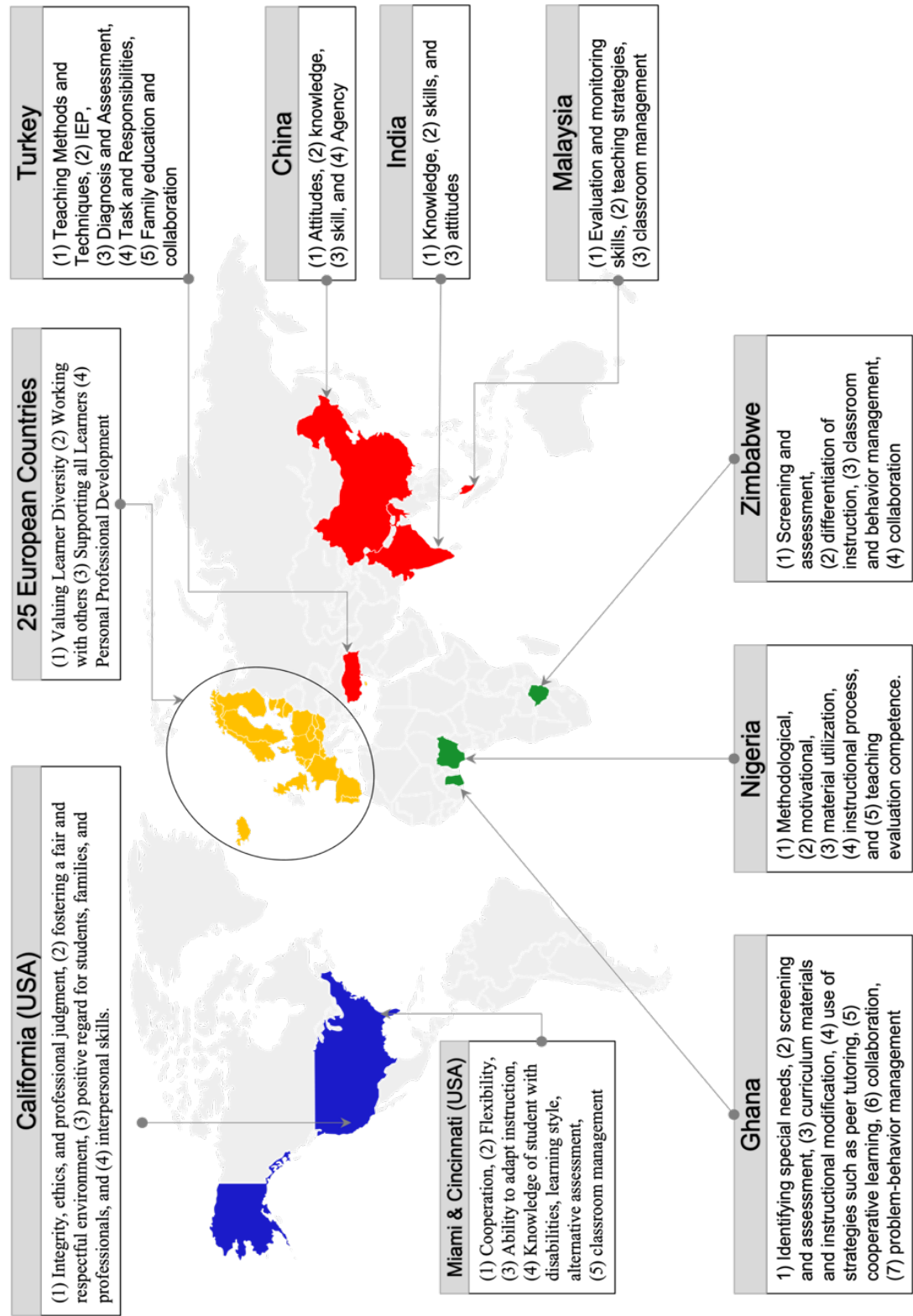
2.7 Different Aspects of Competencies of Inclusive Education Teachers

A basic set of competencies are required in order to be an inclusive teacher, and these required competencies vary substantially with respect to the national context. That being the case, competencies of inclusive education teachers in different country contexts are outlined to understand the frameworks used in different countries. The following figure provides a picture

of important competencies perceived in different country contexts (See Appendix A). Competencies of inclusive education teachers in the European context, followed by African and other contexts are discussed as follow.

Figure 2.4

Competencies in Previous Research



2.7.1 Competencies of IE Teachers in the European Context

In European countries, the profile of inclusive teachers was developed by the European Agency for Development in Special Education Needs under the project Teacher Education for Inclusion (TE4I).⁸ This profile encompasses the fundamental values and competencies necessary for all who want to become an inclusive education teacher. Fifty-five scholars from 25 European Countries agreed upon the four competencies that can be used as a guide for the implementation of Inclusive Teacher Education Programs. The conceptual foundations of the profile were built on "a value-based approach," which were derived primarily from UNESCO's rights-based approach and the ET 2020 Strategic Framework (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2012).

The ET 2020 framework addresses the four strategic objectives, where the third objective focuses on "promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship" (Council Conclusion, 2009). It emphasized that "Education should promote intercultural competencies, democratic values and respect for fundamental rights and the environment, as well as combat all forms of discrimination, equipping all young people to interact positively with their peers from diverse backgrounds." (ibid, p. 4). UNESCO (2008) also noted that "Applying a rights-based approach to education in order to move towards inclusion will require comprehensive school system reform including modification of constitutional guarantee and policies, curricula, teacher training systems, materials, learning environments, methodologies, resource allocation, etc. Above all, it will require a change in attitudes of all people, throughout the system, to welcome diversity and difference and see these as opportunities rather than problems." (p.29). That is the reason that a "principled, rights-based approach" is fundamental to the profile of inclusive education, as it stresses the importance of teaching students to have a good attitude

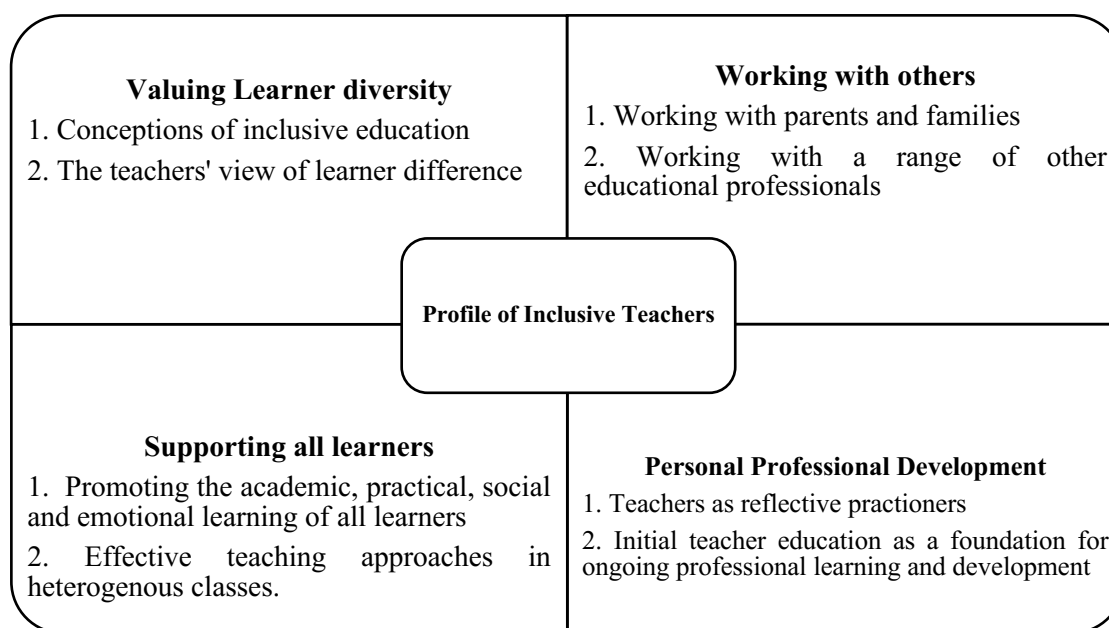
⁸ Fifty-Five country experts have been involved from 25 countries: Austria, Belgium (both the Flemish and French speaking countries), Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

in addition to imparting skills and knowledge (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2012).

There were four basic competency areas: (1) valuing learner diversity, (2) supporting all learners, (3) working with others, and (4) personal and professional development (European Agency, 2012). These competencies consist of three elements: knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and they constitute effective guidelines for becoming a qualified inclusive teacher. Each area of competence has its own values that are shown in the following diagram.

Figure 2.5

Profile of Inclusive Education Teachers (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2012)



This profile was created to aid in the development and delivery of inclusive teacher education programs for all teachers by providing a stepping-stone from which to identify pertinent material and planning techniques and to describe desired learning goals for preparing mainstream teachers in all teacher education. However, the TE4I study stated that there is a need for thorough research on the areas of competence required for quality and inclusive

practices, and it supports the implementation of this profile in many settings to assist efforts towards greater inclusion and quality inclusive education practice (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2012).

2.7.2 Competencies of IE Teachers in African Context

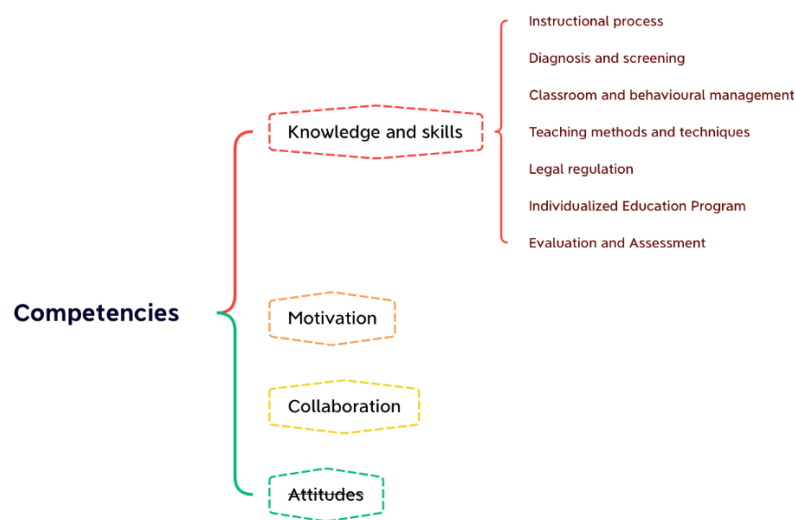
A greater emphasis on teaching and classroom management competencies is found in inclusive education in African countries. For example, competencies that are considered important for inclusive education teachers in Ghana include identifying special needs, using assessment information, adapting curriculum goals, modifying content, adapting material, designing IEP, planning lessons to account for differences, incorporating cooperative learning, peer tutoring, multi-level teaching, scaffolding, collaborative teaching, using effective questioning, positive behavior, and behavioral management strategies (Kuyini et al., 2016). Recently, research conducted in Zimbabwe also recognized the importance of competency in screening and assessment, competency in differentiation in instruction, competency in classroom and behavioral management, and finally, competency in collaboration in special education in primary school teachers (Majoko, 2019).

Abba and Rashid (2020) conducted a case study of twenty technical vocational education teachers to investigate the level of competence required for the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria. As in the case of Ghana and Zimbabwe, Abba and Rashid explored teacher methodology, classroom management, teaching evaluation, and instructional competence. It may be argued that most African nations recognize the significance of knowledge and skill, particularly for effective classroom teaching, but pay less attention to attitudes and other motivating variables that might affect their performance. The European Commission (2013) defined competence as a complex mix of knowledge, skills, understanding, values, attitudes, and desires that contribute to successful, embodied human activity in the world in a given area; therefore, to some extent, this definition stands in contrast to that of the

African aspect. Some African countries place greater weight on measuring teachers' professional competence (knowledge, skill) than personal competence (attitudes, motivation, desire, values) when it comes to evaluating their effectiveness as teachers of students with special needs (Bukvić, 2014). The mostly agreed-upon capabilities of inclusive education for African nations are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2.6

Competencies of Inclusive Education Teachers in African Countries



Note. Refers from Abba & Rashid (2020); Kuyini et al., (2016); & Majoko, (2019)

2.7.3 Competencies of IE Teachers in Other Contexts

In Asian countries, such as Turkey, China, and India, different competencies were accepted as important for becoming an inclusive education teacher. For example, in Turkey, the professional competency of an inclusive education teacher includes (1) Teaching Methods and Techniques, (2) an individualized education program, (3) diagnosis and assessment, (4) tasks and responsibilities, and (5) family education/collaboration (Durdukoca, 2021). Similarly, professional knowledge concerning exceptional children, a classroom climate of acceptance, communication with parents, community, and colleagues, assessment of students' needs, classroom management, goal setting, resources for classroom learning, instructional techniques,

personalized curricula, and evaluation of student progress were considered as the basic competencies of inclusive education teachers in Delhi (Das, 2013).

Deng et al. (2017) also suggested that Chinese teachers' competencies for inclusive education were based on four factors: namely, teaching and teacher instruction, communication and cooperation, attitudes and beliefs, and reflection and development. It can be concluded that Chinese teachers' competency framework was based mainly on the "knowledge, attitudes and skills" of the teachers (Deng et al., 2017). This was confirmed by studies conducted by Jadhav (2020). The researcher developed assessment tools for identifying the inclusive teachers' competencies, and it was based on "knowledge, skills and attitudes" (Jadhav, 2020). However, Beijing primary and junior high school teachers considered "agency" as part of the teachers' competency for being an IE teacher in addition to knowledge, skill, and attitude (Mu et al., 2015). Rajendran et al. (2020) argued the important role of emotional intelligence in supporting the needs of diverse students in the inclusive classroom. In order to face those challenges, teachers who are good at interpersonal and intrapersonal ability, managing stress, adaptability, and controlling emotion were highly in demand. Emotional intelligence is related significantly and positively to increased adapted behavior, higher quality social relationships, longer retention in one's professional life, better coping strategies, and leadership skills that enhance an individual's intra- and interpersonal skills (Rajendran et al., 2020). The author is also convinced that teachers' inability to manage their socio-emotional stress can adversely affect student academic achievement and behavior. Therefore, the author pointed out the important role of teachers' emotional competencies in the successful implementation of inclusive education.

In the United States, there were ten competencies for both special and general education teachers to implement IE; "integrity, ethics, and professional judgment," fostering "a fair and respectful environment," "having positive regard for students, families, and professionals," and

having interpersonal skills that are considerate, nonjudgmental, supportive, adaptive, and flexible student-centered orientations (Dingle et al., 2004). Similarly, Hamill et al. (1999) suggested seven competencies that are necessary for teachers and administrators working in an IE setting. These competencies were (1) cooperation, (2) flexibility, (3) ability to adapt instruction, (4) knowledge of students with disabilities, (5) knowledge of learning style, (6) knowledge of alternative assessment, and (7) classroom management (Hamill et al., 1999).

Given these points, teachers' competencies for becoming effective inclusive teachers were composed mainly of knowledge, skill, and attitude. While the United States and Europe have long recognized "knowledge, skills, and attitudes" as foundational to their frameworks, many nations in Africa and Asia have been unable to make such a commitment. It could be concluded that competency was made up of different values and beliefs that were based on different cultural and theoretical contexts. Yet, most of the studies argued the importance of teacher competency in the successful implementation of inclusive education.

2.8 Perceived Competence of IE Teachers

A large and growing body of research has investigated the perception of teacher competence in implementing inclusive education, and the results have demonstrated that teachers felt less readiness for their newly adapted roles (Arvelo-Rosales et al., 2021) and showed unwillingness toward the inclusion of children with disabilities in their classroom (de Boer et al., 2011; Sharma et al., 2009). This is hardly surprising considering that most teachers are not well prepared to teach children with disabilities together with children without disabilities. Many teachers are not trained to welcome diverse learning needs, and teachers voiced the need for providing adequate training, even teachers from developed countries. According to the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM), teachers around the world lack access to comprehensive training on inclusion even in countries where most teachers are trained and qualified. GEM acknowledged that more than one in every three teachers, and about one

in every two in Japan, reported a strong need for professional development in teaching students with special needs (UNESCO, 2020).

The role of effective professional development to improve teachers' perceived competence was found in the case of Turkey. In 2019, Gezer and Aksoy reported a lack of awareness of pre-service teachers for inclusion. The pre-service teachers considered being an inclusive education teacher as providing a supportive role rather than a primary one. Surprisingly, they were unaware of their roles, necessary knowledge, and skills for inclusion (Gezer & Aksoy, 2019). However, an in-service training program for special and inclusive education was opened, and a "special education" course for the teacher training program was added. A recent study by Durdokoca (2021) claimed that most of the in-service teachers from Turkey perceived themselves as having a higher level of competence for inclusive education. They were experts in using different teaching methods and skills but possessed lower competency in diagnosis and assessment for inclusion.

When looking at other African countries, the perception of teachers' competence towards inclusive education was found to be similar to other countries. Abb and Rashid (2020) conducted a case study to examine the level of TVET teachers' competence in the effective implementation of IE in Nigeria. The results showed that only 67.5 % had competence in motivation, 58.3% were competent in method and skill for evaluation, 52.5 were experts in the instructional process, and only 35% had material utilization skills. Similarly, in other Asian countries like India, primary and secondary school teachers perceived low competency for inclusive education (Das, 2013). In Malaysia, only 41.33% had skills in evaluation and monitoring, 42.22% had competencies in teaching strategies, and 40% had the ability to manage the classroom to be an inclusive teacher (Rabi & Zulkefli, 2018).

Many previous studies reported a low level of teacher competence in various aspects of the implementation of IE. Even in European countries, for example, primary and secondary

school teachers in Kragujevac showed low competencies for inclusive education. This finding was consistent with the study conducted by Das (2013) showing that both primary and secondary school teachers in Delhi were not trained to teach children with disabilities, and they perceived themselves as low-competence teachers to work with students with disabilities. Recently, another study confirmed that in-service teachers from both the Philippines and Thailand still lack the necessary competency to successfully implement inclusion (Zarla et al., 2020).

Based on the results of the literature review, only a few studies were found that focus on the differences in competencies of teachers based on their gender, age, grade level taught, etc. Durdukoca's mixed method study (2021) found that teachers' professional competencies were not affected by gender. This finding was consistent with the study conducted by DeniZ and ILiK (2021), who found no difference in teachers' professional competence by gender. However, female pre-service teachers in Turkey are better at cooperation competence (Şahan, 2021). With regard to age, a higher level of competency was found in younger teachers (Bukvić, 2014). On the contrary, the result offered by DeniZ and ILiK (2021) suggests that there was no difference in Konya teachers' competency by age. Arvelo-Rosales et al. (2021) argued that pre-service teachers studying at the University of La Laguna who had daily contact with disability showed a higher level of competence for inclusive education than those without contact with SENs. In addition, no difference in perception of competency was found between primary and secondary school teachers in Delhi (Das, 2013). Sahan (2021) also found that science pre-service teachers possessed more competence in teaching and cooperation for inclusive education, and primary school pre-service teachers are better at classroom management than others types of teachers.

To conclude, many teachers from different regions expressed the need for professional development for a new position, from a general education teacher to an inclusive education

teacher. (Serbia et al., 2020; Zulfija et al., 2013). Previous studies have pointed out teachers' lack of theory and techniques for IE (Zulfija et al., 2013), lack of knowledge of children with special education needs (Bukvić, 2014), lack of competence in evaluation and monitoring (Rabi & Zulkefli, 2018), and limited diagnosis and assessment skill (Durdukoca, 2021). All of these problems can be traced back to one root cause: a lack of a fundamental competencies framework that may help teachers and administrators provide inclusive education that is effective for all students.

However, a fully inclusive classroom cannot be achieved only through competent teachers. We need teachers who are proficient, who have a genuine appreciation for their work, and who are committed to seeing their students succeed despite the difficulties they may face, especially those with special education needs. Having dedicated and skilled educators is crucial to creating an inclusive society. However, literature highlighting the relationship between teachers' competence and commitment towards the inclusion of children with disabilities is still scarce, even though many studies exist for general education teachers. The following section discusses their relationship in consideration of underlying predictors.

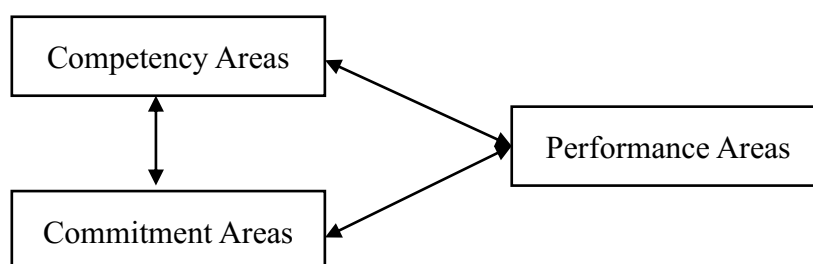
2.9 Teacher Competence and Commitment: Their Interactive Roles in IE Implementation

Competence and commitment are two qualities that should be present in every professional endeavor. They are the key to ensuring the productivity and quality of the organization. Together, these competencies and commitments would assure a teacher's continuous attention in the classroom, which would have positive effects on student engagement and achievement, parent and community involvement for the greater good of society and teacher job satisfaction. In 1998, National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) in India developed a competency-based and commitment-oriented teacher education

curriculum to improve the quality of teacher education⁹. It was based on the premise that teachers' competency, commitment, and performance are inter-related:

Figure 2.7

A Competency-based and a Commitment-oriented Curricular Framework (NCTE, pg.xiii)



In the same vein, Everwijn et al. (1990) also argued that both competence and commitment are basic factors that can influence work performance. Unlike NCTE, they put more emphasis on competence as a predictor of commitment as “In their effects on work performance, competence and commitment are not the same order. Competence without commitment can lead to the required work performance. But without competence, it is hard for the dedicated and motivated employee to perform according to standards” (Everwijn et al., 1990, p.550). Although Everwinjin et al. emphasized competence more, they also recognized its relation to commitment.

Furthermore, several investigations have shown the existence of a causal link between these two ideas (González et al., 2018; Suantara et al., 2020; Siri et al., 2020). For example, Marjito (2014) proved that teacher competence had a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment. Suantara et al., (2020), who echoed these findings, suggested that an increase in an employee's level of competence would lead to an increase in that person's commitment to the company (Suantara et al., 2020). Many previous studies predicted that an

⁹ <http://14.139.60.153/handle/123456789/2096>

increase in competence would lead to a significant increase in commitment (Akram et al., 2015; González et al., 2018; Halim et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021).

A review of the literature reveals a robust and persistent association between these two constructs, with commitment contributing as a moderator in certain cases of workplace performance. Siri et al. (2020) found that teacher performance is significantly improved by teacher competence and commitment. Teachers who were confident in their own educational, professional, and personal abilities were more committed to their work. Siri et al. also looked at how commitment acts as a mediator, influencing teachers' skills and performance both directly and indirectly. Similarly, Gonzalez (2018) proved that Spanish pre-service teachers' perception of autonomy, support, structure, and control provided by their university teachers were significant predictors of teaching competence, which in turn predicted teaching self-efficacy and teacher commitment. Personal and general efficacy are also the two strongest predictors of commitment (Coladarci, 1992).

Previous studies have reported the effect of teacher competence on other teachers' job-related factors such as job satisfaction, motivation, etc. For example, Akram et al. (2015) have reported the relationship between teacher competence with professional commitment and job satisfaction. The result showed that there was a strong positive relationship among them and concluded that enhancing the competency of teachers could lead to the enhancement of commitment and job satisfaction. A recent study also found that principals' leadership, motivation, commitment, job satisfaction, environment, organizational culture and management, and wage are the factors influencing teachers' competence and performance (Aindra et al., 2022). Competence, commitment, and motivation all have a role in a teacher's performance, as shown by the research of Madjid et al. (2020).

Nevertheless, only a limited number of studies have documented the correlation between competence and commitment in regard to inclusive education. Prior research has documented a correlation between teacher attitudes and their commitment to inclusive education. (Wanderi., 2015; Bansal., 2016; Deng et al., 2024). These studies indicated that teachers who had favorable attitudes toward inclusive education demonstrated a greater commitment to inclusive education. A recent study conducted in Beijing revealed that teachers were engaging in inclusive education against their will due to financial incentives and a lack of alternative work opportunities (Deng et al., 2024). In addition, it has been found that teachers who understand the significance of inclusive education and are welcoming to children with disabilities exhibit a stronger commitment to promoting inclusive education.

In general, teacher competency and commitment are regarded as significant contributors to the final achievement of educational goals. Sharma and Pace (2019) proposed an “EMBRACE” strategy¹⁰ for teacher educators to ensure preparation of teachers for a commitment to inclusive education is fully integrated. According to this strategy, teachers should be exposed to inclusive culture, policy, and practice using any necessary means, including those that stress the heart, hand, and head. Wang et al. (2021) argued that teachers’ commitment is closely related to teaching competency, teaching efficacy, and satisfaction with the education program. Using Locke's Model of Work Motivation, Wang et al. (2021) explain that teachers' commitment to their jobs results from their personal values, their participation in teaching-related activities, their sense of personal and professional identification, and their early experience of success in the field. Teachers' commitment to their jobs is also affected by their involvement in retraining. The research shows that since their skills have improved and

¹⁰ The acronym EMBRACE denotes (1) Empathize with the sociocultural background of student teachers, (2) Model behavior that endorses inclusion, (3) Balance the use of variety of activities, (4) Reflect practice and teaching approaches, (5) Arouse a sense of hopefulness as an inclusive education teacher, (6) Create authentic opportunities, and (7) Encourage to work collaboratively.

they are better equipped to do their jobs, teachers who get further training are more likely to continue with the organization, (Owan et al., 2022).

To conclude, competence and commitment matter a great deal toward establishing successful organizations, and implementing inclusive education is no exception. That is why competence and commitment have become important characteristics of teachers that need to be nurtured and developed among teachers in school. As a consequence, the conditions necessary to improve teacher competence and commitment are of great concern in this new inclusive era.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter discusses the theoretical stance of this study and how the adopted theories align with the research questions and problem statement. As a means of clearly elucidating the position upon which the research is founded for each concept, the chapter introduces two famous theories to deeply understand the research purposes and significance of the study and how the theories embedded and guided the research. Finally, a preliminary competency framework for this study is discussed.

3.1 Theoretical Background of the Study

3.1.1 Commitment Theory by Meyer and Allen

Commitment matters greatly to organizations. Meyer and Allen developed a three-component model of commitments in combination with different perspectives. Meyer and Allen (1991) urged that their combination of both attitudinal and behavioral approaches in conceptualization of commitment could explain the psychological state that reflects their desire, need, and obligation to be in the organization. Based on this argument, Meyer and Allen defined commitment as follows:

“...commitment is a psychological state that (a) characterizes the employee’s relationship with the organization, and (b) has implications for the decision to continue or discontinue membership in the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

Meyer and Allen argued a model of commitment composed of three psychological states: affective commitment, continuous commitment, and normative commitment, that are distinct from each other, as shown in Figure 3.1. (Allen & Meyer, 1990, 1996; Meyer & Allen, 1991). The affective component refers to the employee's attachment to the organization, and a person with a high affective component will remain in the organization because "they desire to do so." Continuous commitment refers to an understanding of the expenses involved with

quitting the organization, and an employee with a strong continuous commitment will remain in the organization because "they must." Finally, normative commitment relates to a sense of responsibility; a person with a high degree of normative commitment will continue because "they believe they ought to do so." Furthermore, they argued that each of these mental states can be experienced by an individual to varied degrees. Others may feel neither a need nor an obligation to stay but have a strong desire to do so. Still others may feel neither a need nor an obligation to leave but have a strong want to stay.

Meyer and Allen (1990, 1996) claimed that three components of commitment are valid measures of organizational commitment. Nonetheless, they admitted that their commitment model required additional construct validation (Allen & Meyer, 1996). They pointed out that although factor analysis proved their model of commitment to be accurate, a strong association still exists between normative and affective dimensions of commitment. That is why many authors have pointed out several arguments opposing their theory. First, some authors have highlighted the conceptual ambiguity of the model (Solinger et al., 2008; Swailes, 2002). Cohen (2007) pointed out that the redundancy of the concepts of normative and affective commitment. However, Culpepper (2000)¹¹ and Meyer et al. (2002)¹² countered this opposition. Jaros (2007) also argued that Meyers' construct of organizational components focused on the full-time paid organization members.¹³ Despite several critiques, the three-factor model of commitment proposed by Meyer and Allen is frequently used to explain why people are committed to particular organizations.

¹¹ Culpepper (2000) compared the original Allen and Meyer (1990) scale to the revised version and found that, with only minimal adjustments, the original scale better distinguishes between affective and normative commitment and is a better measure of the construct's validity.

¹² Affective and normative commitment, according to Meyer et al. (2002), are distinct concepts. Although they discovered a strong link between two ideas, this does not mean that employees will never feel obliged to act in a certain way even if they don't feel like it. Therefore, they argued that the three-components of components are related and distinguishable from each other.

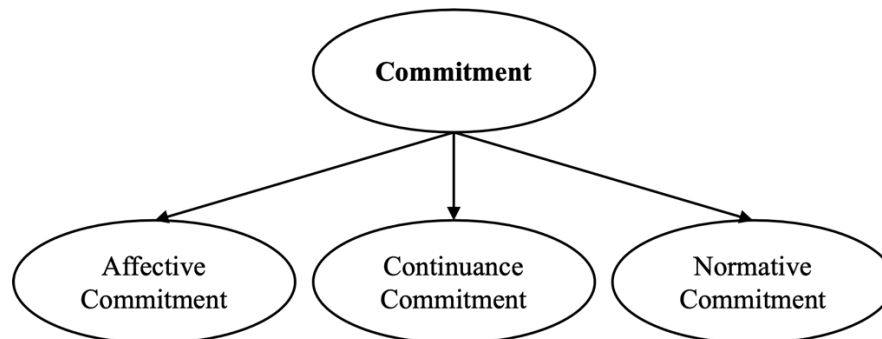
¹³ Jaros (2007) argued that not all organization has the same characteristics of three-components commitment, for example, volunteer workers or parttime workers makes it meaningless to measure normative commitment.

One example in which the three-components model was applied is documented by Owan et al. (2022). They confirmed the construct validity of Meyer and Allen's model and examined the impact of retraining, placement, and motivation of school leaders in each component of commitment. In a similar vein, Ibrahim and Iqbal (2015) found that teachers' affective, normative, and continuous commitment was positive, and many educators emphasized that they became teachers for reasons other than financial. Halim et al. (2019) found that the three components of commitment could serve as a predictor of performance. Siri (2020) also utilized Meyer and Allen's model and argued the influence of teacher competence on the affective, normative, and continuous commitment of teachers.

Applying Meyer and Allen's three-component model of commitment to this study, teacher commitment consists of three components: emotional attachment to the profession, recognition of the cost of leaving the profession, and a sense of obligation to the organization. This framework can shed light on the relative importance of three factors—personal commitment, financial considerations, and a sense of duty—in shaping professionals' commitment in their specific profession (Allen and Meyer, 1996). Although teachers may no longer have an interest in teaching, the model suggests that they may still be dedicated to the profession due to the high cost of quitting and a sense of obligation to their profession. In light of this, it is compelling to investigate whether or to what extent teachers who work with students who have special needs exhibit all three types of commitment.

Figure 3.1

Three-components Model of Commitment by Meyer and Allen (1990, 1991, 1996)



3.1.2 Self-Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan

Many previous studies have proved the significance of Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory to explain human behavior or performance in terms of needs satisfaction (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009; Hagenauer et al., 2018; Jansen in de Wal et al., 2020). Deci and Ryan developed self-determination theory (SDT) over the course of three decades in four separate mini-theories; they then merged these four theories into a single overarching framework to describe all potential forms of human behavior across all disciplines (Ryan & Deci, 2004). The four sub-theories explain the role of rewards and social contexts on intrinsic motivation (Cognitive Evaluation Theory), the influence of social contexts on the internalization of extrinsic motivation (Organic Integration Theory), the differentiation of extrinsic motivation according to internalization (Causality Orientation Theory), and the relationship between motivation and well-being (Basic Need Theory).

By bringing these four perspectives into SDT, we can better understand the factors that motivate people to thrive and perform. According to SDT, satisfaction of innate psychological needs could bring the optimal functioning of an individual which leads to psychological growth and well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2004). Therefore, individuals will actively

pursue and engage in activities, areas of interest, and social connections that empower the satisfaction of those basic psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). These basic psychological needs include competence, relatedness, and autonomy. First, Deci (1975) described competence as “feeling effective in one’s ongoing interaction with the social environment and experiencing opportunities to exercise and express one’s capacities” (Deci & Ryan, 2002, p.7). According to Elliot et al. (16), White's concept of effectance motivation¹⁴, in which an individual is driven by a desire to learn about and exert control over their surroundings, underlies the idea of competence in SDT. In order to satisfy their desire to be competent, people actively seek out challenges that match their ability level and keep trying to improve their skills through practice. For this reason, competence cannot be defined in terms of a set of acquired skills; rather, it is a subjective experience of self-assurance and efficacy in one's actions (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Secondly, relatedness underlines the homonymous aspect of life's integrative need to connect with and be accepted by others. The drive to experience oneself in relation to others is not about reaching a certain outcome or formal standing, but rather mentally being in comfortable communication or unity with others. Finally, autonomy is acting based on one's own interests and beliefs. When individuals are independent, they perceive their actions as a representation of themselves; hence, even when affected by external influences, they feel initiative and worth. If these three basic needs are fulfilled, it is likely to have a productive effect or a better outcome. Parenting (Grolnick & Apostoleris, 2002), education (Reeve, 2002), healthcare (Williams, 2002), sports (Frederick-Recascino, 2002), and others have all found applications for self-determination theory. Deci and Ryan (1985) also acknowledged the

¹⁴ White (1959) states innate nature of competences as “Effectance motivation cannot, of course, be conceived as having a source in tissues external to the nervous system..... represents what the neuromuscular system wants to do when it is occupied or is gently stimulated by the environment” (p.321). Yet, as Elliot et al. (16) pointed out, effectance-motivated behavior is performed for the direct, immediate benefit of having an impact on the environment, rather than for the sake of obtaining the ensuing skills and talent.

widespread use of STD in a variety of contexts, including the classroom, psychotherapy, the workplace, and athletic competition.

In the context of education, STD is typically employed to explain student performance and teacher performance in terms of satisfying basic psychological needs. Using the SDT framework, Hagenauer et al. (2018) investigated the impact of need satisfaction on emotion, which in turn affected life satisfaction and commitment among students enrolled in a teacher education program. He advocated for learning settings that cater to students' fundamental psychological requirements to guarantee students' emotional health and boost commitment. Similarly, Davidson and Beck (2019) also proved that students' satisfaction of competence influences their degree commitment. Jansen in de Wal et al. (2017) studied Dutch secondary school teachers and found that the effect of job resources on teachers' motivation for work and their commitment to professional learning can be explained, at least in part, by the satisfaction of basic psychological needs and by teachers' autonomy-related motivation.

To return to the subject under study, self-determination theory will be used to shed light on whether or not the participants' level of competence satisfaction affects their commitment to the organization. This study suggested that teachers whose psychological needs are met will have a stronger commitment to their organization. This study presumed a strong correlation between teachers' perceptions of their own competence and their level of commitment. Teachers who consider themselves competent for inclusion will strive to achieve organizational goals and continue in the profession, regardless of their sense of responsibility or the high cost of resigning. Conversely, if teachers are unable to meet their own particular standards of competence, they will be less invested in the success of their organization. This has the unfortunate consequence of making teachers more likely to quit if they do not feel satisfactory. Yet, the relationship between competence and commitment is intriguing enough to encourage further investigation into its roots.

3.1.3 Self-efficacy Theory by Bandura

Bandura first coined the term self-efficacy as an "expectation of personal mastery," which influences an individual's ability to deal with a given situation and achieve desired results (Bandura, 1977, p.193). Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy or perceived self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to manage prospective situations" (p.2). He asserted that an individual's self-efficacy affects his or her conduct and level of effort when pursuing specific objectives. Additionally, he hypothesized that expectations of personal mastery influence both the onset and maintenance of coping behavior. In light of this, an individual's level of self-efficacy significantly affects the amount of effort they will put forth and the duration they will persist despite difficulties and negative experiences (Bandura, 1997). However, Bandura also acknowledged that high expectations will never be enough to guarantee success if underlying competencies are limited (Bandura, 1977). An individual's sense of self-efficacy can be influenced in four basic ways: through direct experience (mastery), indirect experience (vicarious), social influence (persuasion), and direct experience (physiological and emotional condition) (Bandura, 1977, 1997). Success and failure, seeing the performance of others, being persuaded by the feedback or judgment of others, and one's own emotional condition are all factors that can increase or diminish one's sense of self-efficacy.

Bandura's concept of self-efficacy has been shown to be effective in a broad range of disciplines in numerous studies. For instance, Hackett (1995) discussed how one's sense of self-efficacy affects both one's career choices and one's professional development. Similar applications can be found in healthcare, where it is used to control the spread of health-enhancing practices and the eradication of those that are harmful, such as the reduction of smoking, the improvement of one's diet and level of physical activity, and the treatment of cancer (Schwarzer & Fuchs, 1995). Students' motivation, emotions, and performance in the

classroom are all affected by their beliefs about their own abilities to complete academic tasks (Bandura, 1993; Zimmerman, 1995).

The importance of teachers' self-efficacy has also been recognized in the literature. Gonzalez et al. (2018) discovered that the perceptions of autonomy support, structure, and control by Spanish pre-service teachers were significant predictors of teaching skills, which predict teaching self-efficacy. All of these characteristics predicted the commitment of pre-service teachers, operationalized as satisfaction with their career choice, intended effort, and intended perseverance. Similarly, Muhangi (2017) also claimed that there is a significant positive relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction and commitment among secondary school teachers. In 2019, research by Liu and Huang reported that occupational self-efficacy has a direct effect on organizational commitment.

Even though self-efficacy has been thoroughly studied in a variety of fields, there is still need for improvement in the context of inclusive education. A number of authors have reported the effect of self-efficacy on job commitment of teachers in special education (Adebomi & Olufunke, 2012; Canrinus et al., 2012). Yada (2020) conducted a comparative study involving teachers in Japan and Finland to determine the contextual factors that shape teachers' self-efficacy in their ability to promote diversity and inclusion. He found that teachers' demographics and self-efficacy sources affected their efficacy beliefs in different ways across countries, and he highlighted the need to investigate inclusive education in cross-cultural contexts that account for cultural, historical, political, and societal contexts.

Returning to the framework of this study, self-efficacy theory will be utilized to highlight the relationship between competence and commitment. This study hypothesizes, drawing on Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, that teachers' perceptions of their own competence with inclusive practice will affect their perceptions of their own efficacy to conduct those practices, which in turn will increase teachers' commitment to their profession. This means that

teachers will be more dedicated to the organization's aims and practices if they have a high degree of competency for inclusion and a strong sense of their own ability to bring about those aims. To put it another way, teachers who are less skilled in the area of inclusive practice will also be less confident in their own abilities to accomplish this strategy and thus will be less committed to the success of the organization's aims.

3.2 Conceptual Framework of the Study

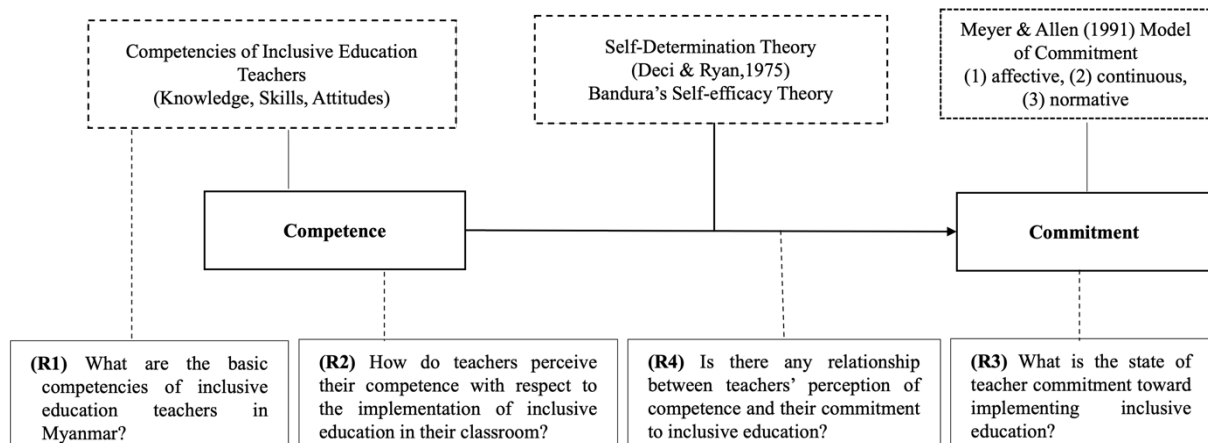
Based on a review of the relevant literature, a vast and growing number of studies have explored inclusive education during the past decade. Nevertheless, until recently, the majority of prior research, particularly in developing nations, did not focus on teachers' competency or competence for inclusive practices. The majority of past research is from European and African nations, with very few from Asian nations such as Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and the Philippines. In addition, the literature study revealed inconsistencies in the overall competencies of inclusive education teachers, which differed greatly depending on the cultural setting. The absence of this universal competencies framework affects teacher preparation, which may result in a shortage of competent educators in inclusive settings. This outcome may increase the likelihood of teacher turnover or a lack of meaningful effort toward organizational objectives.

Previous studies have reported the relation between teachers competence and commitment (Coladarci, 1992; Everwijn et al., 1990; González et al., 2018; Siri et al., 2020; Suantara et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021), competence and self-efficacy (Miller et al., 2017; Poulou, 2007), and self-efficacy and commitment (Adebomi & Olufunke, 2012; Canrinus et al., 2012). Despite this, there is still limited academic research on the relationship between competence and commitment. This research will help close the knowledge gap by examining their connection within the framework of inclusive education. Taking into account the research gap, significant concepts from the literature review, and theoretical background, this study

employed the conceptual framework depicted in Figure 3.2 to investigate the relationship between teachers' competence and their commitment toward inclusive education.

Figure 3.2

Conceptual Framework of the Study



CHAPTER 4: DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the data used in this study as well as how these data were acquired and analyzed to answer the research questions. This chapter opens with a comprehensive description of the rationale for a particular study design. The second section summarizes the data employed in this study, including the research settings and participants. In addition, the procedures utilized to collect and evaluate data are described in depth. The section concludes with a discussion of how the study addresses issues of reliability, validity, and research ethics.

4.1 Research Design: Grounded Theory

This study used a qualitative research design, which provided the researcher with in-depth insight into the subject under investigation. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research is used when the existing theories fail to adequately portray the complexity of the subject under inquiry or when a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the issue is required. This study employed the Creswell and Poth qualitative research methodology to comprehend the problem context and develop a theory based on a comprehensive description of experiences. Among qualitative research methodologies, the grounded theory approach was selected due to the need for a model to describe how people perceive the investigated topic.

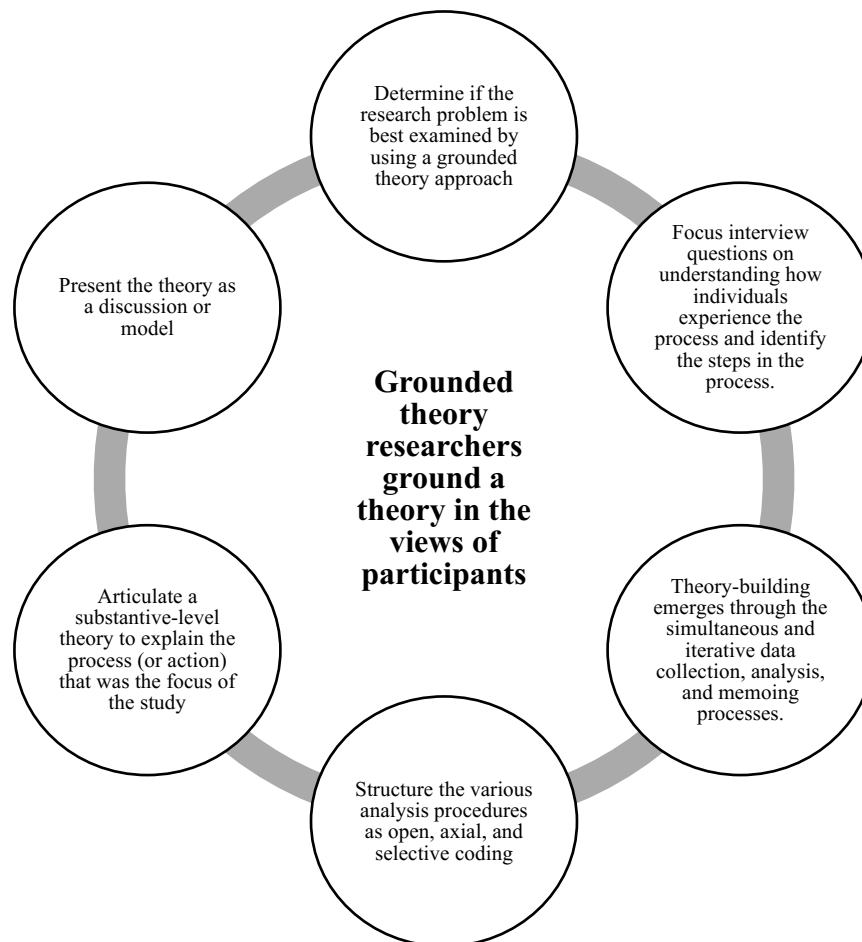
Grounded theory research has become one of the most widely used methods in qualitative inquiry (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021), and was defined as the qualitative research design in which “the inquirer generates a general explanation (a theory) of a process, an action, or an interaction shaped by the views of a large number of participants” (Creswell & Poth, 2018 , p.82). This qualitative research was originally developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967. It affords researchers not just a profound comprehension of the facts under investigation, but also the ability to generate theories through inductive procedures (Mohajan

& Mohajan, 2022). In addition, Corbin and Strauss highlighted the essential features of Glaser and Strauss' qualitative research methodology. First, the concepts and theories are derived from the data gathered during the study process and were not selected beforehand. Second, data collection and analysis are interdependent and occur in a continuous cycle throughout the study procedure (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Its unique characteristics have become the hallmark of qualitative research in various fields.

To place the ideas of grounded theory in context, it helps researchers to uncover competencies perceived by teachers in Myanmar to be important for implementing inclusive education, based on their real experiences. In addition, it provides a general theoretical framework for the essential competencies of an inclusive education teacher. The use of grounded theory enriches the researcher's understanding of the values, beliefs, and feelings of each individual participant from the inductive reasoning of their voices. During this study, the researcher followed the systematic procedure of the grounded theory approach by Creswell and Poth (2018), as follows:

Figure 4.1

Procedures for Conducting Grounded Theory Research (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.89)



4.2 Data

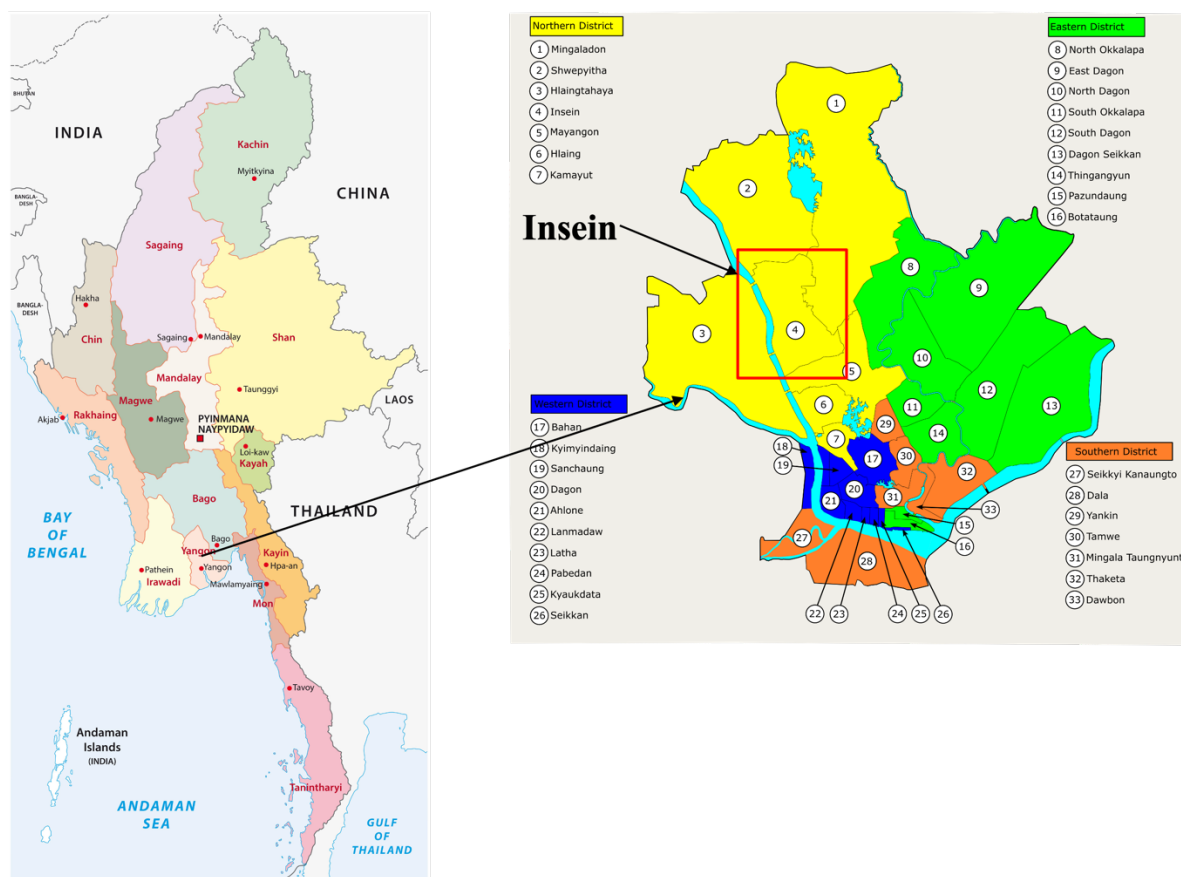
4.2.1 Research Setting

One of the aims of this study is to construct a competency framework for an inclusive education teacher and to investigate how teachers perceive their own competence as inclusive education teachers. In light of this, this study targets research sites that can provide a detailed description of the experiences of educating children with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. The majority of schools promoting inclusive education were located in one of Yangon's neighborhoods. Therefore, this study focuses primarily on two types of research sites in Yangon: Basic Education Department Schools, and non-profit charitable organizations.

This study targeted Basic Education Schools under the Ministry of Education. According to data from the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) on disability and education, Insein, Shwephyithar, and Hlaingtharyar townships in Yangon appear to be the most common locations for projects aimed at educating children with disabilities. Therefore, some of the schools located in the Insein area of Yangon were chosen for this investigation. This study focused on four schools in Insein: No. 1 Basic Education High School, No. 9 Basic Education Middle School, No. 11 Basic Education Middle School, and No. 52 Basic Education Primary School.

Figure 4.2

Map Showing the Region of Research Setting



A non-profit charity organization called the Eden Center for Disabled Children is located in Insein Township of Yangon. Founded by U Tha Uke in 2000, it is the pioneer school

and only place for children with physical and intellectual disability in Myanmar. Eden aims to ensure the fullest potential of children with disabilities and to provide families and caregivers with the necessary knowledge and skills. In addition, it aims to promote community awareness by providing technical support to community, local, and other organizations. It is a leading organization regarding the promotion of disability and inclusive practices in Myanmar. The Center provides access to mainstream education in some basic education schools for more than 200 children with disabilities.

The center has initiated many efforts on behalf of the rights of children with disabilities. It has conducted more than seven Community-Based Rehabilitation Projects throughout the country in collaboration with many international funding organizations. Moreover, it has implemented inclusive education projects (2007-2014), and 50 basic education department schools have participated. The projects mainly disseminate the social model of inclusive education to teachers through training in the knowledge and skills necessary for inclusive education. The center provides various forms of training to disseminate awareness of inclusive education, such as disability awareness training, disability and equality training, inclusive education training, etc. (<https://edencentre.org>).

4.2.2 Participants

This study primarily consists of two types of participants: inclusive education trainers working at one of the private organizations and teachers working under the Ministry of Education. While inclusive education trainers provide a rich description of the basic competencies of being an inclusive education teacher through their background and professional experiences, teachers working under the Ministry of Education enrich what teachers should have and how they perceive themselves being an inclusive education teacher through their own personal experiences in an inclusive classroom.

Table 4.1*Characteristics of Teachers from Nongovernment Organizations*

No	Name	Gender	Age	Education	Organization & Position
1.	Khin	Female	29	Master of Public Health (Melbourne)	Inclusive Education Specialist, Save the Child
2.	Aung	Male	-	B.A (English)	Eden Center for Disabled Children (ECDC), IE trainer
3.	Khine	Female	51	B.A (Psychology)	Eden Center for Disabled Children (ECDC), IE trainer
4.	Zaw	Male	33	B.Sc (Physics)	Eden Center for Disabled Children (ECDC), IE trainer
5.	Tun	Male	-	Master of Disability (UK)	Eden Center for Disabled Children (ECDC), Founder, and director of ECDC, IE trainer
6.	Win	Female	50	B.Sc (Physics)	Founder of private inclusive school A, special education trainer
7.	Htet	Female	-	B.A (Geography)	Eden Center for Disabled Children (ECDC), IE trainer and field supervisor

A total of seven trainers working under nongovernment organizations participated in this study. Among them, five teachers teach at the Eden Center for Disabled Children (ECDC), one teacher works for Save the Child Myanmar, and one teacher provides inclusive education at her private school. Three of the seven were male trainers. Most of the trainers hold bachelor's degrees in either science or art (B.Sc. or B.A), and two of the trainers earned advanced degrees from foreign countries. Each of the teachers provides training relating to inclusive and special education to community members, teachers, and social workers. (See Table 4.1)

Table 4.2*Characteristics of Teachers Under the Ministry of Education*

Characteristic	Category	n
Age	Above 50	4
	Between 50 and 40	7
	Under 40	2
Position	Primary assistant teacher	4
	Junior assistant teacher	7
	Senior assistant teacher	2
Education Level	B.Sc.	6
	B. A	3
	DTEC/DTED	2
	BED	2
School Name	No 1 Basic Education High School, Insein	7
	No 9 Basic Education Middle School, Insein	2
	No 11 Basic Education Middle School, Insein	2
	No 52 Basic Education Primary School, Insein	2
Training	Yes	5
	No	8
Experience teaching children with disabilities	Children with a physical disability	5
	Children with hearing disability	1
	Children with vision disability	3
	Children with intellectual disability	3
	Autism	1

On the other hand, thirteen female teachers working under the Ministry of Education participated in this study. Among them, 55% work at No.1 Basic Education High School, 15 % at No.9 Basic Education Middle School, 15% at the No.11 Basic Education Middle School, and another 15% at the No. 52 Basic Education Primary School. Regarding their position, primary assistant teachers accounted for 31%, junior assistant teachers accounted for 54%, and senior assistant teachers accounted for 15%. Most of the participants were between 50 and 40

years old (54%), while 31% of the teachers were above 50 years old, and 15% were under 40 years. Almost half of the teachers (46%) possessed a bachelor's degree in science while another 24% had a bachelor's degree in art. Only 15% of teachers hold diplomas in teaching, whereas 15% of teachers hold bachelor's degrees in education. More than half of the teachers (62%) had never received training relating to inclusive education. However, they were teaching different types of disabilities in their mainstream classrooms. Of these, 38% of teachers reported having experience in teaching children with physical disabilities, 8% had experience in teaching hearing disabilities, 23% had experience in teaching vision disability, 23% had experience in teaching intellectual disabilities, and 8% had experience in teaching children with autism (See Table 4.2).

4.2.3 Data Collection Instrument

This study used a semi-structured interview questionnaire. The questions in the semi-structured interviews were developed in reference to the objectives of the research questions. The interview guide consists of three parts: general information about the participants; the main questions regarding the issues, followed by a series of prompts and probes for each issue; and finally an additional comments section. General information about the participants included age, educational background, working position, and experience. The second part includes five key research questions concerning the teachers' competencies toward implementing inclusive education. There is also an open-question section that enables the participants to provide additional comments or suggestions on the topic discussed. Details about the interview guide are attached in Appendix E.

4.3 Methods

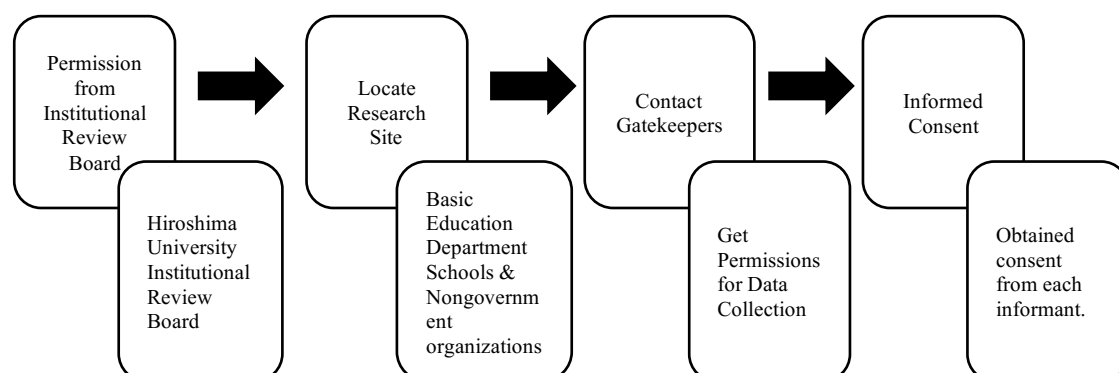
The following section describes the methods used to collect and evaluate the collected data. It comprises the researcher's access to the research location, the sampling procedure, data gathering methods, and data analysis, with research ethics in consideration.

4.3.1 Data Collection Procedure

Before beginning data collection, the researcher gained approval from institutional review boards, verifying that this study design adheres to the rules for conducting ethical research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Then, the researcher located the research site or individuals who can provide significant contextual information that will be useful for gaining a deeper understanding of the subject under investigation. Consequently, teachers working for the Ministry of Education, as well as teachers working for private special and inclusive education schools were targeted. To gain access to these sites, researchers contacted personally known gatekeepers of government and non-government organizations via email and social media. With the assistance of these gatekeepers, data collection permissions were obtained (See Appendix I). Afterward, the researcher emailed each participant an informed consent document briefly introducing the design and anticipated benefits of the study and explaining the policy on the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants and the right to withdraw at any time, as detailed in Appendix D.

Figure 4. 3

Data Collection Procedure



4.3.2 Sampling Method

Purposive sampling was adopted in this study. It is a widely used qualitative research method for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomena of interest (Palinkas et al., 2015). In purposive sampling, the researcher selects individuals based on the desired characteristics (Cohen et al., 2018). Inclusion criteria for this study were teachers who have experience in teaching children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms and trainers or teachers who provide inclusive education training. Based on the focus of this study, it was crucial to only include informants who have background experience or knowledge of teaching children with disabilities. Teachers who do not have experience in teaching children with disabilities were excluded. Theoretical sampling was also used to ensure that teachers who participated in the study had adequately experienced the phenomena to provide a rich description (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

In order to establish the informants' background, the researcher first collected participant information on age, current position, experience in teaching children with disabilities, types of children with disabilities being taught, and years of teaching experiences. The researcher evaluated this background data and excluded several informants who did not have experience teaching children with disabilities in a mainstream classroom. A total of twenty informants met the inclusion criteria and participated in the study.

In grounded theory, Charmaz (2014) suggested including 20 to 30 participants to develop a well-saturated theory (as cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018). However, a minimum of 15 participants was considered appropriate if saturation of the information was satisfied (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). For instance, Harley et al. (2009) conducted a grounded theory study with a sample of 15 physically active African American women. Referring to this study, 20 participants of teachers with rich experiences in mainstreaming participated (Harley et al., 2009). Characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 5.1.

4.3.3 Semi-structured Interviews

In this study, the researchers employed semi-structured in-depth interviews to explore the interviewee's opinions and beliefs on the essential knowledge and abilities for teaching students with special education needs in mainstream classrooms, based on their experiences. Brinkmann (2015) explained that a "semi-structured interview can make better use of the knowledge-producing potentials of dialogues by allowing much more leeway for following up on whatever the angles are deemed important by the interviewee" (p.26). Similarly, DeJonckheere and Vanghn (2019) also argued that semi-structured interviews are appropriate for collecting new and exploratory data related to the research topic, triangulating other data sources, or validating the findings. In relation to this study, a semi-structured interview was used to deeply explore new theories on the research interest, and the questions were open-ended with prompts and probes (Cohen et.al, 2018).

In designing the semi-structured interview, the researcher followed Dejonckheere and Vaughn's ideas, which include eleven steps: (1) determining the purpose and scope of the study, (2) identifying participants, (3) considering ethical issues, (4) planning logistical aspects, (5) developing the interview guide, (6) establishing trust and rapport, (7) conducting the interview, (8) memoing reflection, (9) analyzing data, (10) demonstrating the trustworthiness of the research, and (11) presenting findings in a paper or report. In following these procedures, the researchers first determined the objectives of the interview and the attributes of the participants who may provide rich and detailed information in answering research questions. Then the researcher prepared the consent to guarantee confidentiality, beneficence, and non-maleficence to ensure ethical clearance of the interview (Cohen et al., 2018). The interview guide includes a detailed description of the interview outline, introducing the objectives of the interview, requesting and confirming consent, asking personal information, and finally followed by the

specific interview questions regarding the topic concern with prompts and probes (See Appendix E).

After preparing the interview, the researcher chose to conduct one-on-one interviews to elicit more individual perspectives, opinions, and experiences (Cronin, 2013). Among different types of interview modes, the researcher applied to conduct a synchronous online interview. This online face-to-face interview was conducted because the data collection was done during the Myanmar civil war (2021-ongoing). Therefore, data were collected between April 2023 and June 2023 via Zoom or Viber based on the participant's preference. The researcher contacted each participant through email or telephone to set the time and date for the interview, and the interview was conducted accordingly.

During the interview, the researcher built rapport by first introducing herself fully to the respondent and explaining the purpose, nature, and duration of the interviews, the use of information from the responses, and the ethical issues. Then, the researcher asked for some personal background information about the respondents and tried to establish trust with the interviewee. Then, the researcher moved on to the main content of the interview by showing interest in their responses without judgment. The researcher took notes during the interview and recorded the interviews with the interviewee's consent.

After the first-round interviews, the researcher analyzed the recorded data first by reading and memoing emergent ideas from the data. However, some of the concepts still needed to be explored in more depth, leading to follow-up interviews to further explore the topic. Corbin and Strauss (2015) also recommended the circular process of data collection and analysis in grounded theory until the researchers determined that the major categories under study were fully developed with appropriate saturation. Glaser and Strauss stated that "saturation is reached when no new insights, properties, dimensions, relationships, codes or categories are produced even when new data are added" (as cited in Cohen et al., 2018, p.720). Once

saturation is reached, the phenomenon under study is said to be grounded in data (Charmaz, 2006). This study was determined to have reached the fully developed emerged codes or categories after the second follow-up interview.

4.4 Transcription and Translation

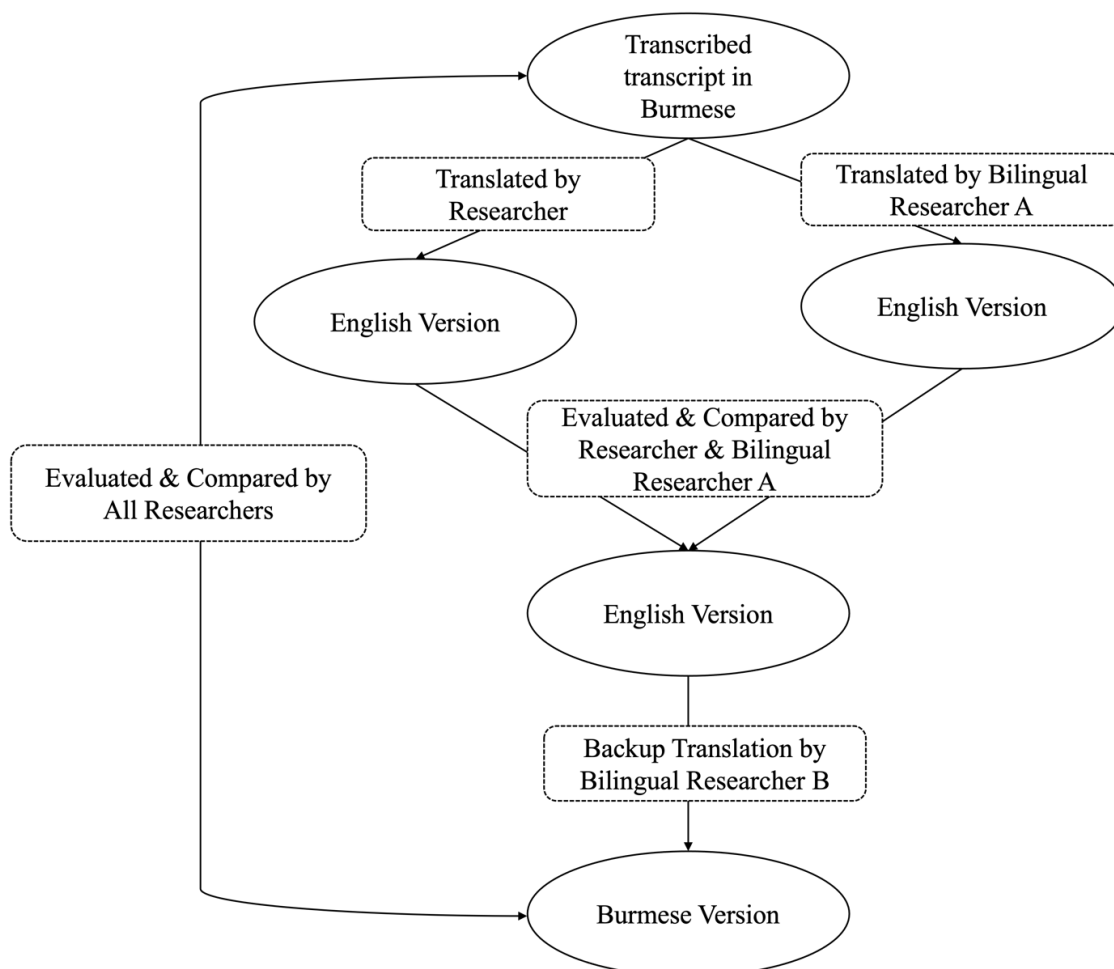
Due to the nature of the study's setting in Myanmar, all interviews were conducted in Burmese, the native language of the participants. The researcher carefully transcribed each audio recording immediately after the interview, even though this takes a long time, as the transcribers must have an adequate understanding of the subject matter (McMullin, 2023). Each audio recording was transcribed in a denaturalized format, where “idiosyncratic elements of speech (e.g. shutter, pause, nonverbals and involuntary) are removed.” (Oliver et al., 2005, p-1274). In addition, Oliver et al., (2005) also argued that denaturalized transcription is mostly used in grounded theory research where meanings and perceptions were emphasized for constructing theory or explaining phenomena under study. The researcher deleted any background noise, interruptions, and repeated utterances, as well as made the required changes to the transcript after attentively listening to the audio and interpreting both the manner in which it was said and the content (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). After transcribing all the recordings, the researcher proceeded to translate each interview into English for further data analysis.

The translation process is very important and could affect the research findings. This study followed the backup translation technique proposed by Chen (2004). By reversing the direction of translation from target to source language, backup translation—the most popular translation tool—allows users to assess the degree of similarity between the two versions (Brislin, 1970). To begin, the researcher translated all of the original transcripts from Burmese to English. Additionally, the researcher enlisted the help of a colleague who is proficient in

Burmese and English and specializes in inclusive education to provide translation services into English. Subsequently, the two English transcript sets were evaluated, and the translators ultimately agreed on the final English version. Following this, the researcher requested a Burmese translation of the final English version from a bilingual colleague who is an education researcher who speaks both Burmese and English fluently. In conclusion, all translators conducted a comparative analysis of the backup translation version and the original version of the Burmese and English transcripts. After deliberation among the translators regarding inconsistencies in the usage of terms and concepts, consensus on the English transcript was ultimately achieved (Chen & Boore, 2010).

Figure 4.4

Backup Translation Procedure by Chen (2004) (as cited in Chen & Boore, 2010)



4.5 Data analysis

Before conducting data analysis, transcribed interviews were exported to the qualitative analysis software NVivo. NVivo was mainly used in this study for data management and coding. Data analysis was guided by Corbin and Strauss (2015) consisting of three phases of coding: open, axial, and selective coding. Using these three sequential coding processes, the researcher was able to break down the data into more manageable components and gain deeper knowledge of the phenomenon of interest (Cohen et al., 2018). Before the process of coding, the interview transcripts were digested through multiple readings to become familiar with the materials.

During the *open coding phase*, the researcher carefully examines the transcribed interviews many times to explore the silent meaning of the information. The data were coded line-by-line or paragraph-by-paragraph to ensure that all of the important information received attention (Saldaña, 2016). The conceptual labels were given by constantly comparing with others for similarities and differences. Hawker and Kerr (2015) argued that researchers should engage in constant comparison of data throughout the data analysis.

During this labeling, the researcher brainstormed by asking questions of the meaning of each word or group of words and taking memos of any significant reaction, emotion, or question coming up when reading the transcripts. In this way, conceptually similar words are grouped together to form categories until new information obtained provides no further insight into the categories. The process of open coding was conducted to reduce the data set into a smaller set of categories to make the analytic process more manageable. Once the researcher identified the specific properties of each category, constant comparisons of each category and property were examined to ensure that each category was grounded in a similar concept (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). During this open coding process, the researcher identified as many codes as possible to avoid missing any important concepts. All the emerging first-trial codes were

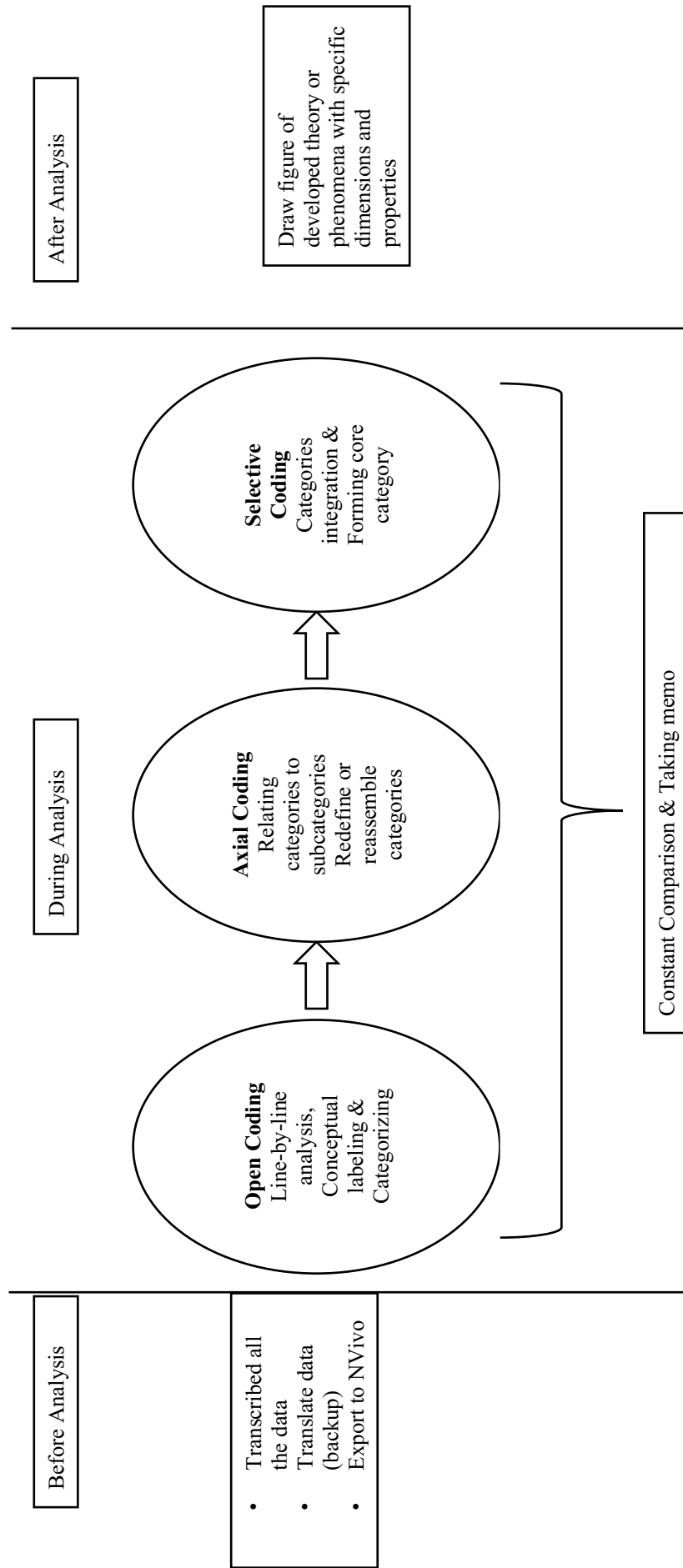
retained to visualize the progress of the analysis and to observe duplication (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Then, the researcher engaged in the second cycle coding process called *axial coding*, where the researcher reviewed the identified codes and examined the relationships among them (Cohen et al., 2018). During this stage, the researcher developed categories that resembled major categories or axial codes (Hawker & Kerr, 2015). Charmaz (2014) also argued that axial coding “aims to link categories with subcategories and asks how they are related” (p.148). In addition, the researcher ensured that all axial codes were saturated such that no new information or properties were discovered in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1988). During this coding phase, the initial codes were reduced after sorting and relabeling to form similar categories.

Finally, *selective coding*, also called theoretical coding by Saldaña (2016), was conducted. During the selective coding phase, the researcher integrated each of the codes and categories and reformulated new core categories or theories to explain the phenomena under study (Hawker & Kerr, 2015; Saldana, 2016). The central core category may exist in the name of one of the codes or categories developed so far, but new abstract words or phrases were also identified. The researcher reviewed all the previous memos to guide the formation of central categories to explain the phenomena under study. The result of the core categories with each specific property and dimensions are presented in the figure.

Figure 4.5

Analysis Procedure by Strauss & Corbin (1998)



4.6 Role of the Researcher

In this study, the researcher positioned herself as the sole instrument of research. During this grounded theory analysis, the researcher acknowledged that there exists the possibility of researcher perspective informed through literature reviewing in the field of study and extending to the process of data analysis. Due to the researcher's active involvement in the research process, Corbin and Strauss (2015) also noted that sustaining self-awareness is a crucial aspect of grounded theory. Therefore, the researcher acknowledges that the researcher used the knowledge from prior reading experience to generate interview questions and these experiences may have some impact on defining the meaning of the data and developing concepts and categories during the data analysis process. However, according to Corbin and Strass (2015), it is impossible to dismiss the researcher's past knowledge of their professional expertise and interest area when conducting research. While acknowledging the value of a literature review and the significance of the researcher's involvement, this grounded study places a focus on the inductive nature of theory building.

4.7 Reliability and Validity

Despite an ongoing controversy regarding the usage of the terms "reliability" and "validity" in qualitative research (Brink, 1993), some researchers argue that these constructs are suitable for both quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Cohen et al., 2018; Cypress, 2017). The study utilized the terms reliability and validity to describe the quality and trustworthiness of the research. Reliability in qualitative research is the consistency between the data recorded by researchers and the actual events in the natural setting being studied, indicating a high level of accuracy and thoroughness in coverage (Bogdan and Biklen, 1922, as cited in Cohen et al., 2018, p. 270). Validity refers to the accuracy and truthfulness of scientific findings. A valid study demonstrates what actually exists and measures what it is

designed to measure (Brink, 1993, p. 35). Brink (1993) discussed ways to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research findings, including triangulation, expert consensual validation, member checks, seeking for disconfirming evidence, examination of representativeness, and providing detailed descriptions. Following the recommendations of Guba (1985) and Brink (1993), the researcher took steps to guarantee the study's credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability throughout the investigation.

Before collecting data, the researcher developed interview questions to ensure that they accurately assess what they are intended to measure (Cypress, 2017). To make sure that the interviewees understood the questions, wording, and purpose, the questions were piloted with two teachers. Certain terms and phrases were modified in response to the participants' suggestions. Credibility, defined as the exact and true representation of participants' lived experiences, was ensured in this study by involving individuals who have directly experienced the phenomenon being studied and can offer detailed and reliable information on the subject. Participants, particularly teachers working in inclusive classrooms and trainers delivering inclusive education training, participated in this study by sharing their lived experiences and perspectives. This enhances the validity of the research findings. Theoretical sampling was also conducted until no new information was received to validate the transferability of the results (Cypress, 2017).

Researchers doing qualitative studies have an additional responsibility to ensure the integrity of their work by avoiding bias. Throughout the data-gathering process, the researcher consistently engaged in reflection and bracketing to avoid any biases, assumptions, beliefs, or presuppositions that could impact the study. Cypress (2017) argued that researcher bias in collecting and evaluating information can influence research findings and conclusions. Triangulation, including multiple data sources or investigators, was employed in this study to enhance the confirmability and reliability of the conclusion (Brink, 1993). The researcher

obtained the assistance of two colleagues to do backup translation to ensure the integrity of the subsequent data analysis process.

Following the step-by-step coding process, the competency framework was validated. The researcher enlisted the help of three experts who are currently providing training to teachers in the field of inclusive education. These experts were asked to review the themes that were created and assess whether all codes and categories are interconnected or can be classified under the main themes. Additionally, they were requested to suggest whether the identified names accurately convey the meanings and characteristics of the categories. The categories were renamed, and the codes were regrouped based on the ideas and comments received. This was done to ensure that all the codes and categories were aligned with the same underlying concept. Furthermore, an audit trial was conducted in which the researcher provided a detailed explanation of the research procedure and findings, which may strengthen the research's validity.

Following the data analysis, the researcher presented a detailed and explicit description of the research context and procedure (Brink, 1993). Cypress (2017) suggested that providing comprehensive descriptions of the participants, research settings, and findings could enhance the transferability of the research. This study offers a comprehensive and explicit explanation of the suggested framework for the competencies of inclusive education teachers, which could potentially be utilized for future reference.

4.8 Ethical Considerations of the Study

The researcher ensured that ethics remained a primary concern throughout the investigation. Before data collection, the researcher submitted the research instruments and informed consent for approval from the institutional review board of the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Science at Hiroshima University (See Appendix F), and also obtained

permission to visit the research sites. Then, informed consent was sent to the participants prior to the interview explaining the confidentiality and voluntary nature of the study. During data collection, the participants were treated with dignity and their time was respected. All the data collected will be erased after 5 years, following the approval of the research committee, which will minimize risks to confidentiality.

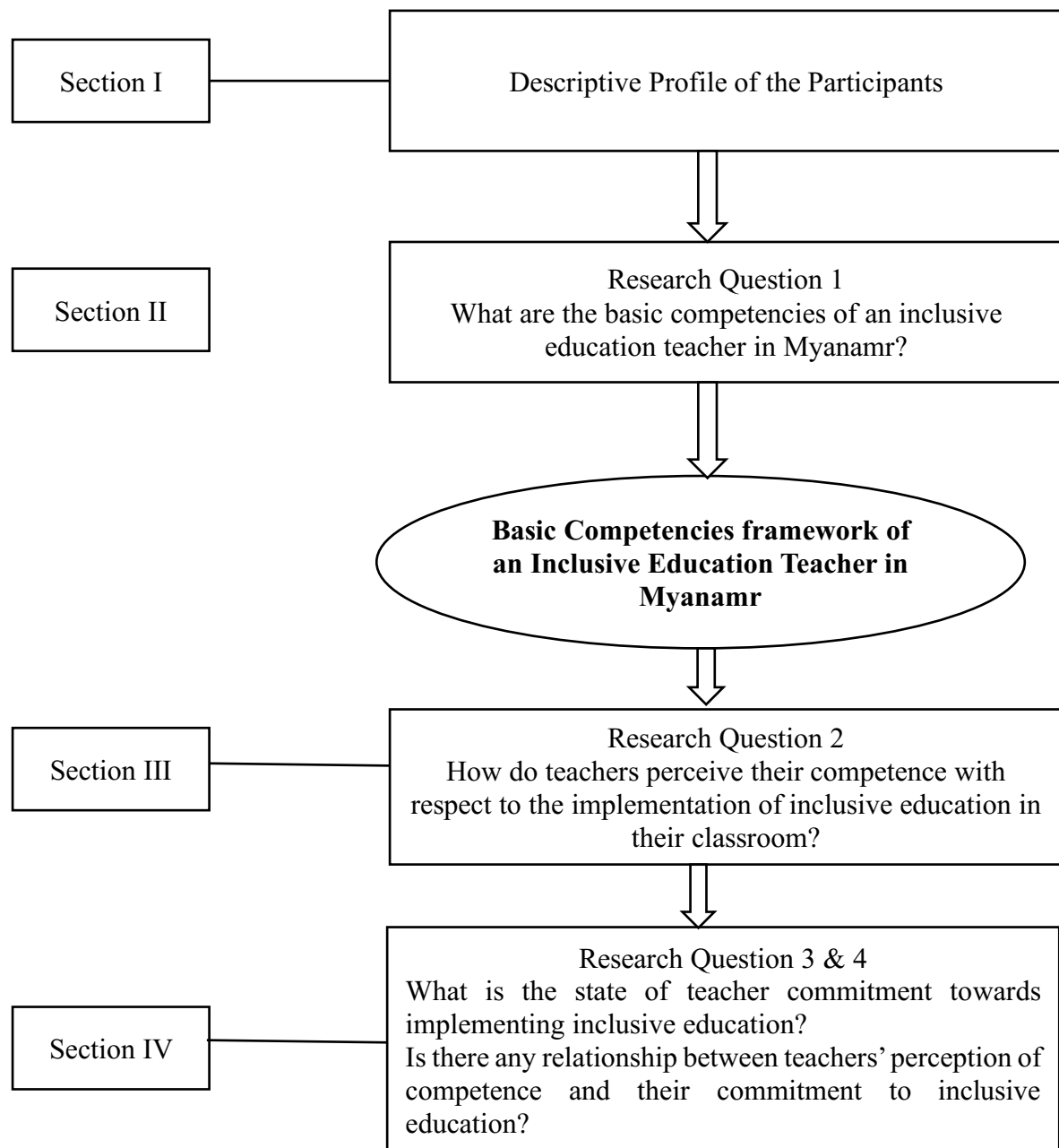
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

This section discusses the findings of the semi-structured interview analysis. Using NVivo software, the data were examined using the three sequential coding procedures described in Chapter 4: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The results of this study address each of the research questions. First, this section begins with an explicit description of the interviewee's descriptive profiles, followed by a detailed study of their experiences and knowledge about inclusive education. The second section provides a solution to the study question "What are the core competencies of inclusive education teachers in Myanmar?" by describing each component of inclusive education teachers' core competencies. It concludes with a framework for teachers of inclusive education.

In the third section, the results of "how teachers feel competent or confident of themselves being an inclusive education teacher" are presented with respect to the previously developed framework. This section addresses teachers' perception of their own competence in areas such as (1) knowledge of inclusive education, (2) supporting all learners, (3) classroom and behavioral management, (4) cooperation and collaboration, (5) inclusive instruction and techniques, and (6) professional development. The fourth section concludes by discussing teachers' commitment to fostering an inclusive learning environment. The section also explains how teachers' perceptions of their own competence influence their commitment. The following diagram illustrates this section's outline.

Figure 5.1

Outline of Chapter 5: Findings



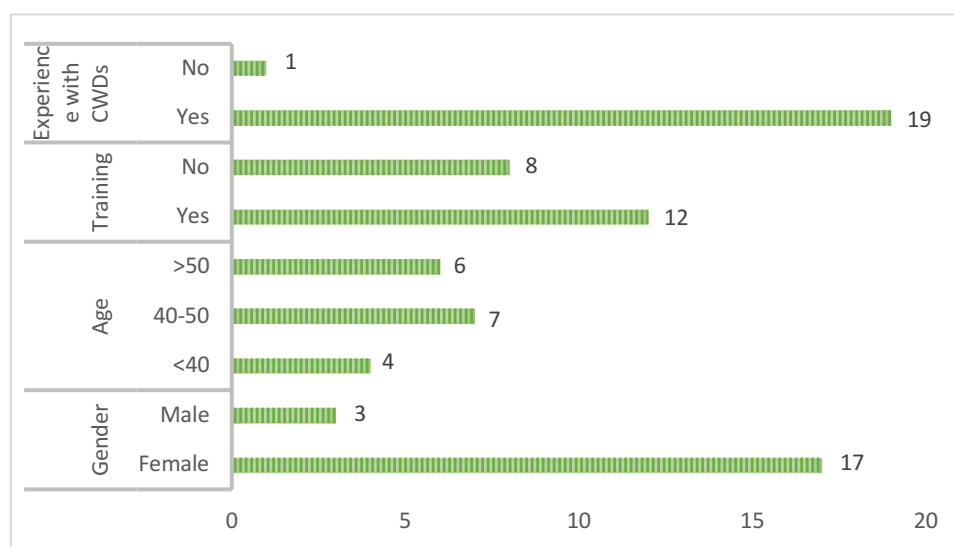
5.1 Section I: Descriptive Profile of the Participant

A total of 20 teachers participated in this semi-structured interview. Among them, 85% (N = 17) were female. Regarding age, 20% of the teachers were younger than 40 years old, 40% were between 40 and 50 years old, and the remaining 40% were more than 50 years old. The

majority of participants (95%) have experience working with students with disabilities in their classrooms. Seven trainers out of twenty participants who provide inclusive and special education training to teachers and social workers had received training on IE. Only five of the remaining 13 teachers who were employed by the Ministry of Education had received training on inclusive education, while the remaining eight had never received such training.

Figure 5.2

Demographic Profile of the Participants



Looking at the participants' educational backgrounds, it was found that 60% of the teachers received a bachelor's degree in either art or science, while 30% held a diploma or training from an educational college or university. Only a minority of educators (around 10%) hold advanced degrees. Sixty-five percent of the teachers work for the Ministry of Education, while thirty-five percent teach in special education settings. There were some primary assistant teachers (10%), some junior assistant teachers (40%), and some senior assistant teachers (10%), and the remaining 35% were trainers at special education schools or private organizations. Detailed profiles of the participants are outlined in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1*Descriptive Profile of the Participants*

No	Name	Gender	Age	Education	Position	Experience with CWDs	Training	Special Characteristics
1.	Khin	Female	29	B. Sc (Singapore), Master of Public Health (Melbourne)	Inclusive Education Specialist	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides training to educators and mentors • participates in community awareness • visits schools for classroom observation
2.	Aung*	Male	-	B.A (English)	IE trainer	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a trainer since 2012 • training on inclusive education. • contributed to special needs or inclusive education-related projects • a person with cerebral palsy
3.	Khine	Female	51	B.A (Psychology)	IE trainer	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a trainer since 2002 • provides training to teachers and community members • participates in IE projects
4.	Zaw*	Male	33	B. Sc (Physics)	IE trainer	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a person with cerebral palsy disorder • trainer since 2018 • experience in inclusive education classroom as a student and a teacher
5.	Tun	Male	-	Master of disability	Founder and director of special school A, IE trainer	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • founder of Special School A and a pioneer of inclusive education • offers workshops and training to teacher educators and teachers • participates in IE seminars abroad

No	Name	Gender	Age	Education	Position	Experience with CWDs	Training	Special Characteristics
								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contributed to a recent revision to the national education law pertaining to equal learning opportunities authored numerous scholarly articles on inclusive education in Myanmar
6.	Win	Female	50	B. Sc (Physics)	Founder and director of special school B, IE trainer	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 years of experience working with children with special needs has 2 children with MBS type 2 disorder opened a school for children with disabilities. currently offering online special education courses
7.	Htet*	Female	-	B.A (Geography), Diploma in Social Work	IE field supervisor	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> nine years as a social worker and field supervisor conducted home visits to collect statistics on children with disabilities in the district taught an online lesson for children with disabilities during COVID-19 a person with a physical disability
8.	Phyu	Female	43	B. Sc (physics), DTEC	PAT	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teaching a Grade 3 student with a physical disability has a basic understanding of inclusive education but is not truly devoted to it
9.	Mya	Female	55	B.A (Philosophy)	PAT	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> experience in teaching an autistic student in her classroom for two academic years
10.	Nu	Female	46	B. Ed	SAT	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a skin barrier disorder who must use a wheelchair is enrolled in her classroom
11.	Hla	Female	54	B. Sc (Zoology), PGDT	JAT	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one year of experience teaching a child with a visual impairment favoured special education

No	Name	Gender	Age	Education	Position	Experience with CWDs	Training	Special Characteristics
12.	Phyo	Female	33	B.A (English), DTEC	PAT	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had experience teaching a child with a hearing disability in Grade 2, a child with intellectual disability in Grade 3, and a child with a physical disability in Grade 4.
13.	Oo	Female	43	B. Sc (Botany)	JAT	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child with physical disabilities in her classroom
14.	Su	Female	51	B.A	JAT	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child with a physical disability is studying in her classroom • prefers special education.
15.	Yin	Female	36	B.A (English)	SAT	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had experience in teaching children with disabilities • knowledge and understanding regarding inclusive education are very limited
16.	Zin	Female	42	B. Sc (Physics)	JAT	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has one year of experience teaching students with hearing disabilities
17.	Nyo	Female	51	B. Sc (Math), PGDT	JAT	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child with a vision disability in her classroom
18.	May	Female	48	B.A (History)	JAT	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has experience in teaching a child with intellectual disabilities in Grade 7
19.	Aye	Female	47	B. Sc (Zoo)	JAT	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has experience teaching a child with a physical disability • a lack of understanding of inclusive education
20.	Lwin	Female	47	B.A (History)	JAT	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child with an intellectual disability studied for one year in her classroom

Note. * denotes a person who has some form of disability, PAT = Primary Assistant Teacher, JAT = Junior Assistant Teacher, SAT = Senior Assistant Teacher

5.1.1 Descriptive Analysis of the Participants' Background Knowledge and Perception of Inclusive Education

Background Knowledge of Inclusive Education: Regarding inclusive education knowledge, regional or worldwide policies, different forms of disabilities, and the concept of inclusive education were investigated. It was found that only 20% of participants made reference to regional or international policies. For example, the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP)¹⁵ and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child with disabilities (UNCRC)¹⁶, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹⁷ were discussed during interview. However, 85% of the participants (N=17) have basic knowledge of different types of disabilities. Among them, 10 participants know the basic categorizations of disabilities in Myanmar, such as physical disability, hearing disability, vision disability, and intellectual disability¹⁸, while the other seven are aware of other disabilities beyond these four, such as autism, cerebral palsy, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). It can be concluded that only inclusive education trainers possessed a broad knowledge regarding inclusive education.

¹⁵ National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) is the roadmap for five years from 2016 to 2021 which plans out for the quality education for all students at all levels and it clearly mentioned about the inclusive education. It stated that “There is a broad spectrum of children with disabilities, including children who will need specialist school provision and others who will benefit most from being included in mainstream schooling. Efforts will be made to promote a transition from special needs schools to mainstream schools” (Chapter 6, p-104, https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/myanmar_national_education_strategic_plan_2016-21.pdf)

¹⁶ United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRC) is the first international convention which purposes “to promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity” (Article 1, p-4, <https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>)

¹⁷ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially goal 4 mentioned to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all” (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4>)

¹⁸ Disability Terminology Handbook

Awareness of the Concept of the Right to Inclusive Education: Regarding their understanding and knowledge of inclusive education concepts, 75% of participants possessed a basic understanding of inclusive education. They repeatedly mentioned words stated in the Salamanca Statement, such as the “right to education,” “no discrimination,” “equality,” “embrace differences,” and “no one left behind.” For example, one participant said that:

*“Every child has the **right to education** regardless of whether they are rich or poor. As a teacher, every school-aged child regardless of race or religion already has the **right to education**.”* (Participant Nyo)

However, the other 25% of the participants found it difficult to define “inclusive education”¹⁹ broadly. For example, one participant defined inclusive education as:

“Some of the children go to special school such as for school for the blind, and so on. But some go to general school such as children with physical disabilities.”
(Participant Maung)

“I don’t know inclusive. I think that there are both children with disabilities and children with good intelligent and they learn together without discrimination.”
(Participant Aye)

Each of the participants working as an inclusive education trainer has a clear understanding of inclusive education. On the other hand, some teachers who are teaching in inclusive classrooms are not familiar with inclusive education. It was found that teachers were practicing inclusion without having a basic understanding of inclusive education.

Perception of Inclusive Education: As a consequence of a lack of proper understanding of inclusive education, 50% of teachers showed negative attitudes towards inclusion. Some of

¹⁹ Inclusive Education is “a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, culture, and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education” (UNESCO, 2009).

them prefer special education, while some of them approach inclusion as charity-based or as following the Buddha teachings. For instance,

“It is good for learning together with children with disabilities and without disabilities. Because in schools like ours, such children are only a few, it is convenient for them [children without disabilities] to study other children. They are not the majority. If there are a lot of children with disabilities in the classroom, I think that there are small schools that they open specially for those children with disabilities. I think they should study there. The children with disabilities will think that they can do the same, and they will be happy in their lives. I don’t exclude them because of their disability.” (Participant Su)

“I consider teaching them as a charitable endeavor.” I can’t do a lot for them because there is no time.” (Participant Zin)

This view was echoed by another informant as follows:

“Sometimes, no teacher wants to accept, and teachers draw a lottery for accepting that only one child [a child with a disability] in their class.” (Participant Htet)

On the other hand, 50% of teachers showed a strong commitment to implementing inclusive education. Participant Khin strongly stated:

“That is why inclusive education is beneficial not only for children with disabilities but also for children without disabilities, and that is why I promote IE.” (Participant Khin)

The following table describes the number and percentages of participants based on their knowledge and perception of inclusive education.

Table 5.2*Descriptive Analysis of Knowledge and Perception Towards IE of Teachers*

Characteristics	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
Knowledge of regional/international laws and policies	4	20%	16	80
Knowledge of different types of disabilities	17	85%	3	15%
Rights concept of IE	15	75%	5	25%
Perception towards IE	10	50%	10	50%

Note: Detailed information is attached in Appendix H.

5.2 Section II: Competencies of Inclusive Education Teachers in Myanmar

The outcome of the analysis of the semi-structured interviews is discussed in the following section. There were five major interview questions, concerning the knowledge, skills, attitudes or beliefs, and professional ethics required to be an inclusive education teacher. The data were analyzed using NVivo software and theme analysis techniques, including open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. After identifying and comparing the emergent coding, it was determined that competent inclusive education teachers must have competencies across six domains.

These domains are (1) Knowledge of inclusive education; including awareness of inclusive education knowledge, policies, and knowledge of special needs and resources, (2) supporting all learners; including awareness of children with disabilities, positive attitudes towards disability and respect of learner rights, (3) classroom and behavioral management; including fostering inclusive environment and managing behavioral challenges, (4) using inclusive instruction and techniques; including adapting instructional materials and inclusive teaching strategies, (5) cooperation and collaboration; including positive relationships with everyone and working with others, and finally (6) professional ethics; including being life-long learners and promoting awareness of inclusion.

During the step-by-step thematic analysis process, the researcher acknowledged that prior reading experiences and literature review have an impact on generating the codes and categories, e.g., “supporting all learners,” which was introduced in the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2012), and “classroom and behavioral management,” which was cited by the author Majoko (2019). While recognizing the importance of literature review and the presence of analogous themes in prior research, this framework offers distinct and essential skills necessary for becoming an inclusive education teacher in the specific context of Myanmar.

The following section discusses the detailed results for each domain.

5.2.1 Domain 1: Knowledge of Inclusive Education

Knowledge of Inclusive Education denotes that inclusive education teachers must have a deep understanding of the concept of inclusive education, as well as the policies, resources, and knowledge required for the successful implementation of inclusive education. In addition, teachers should be knowledgeable about special education needs. Consequently, these areas of core competency encompass two essential areas of knowledge: (i) the teachers' knowledge and awareness of inclusive education concepts, policies, and resources, and (ii) their understanding of special needs education and resources.

Awareness of Inclusive Education Knowledge and Policies: Teachers who are going to teach in an inclusive setting should understand the inclusive education concept, theory, and values such as the right to an education, no discrimination, and equity education for all. One of the participants said:

“Teachers need to know about theory. What is inclusive education? Inclusive education is very broad. If the teachers don’t understand the essence of inclusive education, it will be confused with special education. Therefore, teachers need to

know the concept and theory of inclusive education. In addition, the teachers need to know why inclusive education should be implemented. The teachers need to know inclusive education as the right to education instead of by force.” (Participant Khin)

Similar ideas were reported by other participants:

“Teachers should know the concept of inclusive education. If they understand the concept incorrectly, the implementation will be ineffective. We mostly provide training about the concept of inclusive education.” (Participant Zaw)

“You should know the concept of inclusive education. For example, he needs to know the concept of how to make children inclusive in his classroom” (Participant Aung).

In addition, knowing the value and benefits of inclusive education was found to be essential for inclusive education teachers. Teachers should understand that it is an education system that benefits all children and encourages the holistic development of each individual student. Participant Khin elaborated in detail that:

“When we talk about inclusive education, it is used to say that if a disabled child comes to school, children without disabilities need to wait for learning. But in an inclusive classroom, it is beneficial for both children with and without disabilities. Normally, in classrooms without disabilities, the teachers used whiteboards and asked children to write down. In inclusion, when there are both children with disabilities and slow learners, the teacher needs to use different teaching methods. That’s because everyone’s learning style is different. Some children without disabilities learn by sight. Some prefer doing. Some like to study quickly. Just now, the teacher thought about the disabled child and used various kinds of teaching methods. So, the teaching is beneficial for children without disabilities as well. The

IE classroom is more beneficial for other children. Besides, in the case of assigning quick learners to explain slow learners, the quick learners will understand better. That is why inclusive education is beneficial not only for children with disabilities but also for children without disabilities, and that is why we promote IE.”

Another informant also shared the experience of a school visit that highlighted the importance of understanding teacher diversity and the value of inclusive education.

“When I traveled to Italy for observation, I saw a child with a disability. And I asked the teacher if having a child with a disability in your classroom was bothering you and other students, and the teacher replied ‘no’. The teacher stated that the presence of a disabled child in the classroom poses no issues. The issue arises from the inability of today's society to embrace diversity. That is why war is happening. In order to convey the message that diversity must be accepted in the hearts of all 25 students in the class, it is not possible only with the words of the teacher. I can't put everything in their hearts. I am instilling in these children the importance of appreciating and accepting diversity, regardless of its true nature. If not for this child with a disability, I can't do anything. It is a blessing for me to have this child in my room. Because I was able to give the students who studied with me throughout the year a very important message to embrace diversity.”

(Participant Tun)

Awareness of regional and international inclusive education policies and regulations was also found to be required for competence as an inclusive education teacher. Teachers should understand worldwide conventions enacting inclusive education such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the Salamanca Statement. In addition, an inclusive education teacher should know how his or her country committed to this worldwide implementation. For example, the National Education Strategic

Plan (NESP), which was implemented between 2016 and 2021, declared the implementation of inclusive education by the Ministry of Education in Myanmar. For instance,

“The teachers need to know about UNCRPD and that all children have the right to education, including children with disabilities. All children must be in mainstream school.” (Participant Khin)

“SDG and NESP are an agreement signed by the government of a country to implement inclusive education in their countries. The education staff working in the country need to know what their country promised.” (Participant Tun)

Knowledge of special needs education and resources: Knowledge of special needs education and resources means that inclusive education teachers should also be aware of the pedagogy of special education including the nature of different types of disabilities. Many of the informants expressed the desire for the necessity of special education as:

“If possible, when doing this inclusive education, we also need to know the method of special education and the pedagogy of special education. We can’t do without knowing how to teach these children with disabilities. When I say inclusive education, there is a need for special education. I’m not talking about special school.” (Participant Khine)

“In my opinion, teachers need to know a little about special education. In addition, they can’t be taught like a normal child anymore because they have little needs. So, the teachers should study for this child.” (Participant Aye)

“Special education should be included as a subject, at least at the diploma level. In our country, we do not have the opportunity to learn such a topic as a module. You must grant teachers the freedom to learn. You can’t expect anyone to know instinctively without learning. All teachers should be given special education from the diploma level.” (Participant Khin)

Other informants mentioned that teachers should have a basic understanding of the nature of different types of disabilities to identify them correctly in the classroom. One of the participants argued that:

“Inclusive education teachers should know how to identify children with disabilities when they come to school. It will be in trouble if the teachers identify it wrongly. The teachers should be able to identify the type of disability of children who come to your classroom.” (Participant Khin)

Other informants also supported the above idea that, *“It is really the nature of disabled children. Among the children with physical disabilities, what is their nature? If cerebral palsy children, what is their nature? What is their physical appearance? Just like children with autism, teachers should know their nature.”* (Participants Aung). Participant Khine also echoed their idea that *“The teacher should have basic disability knowledge.”*

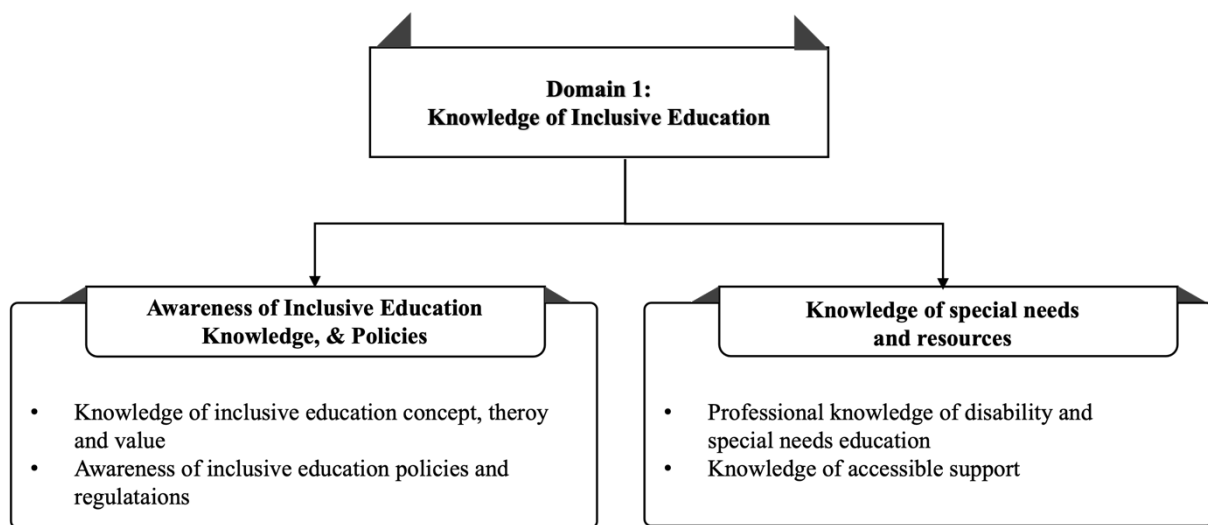
Some participants suggested that inclusive education teachers should be aware of the resources, including private organizations and knowledgeable persons, for better support of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. In most developing countries, resources and support are not readily accessible and sufficient, and some teachers have no information regarding services or support for children with disabilities. For example, one of the participants mentioned that:

“The teacher should know the accessible support. Then, in some rural areas, teachers in elementary schools have no knowledge of inclusive education. But in the case of having children with disabilities, we should work with teachers from special schools.” (Participant Aung).

Another interviewee also felt that *“In some cases, the teachers need to know how to refer to others, contact with community, or get support.”* (Participant Khin)

Figure 5.4

Domain 1: Knowledge of Inclusive Education



5.2.2 Domain 2: Supporting All Learners

Supporting all learners can be defined as the teacher's knowledge of children's needs, positive attitudes, and support for the finest educational practices respecting a child's right to education. A teacher of inclusive education must be able to recognize the weaknesses and strengths of each student, as well as possess inclusive attitudes of equity and respect for diversity when assisting all students. This competency domain consists of three key areas of knowledge, attitudes, and skills: (i) awareness of children with disabilities, (ii) positive attitudes toward disability, and (iii) respect for learner rights. Following is a detailed explanation of each competency aspect.

Awareness of children with disabilities: An inclusive education teacher should have an interest in children. Teachers should try to understand individual students' physical, emotional, and personal condition to fully support their needs. Most of the interviewees reported that teachers should know students' backgrounds, attitudes, intelligence, readiness to learn, emotions, and strengths and weaknesses. For example, the following participants expressed the need to know about a child's background:

“Whether it is a child with a disability or without a disability, teachers need to know their biography. Some of the children were not working when things weren’t going well with their parents at home. Any children, if they know their attitudes, intelligence, and family background, you can handle them effectively.” (Participant Nu)

“In order to teach children with disabilities and without disabilities together in the same classroom, we need to know about children.” (Participant Khine)

Other informants felt that teachers need to know about children’s attitudes or their willingness to learn in the inclusive education setting. For instance,

“You should know everything about the child from the homeroom teacher. I had to learn from previous teachers about his attitudes, and willingness to study.” (Participant Oo)

“We must first examine their attitude.” In my class, a child has no physical impairment, but he has an intellectual disability. To help children not be out of school, we need to know their attitudes first to help him the best.” (Participant Lwin)

“I think we should know about their behavior and willingness to study.” (Participant May)

It has been reported that inclusive education teachers should be aware of individual children’s interests and uniqueness to support them in the best way possible. Participant Khine elaborated on the importance of awareness of students’ strengths and weakness as follows:

“For example, teachers usually think that yelling at one child may scare teacher since the child is just looking for trouble. In fact, each child is unique. Everyone has their own talents. The teachers know that each individual is different if they are really interested in the child. If you know that, there is no problem. What talent

does this child have? Why is this child behaving like that? Does he want attention? If the teachers carefully study children, understand them, and know their performance, it is easy to deal with them. Teachers must know that they are unique and different. Some teachers don't know about the child, but this child who is just yelling is a problem. If the teacher studies the background carefully to see why he is yelling, there is no problem. To be clear, no matter how many children there are in the classroom, if the teachers know about the children, it is easy to handle."

(Participant Khine)

Some informants agreed with the above-mentioned ideas as:

"As a teacher, you must possess detailed knowledge about the children you teach. When we talk about inclusive education, for example, we refer to those who are deprived of the right to education for various reasons, including children with disabilities. The teacher should know about children, including their physical appearance, learning style, weaknesses, strengths, interests, etc." (Participant Tun)

"The teachers should know what the weaknesses and strengths of those children with disabilities in their classroom are." (Participant Zaw)

Most importantly, many interviewees commented that inclusive education teachers should understand individual students' emotions and psychological conditions. Teachers thought that it would be easier to support the needs of each student if they understood what is happening in their minds or what they want. In particular, understanding their emotions would help teachers with behavioral management in the inclusive classroom. The following table summarizes the informants' opinions on the importance of understanding children's emotions.

Table 5.3*References for Understanding Children Emotion*

Meaning	References
Understand child psychology	<p>“We need to know about child psychology. It would be better if the teacher knew about children’s psychological and physical development.” (Participant Khine)</p> <p>“Another thing is children’s psyche. Because knowing the mental state of children can make them inclusive.” (Participant Aung)</p> <p>“If you know what is going on in their mind, I think you can meet the learning needs of children and make them satisfied.” (Participant May)</p> <p>“As for me, the teachers must be able to see the inside of children’s minds. It is very good to teach if you are aware of children's inner feelings. I believe it is effective.....Another thing is the child's psychological state. How can we support their psychological needs? Next is the emotional part.” (Participant Phyu)</p> <p>“As far as we know, we have to learn their psychological and emotional needs to motivate them to study.” (Participant Phyo)</p> <p>“If you are teaching children with disabilities, you need to know the emotions of these children first.” (Participant Mya)</p>

In addition to emotions, it is worth noting that one of the interviewees pointed out that developmental milestones for children with disabilities is also important to know for an inclusive education teacher. The interviewee commented that it is necessary to understand all stages of development of children without disabilities in order to identify the needs of children without disabilities. The interviewee explained her ideas, as follows:

“The teacher needs to know what the normal developmental milestones of children are and how this disabled child falls behind the normal milestones. So, knowing this normal milestone, we can understand what is happening in which part of these children with disabilities. If these children are together in the same classroom, by

knowing these normal developmental milestones, we will understand what you need to do for these children.” (Participant Khine)

Taken together, these results suggest that inclusive education teachers should have an interest in children and be aware of individual students’ backgrounds, willingness, interests, emotions, developments, strengths, and weaknesses.

Another aspect of “supporting all learners” is called “**Positive attitudes towards disability.**” Having a positive attitude towards disability means that teachers hold the belief that children with disabilities are children who are disabled in one area but are capable in other areas. Teachers should have individual ability-related goals or expectations for each child. In addition, teachers should show empathy towards children with disability, rather than feeling pity or sad for them, and interact with them with kindness and patience. There are two essential requirements for having a positive attitude toward children, including (i) belief in children, and (ii) loving, kindness, patience, and empathy towards children.

Two interviewees repeatedly mentioned the importance of belief in children in implementing inclusive education. For instance, informant Khine urged: “*Another thing is that when saying inclusive classroom, in addition to having children enter the classroom, the teacher needs to consider that the children can do it by themselves.*” Again, “Our teachers must know that he can do it by himself.” “If you see that they also have the capacity, that's okay.” Similarly, informant Khin echoed that “*it is important to have the attitude in teacher that children with disabilities are also able to learn.*” Reading these comments, it can be concluded that inclusive education teachers should consider a child with a disability as an able individual in a different way.

In addition, it was mentioned that having expectations and goals for children with disabilities is also important for being an inclusive education teacher. Inclusion does not necessarily imply having children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms, but it ensures

participation in every activity with other children. Therefore, teachers need to have goals for how much and in what way these children can participate in class. Teachers should not let disabled children just sit in the class but physically participate as much as possible.

“Another important aspect is that teachers must have hopes or goals for the children they teach. In setting goals, it would be great if we could set goals for how much they can learn.” (Participant Khine)

“There are different types of disabilities. When children with disabilities come to school, the teachers just let them to be in the classroom. Right to education is not like that. The teacher should have clear expectations for every child such as for slow learner or quick learner.” (Participant Khin)

Another important aspect that inclusive education teachers should possess is a patient, kind, loving, and empathetic attitude towards children with disabilities. Many of the interviewees discussed having patience as follows:

“The main thing is that the teacher has to be patient. If you meet someone who is impatient, these children will not be happy in the classroom anymore. The key is patience and knowing what they want to do as a teacher.”(Participant Aye)

“Teacher, as ordinary people, have different kinds of minds. For example, if the children without disabilities in the room behave rudely, the teacher will get angry. We have to take care a lot. We need to understand. We need to have more patience than normal.” (Participant Nu)

Similarly, other informants also mentioned frequently that “we need patience,” “teachers must be patient,” and “we must have patience” in their explanations of dealing with children with disabilities. However, patience alone is not enough for an inclusive education teacher. Most important is having an empathetic attitude. For instance,

"Pity and empathy are not the same." I would prefer to feel more empathy for those children in need. If someone feels pity for us, we don't like it. Empathy means if you were a disabled child, if I were to bully a disabled child, if I were in his place, would I like it? The main thing is to have empathy." (Participant Khin)

Some of the interviewees pointed out the importance of loving and kindness in dealing with children with disabilities. Participant Tun argued that:

"Mainly, a teacher attitude. The teacher is included in the same group as Buddha. Among the Five Gems (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, Parents, and Teachers), parents and teachers are also the same. It means that the teacher profession and their roles are special for people. Teachers' attitudes are unique. Why? It is the teacher who teaches and treats everyone with love and without discrimination to come to study. It is the essential attitude of teachers."

Similarly, participant Aung also elaborated the importance of kindness with his personal experiences and with metaphors such as:

"The main thing I want to talk about is attitude. Teachers' kindness and love. That's very important. Because I met with a good kindergarten teacher, I'm allowed to go to school. I'm still that I'm here now. The principle didn't want to allow me to attend school. But the teacher said that he would take responsibility for everything about this child and accepted me into his room. Because of kindness. That teacher didn't know the concept of inclusive education, but I was accepted at school because of the willingness and kindness of the teacher to educate me. It is said in a book, "No matter how good the system is, if the teacher's attitude is not good, the system will not be going well." What I want to highlight is that no matter how good the system is, it will not be successful if the teachers don't have the right attitudes towards children with disabilities." (Participant Aung)

When turning to another aspect, namely, “**Respect for learners’ rights**”, it can be defined as the teacher’s ability to identify and respond to individual students’ needs and deal with diversity with respect. This is one of the most important competencies of an inclusive education teacher where diverse learners co-exist. There are two major abilities that inclusive education teachers should possess with respect to learners’ rights: (i) recognizing and responding to diversity without discrimination, and (ii) identifying and responding to individual students’ needs and interests.

First, teachers of inclusive education must be aware of individual differences in the classroom, appreciate diversity, and respond without bias. It is important to understand the children’s needs and interests. Therefore, inclusive education teachers should understand the importance of listening to the learners’ voices. For instance, one of the interviewees pointed out her experience, which highlights the importance of learners’ voices:

“There is a child who needs to use a wheelchair in the classroom, and a child got a ‘zero’ grade in the physical education (PE) subject. At the time, I (the trainer) needed to discuss this with the teacher and a student. I asked the teachers what the activities were during PE, and the teacher said singing, dancing, and exercise. I need to ask a child whether she wants to participate or not, and she replied that she wants to participate in PE, but the teacher doesn’t allow her to do so. So that I need to explain to the to the teacher that a child can’t walk, but she can sing or raise her hand, and she can do some hand exercise while others are doing it. Then, the teacher understands and considers including it during PE.” (Participant Khine)

This problem highlighted that teachers sometimes forget to listen to what the child wants and do what they want instead. Inclusive education teachers, especially, should consult the child and provide what the child wants in respect of inclusiveness. On the other hand, over-protectiveness may be a reason for a teacher not letting a child participate in PE class. Teachers

are sometimes afraid that a child will have an accident while others are doing exercises. This could prevent a teacher from creating an inclusive classroom despite their inclination to do so, leading to discrimination for the child. Participant Aung also elaborated on the counter-effects of over-protecting children with disabilities:

“Some teachers have a deep concern for children with disabilities. The children find it uncomfortable when the teacher provides them with excessive care. We believed that providing extensive care for the disabled children would be beneficial, but we should maintain moderation in all aspects. What I want to say is that the teachers don’t need to fill in all their needs, but how to help them is, for example, to facilitate, when, and how to make it convenient for them. You don’t need to be overly concerned. Children with disabilities must be treated like other children. So that the students without disabilities will be treated equally.”

Based on his personal experience, Participant Aung also explained the problems that could arise from overprotecting children:

“Be careful not to highlight the difference too much. Highlighting the differences too much can cause side effects. When I was a child, I was left alone in the room during the cleaning period because I was disabled. At that time, what I was in mind was that I was left since I was different. At the time, if something in the room were lost, I was thinking of being responsible for that. It wouldn’t be like that if the teachers let me do it. Sometimes, caring too much is more like highlighting differences.”

Therefore, it can be concluded that inclusive education teachers should be careful of unintentionally violating the rights of a child through their over-caring, as it can serve to highlight the differences among children. In addition, the teachers must be able to respect the

differences and treat every child equally regardless of their abilities. Two of the informants highlighted the importance of respecting differences:

“All children should be treated equally. The teachers must see their differences as equal. Children with disabilities and those without disabilities differ from each other. We have to accept that difference. We have to accept it and treat it as equal.”

(Participant Aung)

Similarly, *“We always say that children are like butterflies. As butterflies have different colors, so do children. Learning styles are also different. Children with disabilities also have different learning styles. The learning rates are also different. Even among butterflies, some fly low, some fly high. Some children learn fast. Some children can calculate ten math problems at once, while others must calculate one for a long time. The speed of each child is different. How do butterflies fly? They simply fly their best. What I want to say is that kids are learning at their best pace, no matter what. The teachers need to accept and input that mindset.”* (Participant Khin)

As referenced in the text, teachers of inclusive education should have a mindset that values the uniqueness of each student. Having the right attitude does not guarantee the implementation of a successful inclusive classroom. Inclusive education teachers should treat children equally in every aspect of school activities. Many interviewees commented that treating students equally in every aspect of the classroom is important in establishing an inclusive classroom environment. Therefore, inclusive education teachers should be able to recognize learners' needs and respond to individual needs not only in teaching but also in other school activities such as sports, cleaning periods, and physical education classes. The following table further elaborates on the interviewees' desire to respect differences and treat children with disabilities equally in inclusive classrooms.

Table 5.4*References for Respect for Learner Right*

Name	References	Meaning
Khine	So, if there were children with disabilities in the classroom, the teachers should treat all children equally and teach them together.	Treat equality in teaching
Lwin	We formed teams so that a child could cooperate in the school's activities. He is good at it. On his duty day, he comes to school early. He was also given duty at school to understand responsibility.	Provide opportunities for cooperation
Yin	I also ask questions and don't exclude them.	Treat equally in teaching
May	Now, we are teaching in groups, so we encourage him to be able to speak or discuss in class. He can't read, which is why we put much effort into discussion. I also need to tell other children not to exclude them and to be supportive.	Recognized and responded to a child's need
Phyu	As for me, every student in my class is thought of as my own child, regardless of whether they have a disability or not. Considering as your own child, I say everything and treat everyone equally. Even if there is something to be disciplined about, I did it all equally.	Equally in behavior management
Hla	The teachers need to treat them equally so that they will feel strong in their hearts. It would be underestimating them if you thought of them as pitiful or couldn't do anything. I believe we should treat them equally.	Treat equally

Name	References	Meaning
Nyo	If they can't participate in physical class, they need to do something they can. If the other child is doing physical activity, he was asked to visit the library to see if he has a physical disability (can't walk). If a child can't do like others, I will borrow cartoons or articles from the library that interest him.	Recognized and responded to a child's needs
Su	In sports class, I want him to participate. He is a child, and he will want to play. During the cleaning period, I will ask him to throw garbage away. I want him to do the same as others.	Respect differences and treat equally
Tun	If you look at the problem of being different, it's not worth mentioning.	Respect difference
Phyo	I need to teach and treat that disabled child equally.	Treat equally
Mya	You need to allow him to participate in everything. In sporting events, he participates, but his physical appearance looks bigger than that of his classmate. But he should be allowed to run.	Respect differences and treat equally
Oo	As a teacher, I treat children equally. Regardless of the children, teachers must exercise caution when instructing and disciplining them. In school activities, without putting aside those children with disabilities, when others are sweeping, he can wipe the seats by sitting. He can participate by doing something that he can. If we left him behind, he would feel downhearted. For me, he can do it, and he should be treated like other children equally.	Treat equally in school activities

Another significant aspect is that inclusive education teachers should be able to identify and respond to individual students' interests and needs. Inclusive education teachers should have the skill to explore the barriers that the child would have in the inclusive classroom. Most of the barriers occur in the classroom during teaching when teachers fail to notice what is happening. One interviewee argued that:

“The teachers need to know what kind of barriers there are in an inclusive classroom. Does your teaching method meet the students' needs? Are there any barriers regarding teaching methods? In addition to teaching methods, there may be barriers in infrastructure as well. It is not convenient for physical disabilities if the classroom is crowded. What about the toilet? Is it accessible for CWDs? Most importantly, the teachers must be able to identify the barriers that the child would have.” (Participant Khin)

It can be interpreted that inclusive education teachers need to be aware of barriers not only in the classroom but also in the school environment that can pose difficulties for the child to attend school. If the teachers find it difficult to identify barriers, it can sometimes end with dropout. Therefore, the identification of barriers was considered one of the key abilities or skills that inclusive education teachers should have. Two of the interviewees shared their personal experiences when studying in the inclusive classroom when they were students.

“I will share a personal story with you. When I was young, the table was moving, writing was slow, I was sweating, and the papers were torn. Writing was a challenge for me. But the teachers need to finish the lesson, and I can't write everything on the whiteboard. At the moment, what I want is to copy or print the note that they are going to teach. It will be very easy for me and will not disturb my friends either.” (Participant Zaw, a person with Cerebral Palsy disorder)

"I have also experienced it personally. Bad handwriting at school. When I write, a table shakes a lot because of my effort, and my handwriting is not good as a result. The teacher said that the handwriting was not written very carefully. However, this issue arises when CB children are required to put effort into their handwriting."

(Participant Aung, a person with Cerebral Palsy disorder)

When looking at their personal experiences, it can be concluded that teachers should be able to identify barriers in the classroom depending on the types of disability. However, it is evident that teachers have less knowledge and understanding of the nature of cerebral palsy disorder. Teachers need to have a basic understanding of different types of disabilities to respond effectively to each student's needs.

Another important aspect is that teachers should be able to identify any interests or hobbies that a child with disabilities has. Exploring and supporting their interests is one of the ways he or she can be inclusive in the classroom. Education is not only teaching literacy. There are many other extracurricular activities that a child can explore. It is important that teachers have the desire and skill to explore this avenue toward inclusion:

"As for me, I need to find out what their hobbies are." If he likes, or even though he is not interested in studying, I will support their hobbies." (Participant Aye)

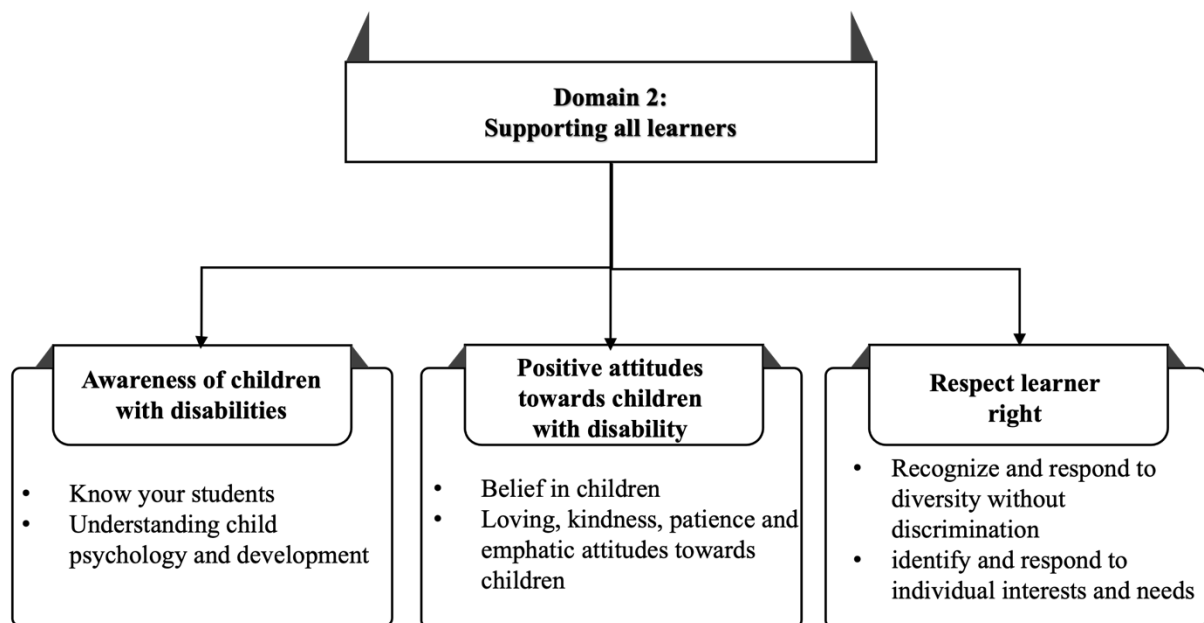
"But if it is difficult for him to learn, I will find other things in which he may have an interest. For example, children are interested in folding paper. If he is passionate about it, I would study the art of folding. When other children have finished studying, I will teach him about folding. Besides studying, I think he could get something that he is interested in." (Participant Phyu)

To conclude the "Supporting all learners" aspect, inclusive education teachers should first know about the children's physical and emotional states, readiness, strengths, and weaknesses. Secondly, inclusive education teachers should have positive attitudes toward

children which include being patient, showing empathy, love, and kindness, and believing in children. Finally, inclusive education teachers should respect learners' rights where teachers treat students equally and respect differences. Teachers should be able to identify needs and interests, and support students based on individual needs.

Figure 5.5

Domain 2: Supporting All Learners



5.2.3 Domain 3: Classroom and Behavioral Management

Classroom and behavior management refers to a teacher's knowledge and ability to create an environment where all students can learn in peace and achieve their maximum potential. Teachers should be able to create learning environments conducive to the effective education of all students. Moreover, teachers should be able to facilitate the prevention of behavioral issues in the classroom. This competency area, classroom and behavior management, is comprised of two critical skill sets. These include (1) fostering an inclusive environment, and (2) managing behavior challenges.

Fostering an inclusive environment: One of the most important skills that inclusive education teachers must have been the ability to create an inclusive classroom environment.

Teachers should be able to create a happy and safe environment for effective learning. Teachers should be able to prepare a learning environment for responding to each individual's learning needs. In doing so, teachers sometimes need to encourage children with disabilities to actively participate. In fostering an inclusive environment, some of the interviewees reported that creating a happy and peaceful environment for all children can be effective in teaching. For instance, one of the informants teach all children:

"You all are brothers and sisters and must support each other. Someone will know what you don't know, and we need to fill in each other, and the classroom will be peaceful." (Participant Nu)

Similarly,

"It would be great if teachers could create a fun environment for them to learn. There are some children with intellectual disabilities, and they may not be suited to the current curriculum. But it would be great to create a classroom environment where students can learn happily." (Participant Khine)

Another interviewee also mentioned a similar desire: *"we need to teach children without disability how to get along well with people and to be in harmony with the environment."* (Participant Lwin). Therefore, most of the teachers believed that creating a happy environment is essential for a child to be in school, especially for a child with a disability. Teachers thought that an unhappy environment could end with the child dropping out of school. One informant expressed her concern as follows:

"Sometimes, when I ask him (a child with an intellectual disability) to read, I have to tell all children not to laugh at him. Otherwise, he may end up outside of the school if he is not happy in the classroom." (Participant May)

Another finding was also reported that inclusive education teachers should be skillful in preparing learning environments to respond to individual students' needs. The classroom

environment must be accessible for all children. Therefore, teachers should be able to be aware of individual learning needs and assess those problems accurately. Several interviewees mentioned the importance of seating arrangements in preparing the classroom environment.

“Setting. How to arrange seats for the children in the classroom. For example, if you have vision or hearing disabilities, how will you manage the classroom? Another is to place children with and without disabilities together. For example, place smart children next to children with vision difficulties. In this way, they can support each other.” (Participant Aung)

Another two interviewees also shared experiences of teaching children with hearing disabilities and physical disabilities:

“Regarding the child, the child I was teaching had a hearing disability, so he was asked to sit in the closet with the teacher even though we practiced the rotation chair system in the class.” (Participant Zin)

“When sitting, he was asked to sit at the end of the table. And he also did the same rotation as other children in class, but always sat at the corner for easy access.” (Participant Oo)

Not only the classroom, but teachers are also responsible for making the school itself more inclusive, including considering the location of the classroom and ensuring that other places are accessible, such as restrooms and the library. For instance,

“When they first arrived at that school, at the entrance of his classroom, they made a small block for wheelchairs. We have to make the classroom accessible.” (Participant Lwin)

“And for the classroom, A to F is located on the first floor, but in fact, the classroom is moved to the ground floor since he used a wheelchair for school. That is how we create the environment that he can study.” (Participant Nu)

Table 5.5*References for Importance of Motivation for CWDs*

Name	References	Meaning
Khine	Instead of saying, “You can’t do it; I think you can’t do it,” try saying, “You can do it.” So, do you want to look at the process or the product? You have to look at the process. How much can he do? If you look at the product, it will not be satisfactory. Therefore, depending on what he does, teachers must recognize and encourage him.	Motivate and encourage children
Yin	I always praise a child with a disability. They have weaknesses, but they put a lot of effort into their education. They are more worn out than normal students.	Praising children for effort
Phyo	I have to soothe them. I've got to motivate them to study. If they need something, I will fill in as much as I can. The children do not receive support from their family. The child doesn't want to go to school. At that time, I have to motivate them to come to school.	Motivate children for coming to school
	I asked him questions like other children and praised him when he could answer. Then other children without disabilities will think that he can do it too. The teacher needs to support all children and not have pity for children with disabilities. There may be inconveniences for them. After teaching together, you need to praise them, which sometimes helps them improve their mental strength as well.	Giving the same opportunities as others and motivating him to participate more in discussions
Mya	Teachers need to encourage him that there are both wins and losses. He doesn't like dirt, but he tries to keep the garbage clean, and he collects it with scissors. If the teacher says that you will get an A in an extracurricular subject, he does. I have to praise him.	Encouraging a child to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Preparing the physical environment plays a very important role in planning an inclusive environment. However, adapting the environment alone does not yield an inclusive classroom.

There is another significant factor that matters in creating an inclusive environment, which is the teachers' ability to motivate or facilitate children with disabilities to be involved in the class. There are some occasions in which a child himself or herself needs extra support for going to school or for being part of school activities. Therefore, inclusive education teachers should be able to motivate children. The above table explains how some of the interviewees perceived the importance of motivation for a child with disabilities.

According to the interviewees' comments, it can be concluded that inclusive education teachers should be able to motivate or encourage children to be involved in the school. Children with disabilities sometimes feel small by themselves, and teachers need to appreciate whatever they have done in the class. Praising was found to be one of the techniques that teachers used to motivate children to be involved in discussions, extra-curricular activities, and learning.

In addition, some of the teachers reported that having a good relationship with the children is also important for effective classroom and behavior management. Inclusive education teachers should be able to build close relationships with children, especially children with disabilities. Having a good relationship could help teachers explore children's needs and interests and is useful for effective teaching. One interviewee pointed out that:

"Then the relationship. At school, sometimes the relationship between teacher and student is not so close. At that time, there was little difficulty in teaching. Children with disabilities are the kind of people who are afraid of people and feel more inferior. The relationship is no longer good because she feels afraid and inferior. So, if we do inclusion in teaching, that point is important." (Participant Aung)

Similarly, another informant also confirmed based on his personal experience that:

"When I was in grade 10, there was only me who was disabled in the classroom. Although the class teacher doesn't know about inclusive education, teachers tried to build rapport and developed friendships with me. The teacher called me for

helping a lot, even though there are many other students in class. For example, could you please give this book to another teacher? Although it is not a big deal, I feel happy that the teacher recognized me, teacher knew that I could do it. Then, I don't feel afraid of the teacher, and we become familiar. It makes teaching and learning easy.” (Participant Zaw)

Taken together, these results suggest that inclusive education teachers should strongly endeavor to create an inclusive environment for every child. To prepare, teachers should arrange an environment conducive to learning. It is worth noting that a teacher's ability to motivate and create close relationships can have a significant influence on a child's willingness to study, which in turn affects the teaching environment in an inclusive classroom.

Managing behavior challenges: Managing behavior challenges refers to the teachers' ability to create a classroom environment in which positive behaviors are encouraged. Inclusive education teachers should be able to prevent any behaviors that will hinder the achievement of all students in the class. Teachers should be able to handle behavioral challenges in a positive way. Teachers should be able to adopt positive and inclusive language in the classroom to prevent distributive behaviors. A few informants reported that teachers' ability to use inclusive language is essential for creating a peaceful and safe classroom environment. For instance, teachers should use “People-first” language, calling a person with a disability, instead of saying a “disabled person.”

“You can't use the term normal for children without disabilities. If we call children without disabilities normal, other children with disabilities are regarded as unnormal. So, it is complicated. You should use the term ‘children with disabilities’ or ‘children without disabilities.’” (Participant Khin)

It was observed that teachers must be careful in labeling children when in diverse classrooms. Even though teachers do not want to discriminate, the way language is used could highlight minority groups. Participant Khin mentioned that:

“Teachers need to use inclusive language without being discriminatory in the classroom first from the beginning” (Participant Khin)

Additionally, teachers should know how to communicate with children with disabilities when dealing with behavioral challenges. One of the informants explained some of the rules at her school.

“We have to study the positive way of communicating with the children. For instance, it specifies the words that should be used when handling behavior issues. Our school doesn’t allow the use of “Hey, don’t run.” I don’t like to tell my child not to run. What I would like to say is, “Son, let’s walk.” If I see a child running, I will just walk and stand in front of them. And say, “Son, let’s walk. Please hold the teachers’ hand, we’ll walk together.” I will approach a child and lower my head. I’m going to lower my height. I will not talk over; kneel down, and the child can see my eyes.” (Participant Win)

Another informant also expressed his personal experiences and feelings as follows:

“Sometimes it makes sad for children with disabilities because of their behavior or words. There is something we need to avoid or follow for good communication. For example, for a child with a hearing disability, you can’t call loudly. You must greet them by waving. If you want to help a child with a vision disability, you can’t hold their hand or shoulder, but let them hold your shoulder and go fast in front of them.” (Participant Zaw)

It is interesting to know that inclusive education teachers should be careful in their manners when dealing with children with disabilities.

Another important skill that inclusive education teachers need to possess is the ability to manage behavioral challenges. Teachers should be able to ensure that all students understand the desired behavior and what is considered inappropriate behavior in the classroom. If undesired behavior occurs, teachers should be skillful in handling it in a positive way. Two interviewees stated that

“As soon as they entered the classroom, the teachers needed to create a situation to make all the children united, such as by doing classwork in groups. The teacher needs to set classroom rules in advance.” (Participant Mya)

Similarly,

“I’ve already told all children at the beginning of the year not to tease each other too much. I already set classroom rules when I enter the classroom.” (Participant Nu)

It is noted that setting classroom rules from the beginning of the school year can help teachers and students create a positive learning environment. Teachers should explain the expected behavior in the classroom during the academic school year. Moreover, one of the participants reported that teachers should cooperate with students in setting classroom rules and consequences.

“Teachers must establish classroom rules effectively. The teacher needs to set with students together. Before the teachers start the classroom, they need to explain why they are setting these classroom rules. For example, this classroom rule is for safety reasons, so that children don’t fight each other. Children must not bully each other. If you don’t follow the rules, there are consequences.” (Participant Khin)

Teachers need to explain the reasons and consequences of the misbehavior so that a child can understand the purpose of creating such rules in the classroom. At the same time, teachers and students together should agree on the consequences of unexpected behavior. One interviewee commented that using positive behavioral management is the key to an inclusive classroom:

“The consequences are not hitting and yelling. For example, in one approach, the teacher is teaching, and the children are writing. If some of the children are playing with the children next to them, normally, the teacher will shout. However, the teacher will write Maung Maung’s name on the white board as the first step. If that’s the case, he knows. I wrote this. If Maung Maung changes his behavior, I will delete his name from the board. But if he keeps misbehaving, I put a star next to his name. If you have added a star, the teacher will discuss it with him after the class or ask the parents. We will use step-by-step positive discipline. Instead of beating him, ask him to clean the classroom or others that would benefit the students also.”

It was found that teachers should not handle undesired behavior with punishments. Other informants also expressed the need of positive behavior management:

“A good teacher has to be artistic and cunning in handling and nurturing children. The teachers should not handle them harshly.” (Participants Khine)

Besides, teachers should also consistently follow the classroom rules. The classroom rules should not only be for the students. For instance, a few informants urged that teachers should serve as role models.

“In fact, the way teachers treat a disabled child in front of all the other children sets an example for the other children. If teachers discriminate, it is not surprising that students will also discriminate. The teachers’ behaviors should be role models for the students.” (Participant Tun)

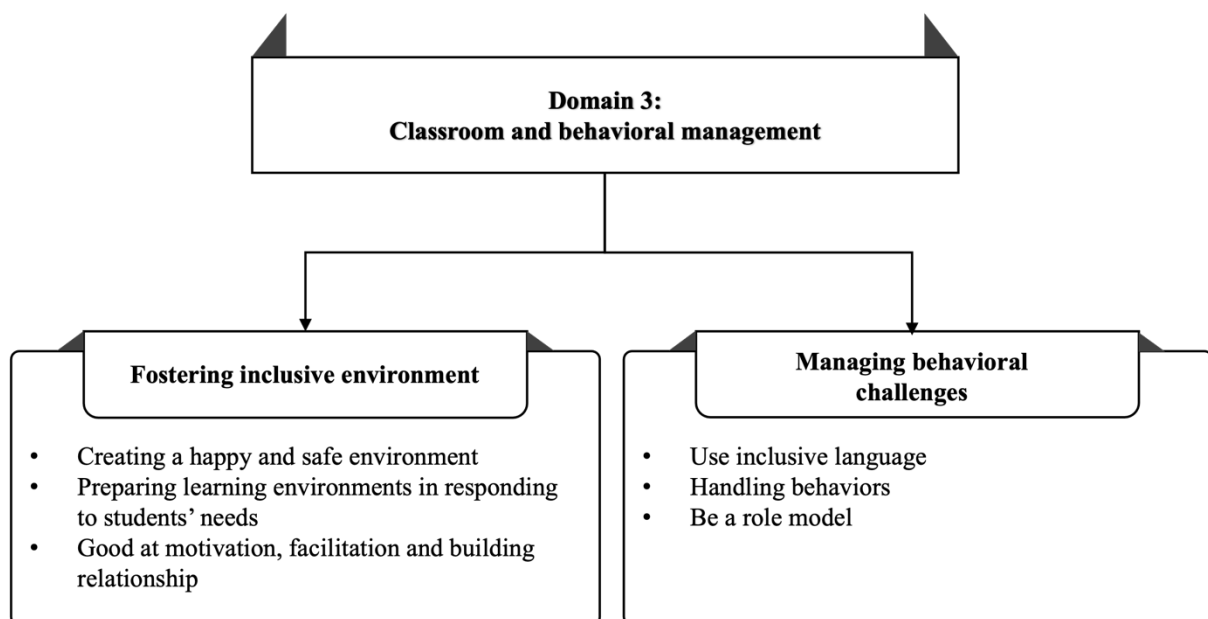
Similarly,

“The primary focus should be on transforming the attitudes of the children first. Teacher attitudes also need to be changed. The teacher should be a role model, as the children are following. The teachers are not watching the children alone. Children are also watching teachers.” (Participant Khin)

Together these results suggest that inclusive education teachers should be skillful in using positive behavioral and classroom management techniques. Teachers should be able to promote a positive climate by structuring the learning environment, engaging and building positive relationships with all students, and modeling desired behaviors. Verbal praise was also considered important for increasing desired behaviors and creating a peaceful environment. Besides, teachers should be aware of step-by-step positive methods for handling behavior depending on the level of disruptiveness.

Figure 5.6

Domain 3: Classroom and Behavioral Management



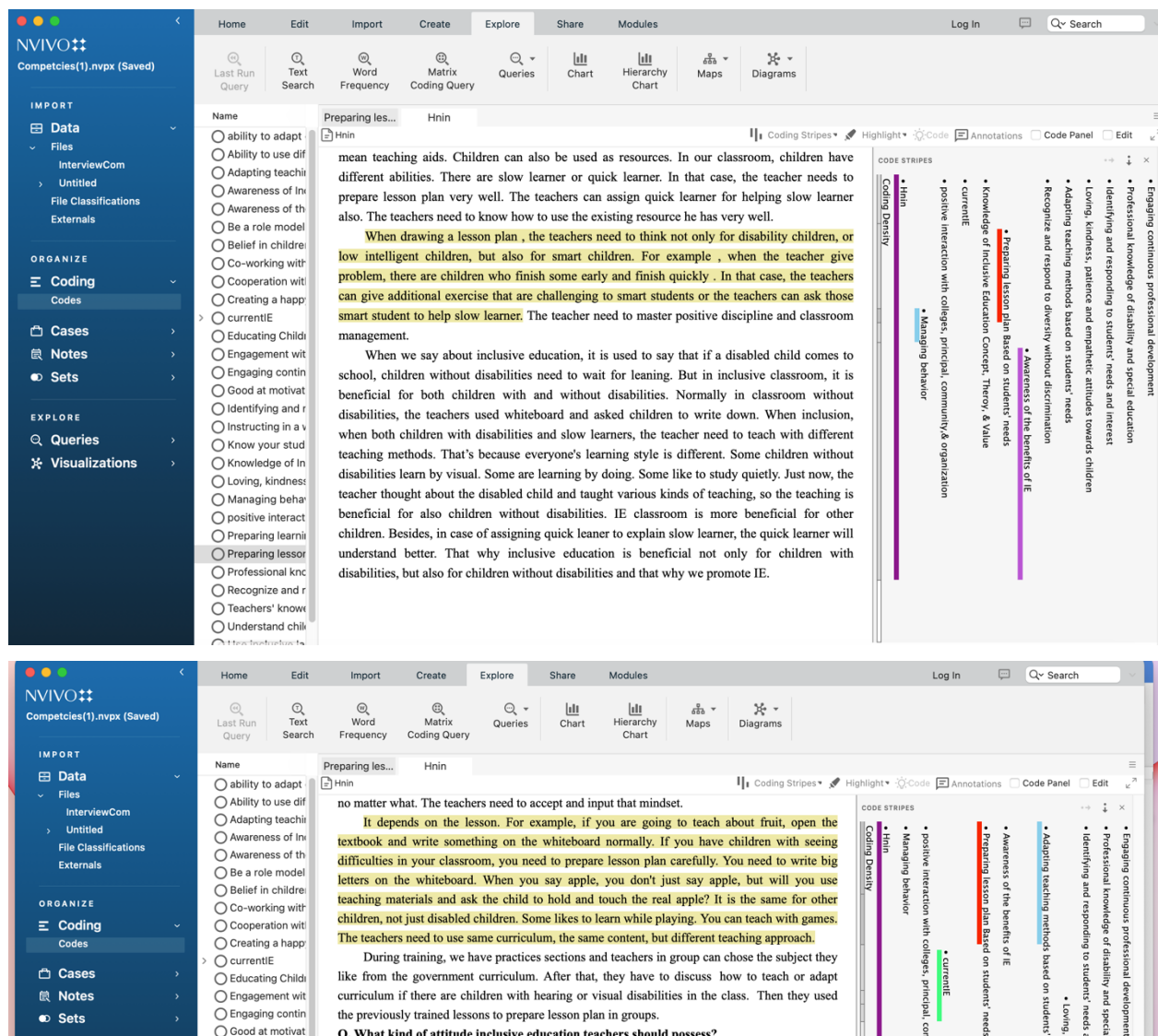
5.2.4 Domain 4: Using Inclusive Instruction and Techniques

Using inclusive instruction and techniques refers to a teacher's capacity to address individual learning needs by modifying or using a variety of teaching strategies and instructional resources. Teaching in an inclusive classroom demands teachers' time and effort to prepare for effective teaching and learning. Teachers need to identify individual learners' needs in order to design instructions that enable students to access challenging curricular content. All students in the inclusive classroom should be independent and autonomous learners. Teachers have full responsibility for fostering happy and motivated learners in the inclusive classroom. This competence domain includes two essential areas of knowledge and skill: (1) adapting instructional material and (2) using inclusive teaching strategies.

Adapting Instructional Material: Inclusive education teachers should be able to use and adapt different instructional materials for effective teaching. Adapting instructional materials means that teachers should be able to make accessible teaching and learning resources that support instruction for all children in the classroom. For effective teaching, especially for teaching children with disabilities in the inclusive classroom, teachers should be able to prepare lesson plans based on students' needs. Teachers will be more able to conduct effective instruction if they prepare lessons that address the individual student's learning needs. One of the interviewees explained the importance of lesson plans as "*the teachers must be able to draw lesson plan very well*" (Participant Khin). Besides, Participant Khin again argued that it should be based on individual students' needs as "*the teachers will be able to do good instruction if they prepare teaching method, teaching aids, and lesson plan depending on the children's needs.*" Further explanation for the importance of preparing lesson plans was found in the following NVivo coding result.

Figure 5.7

NVivo Output Examples



It was notable that an inclusive education teacher should also consider other children without disabilities in drawing lesson plans. Some of the interviewees commented that teachers should sometimes be able to adapt the curriculum, especially for some children with intellectual disabilities.

"Adaptation must be made." For example, this curriculum has lessons from 1 to 10.

In lesson 1, the math section will cover basic addition, subtraction, multiplication,

and division. But depending on how much this child can do, we have to adapt.”

(Participant Khine)

“We have to teach class subjects mainly. He also studies like normal children, and when were done, I told him to ask questions about things he didn’t understand. In math, I can’t teach all the content.” (Participant Phyto, a teacher who is teaching intellectual disability)

It was found that the curriculum sometimes needs to be adapted depending on the level of the students. However, it was found difficult for teachers who have never received training in that. However, teachers have recognized the importance of adapting instructional material for effective teaching. So, inclusive education teachers should be able to prepare lesson plans and adapt teaching content as necessary depending on individual learning needs.

Using Inclusive teaching strategies: Using inclusive teaching strategies refers to the teacher’s ability to apply different teaching aids and technology and conduct instruction in a way conducive to inclusion. Teachers should be able to use different teaching materials and adaptive technology to support flexible teaching approaches for all students. Teachers should also recognize individual learning needs and adapt teaching methods according to their needs. Inclusive education teachers should also understand the effectiveness of collaborative learning in inclusive classrooms and be responsive to effective learning. For instance, some of the teachers reported that teachers should know how to teach children with different types of disabilities using different special aids such as sign language for hearing disability or braille for vision disability.

“Whether you are a regular teacher or a special education teacher, as long as you understand the techniques for teaching these children, there will be no issues. For example, if there is a child with vision, hearing, physical, or whatever type of disability in our classroom, and if the teacher knows how to teach them, for

example, how to teach a child with low vision, such as using touch or braille, or children with hearing disabilities with sign language, or children with intellectual disabilities with teaching aids, there will be no problem. The classroom will become inclusive indeed.” (Participant Khine)

Similarly,

“We need to know how children with vision disabilities write. We need to know braille.” (Participant Nu)

In addition, teachers should be able to use adaptive technology for effective teaching. One informant pointed out the positive effect of IT advances on the knowledge acquisition of children with disabilities.

“Children with dyslexia, for example, children who can’t write, It doesn’t matter. They can speak and understand. Nowadays, there are computers. If there is no computer, there is a voice recorder. You can create text from your voice and even type in Burmese. So, you don’t have to learn. You don’t need to memorize spellings. These kids can’t spell. I won’t teach you anything if you don’t learn to spell. Knowledge and spelling are different things. You can gain knowledge if you can listen. Spelling is a literacy skill. Some think that literacy skills and knowledge are equal. But today is the IT era. You don’t need to read it yourself. This is no longer the era of acquiring knowledge solely through spelling. If you have ears to listen, your knowledge will go up.” (Participant Win)

Informant Win again mentioned using different accessible technological aids:

“Nowadays, every book comes out as an audio book. There are books that you can listen to and gain knowledge without having to read.” (Participant Win)

Further analysis of the data revealed that the ability to adapt teaching methods based on learners' needs was essential for effective teaching. Many of the interviewees considered that inclusive education teachers should know teaching methods for effective teaching for all children in the inclusive classroom.

"If you have to teach these disabled children, you must know the teaching methods to teach them." (Participant Nu)

"Inclusive education cannot be done only with teaching methods. The teachers need to be skilled in teaching techniques." (Participant Khin)

"Then, the teacher needs to know how to teach which child. For example, children who cannot read or write or who are visually impaired. The teacher should know how to teach them to read and write." (Participant Aung)

"Also, the teacher needs to know the basics of how to teach disabled children. For instance, if there are children with disabilities, the teachers should be knowledgeable about how to teach them." (Participant Tun)

Teachers need to consider appropriate teaching methods based on each individual student's needs. One of the most effective and well-known approaches was described as the cooperative learning or group discussion method in the inclusive classroom. Teachers thought that grouping children with different abilities and supporting each other could bring the ultimate learning outcome for every child.

"During the practical period, the other children help the disabled child and let him sit in the corner of the room. Without hurting him, he could help in checking the weight as much as he can." (Participant Nu)

"There are children who can't follow the lesson well. What I teach now is to form groups. If there is a group, there are three levels in that group (A, B, and C). Because the child who got an A in those groups always leads the discussion, he

automatically becomes the leader of the group. When the leader doesn't want his team to lose, when the teacher asks a question that C-level children can answer, other people give him the opportunity to answer. He became involved in the group discussion." (Participant Hla)

In addition, teachers should be able to create learning environments that are conducive to everyone in the classroom. Teachers should be able to motivate active participation in the classroom. Teachers should conduct instruction in a way that is accessible for children with disabilities. For instance,

"You have to adjust a little. Let's say there is a child with vision difficulties in your class. You can't clear materials on the whiteboard quickly, like in a normal classroom. And you need to write a letter slightly larger than usual. You need to think like that." (Participant Su)

Similarly,

"For special attention, if I question something and if he (a child with a physical disability) wants to answer, I ask him to answer with a loud voice from his place. Other children were asked to stand up and answer, but he can do it from his place without standing up." (Participant Lwin)

Another informant elaborated on how teachers' teaching methods need to be adapted by creation:

"The teachers have willingness to teach me. I don't write from kindergarten to grade 4. I took exam orally or spell out verbally. If it is math, they use wooden blocks by their creation." (Participant Zaw)

It can be concluded that teachers should be creative for successful teaching and learning. One interesting finding was that teachers should teach according to their learning style. The

informant strongly recommended adapting teaching methods based on the student's way of learning.

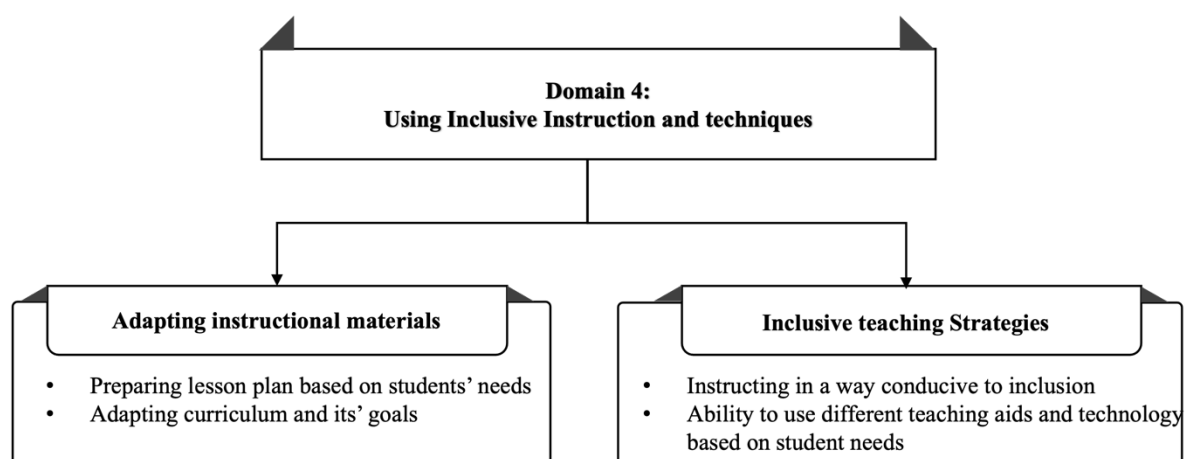
“Usually, when the children come, we teach them with the teaching method that we know. But if we teach in special education or inclusion, we must change the way these children want to learn and be able to learn. You can't go the way you want.....

All the problems can be satisfied if only we could teach according to their learning style.” (Participant Win)

To conclude this section on “Using inclusive instruction and techniques,” inclusive education teachers should be aware of individual students' needs and prepare lesson plans depending on the types of disability. The curriculum and its goals should be adapted based on individual levels of readiness. In addition, teachers should adapt teaching methods based on their learning styles and needs. Teachers should be able to facilitate cooperative learning where all children can learn together. It would be great if teachers could use adaptive technology or teaching aids for effective teaching.

Figure 5.8

Domain 4: Using Inclusive Instruction and Techniques



5.2.5 Domain 5: Cooperation and Collaboration

Cooperation and collaboration here can be defined as a teacher's ability to have positive relationships and skills in co-working with other professionals. Inclusive education cannot be achieved by working alone. It needs to be done in collaboration with many people such as teachers, parents, principals, community members, and other government and non-government organizations to better support children with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. In addition, teachers should be able to work together with other professionals including colleagues, special education teachers, and even children without disabilities. Therefore, inclusive education teachers should have cooperation and collaboration skills. This cooperation and collaboration domain has two major areas of competencies: (1) positive relationships with everyone and (2) working with others.

Positive relationships with everyone: Inclusive education teachers should be able to build positive relationships with everyone, especially people around children with disabilities. Having a positive relationship with others could help teachers gain support for preparing an effective inclusive classroom environment and for conducting successful instruction. Most importantly, teachers need to have positive relationships with parents. Having productive communication with parents could bring up the highest learning outcomes for the child. Teachers should engage with parents constantly. Parents are the best source for learning about children. Some of the informants reported that they need to ask parents from the enrollment about the child:

“Whether a child can learn or not? How to approach? The teacher had to ask parents first. How is the child condition at home? How is the child psychological state? How to deal with it? Discusses with parents” (Participant Mya)

“I asked the parents at the enrollment if there are anyone with disability or health problems. Otherwise, we tend to misunderstand.” (Participant Hla)

As discussed, the teachers also should ask parents about each child's condition following enrolment at the school. Similarly, constant interaction with parents is also important. Parents should also visit the school to ask about their child's progress or condition, and teachers should invite parents for that purpose. For instance,

"The first part is that parents should tell teachers clearly about their children since enrollment, such as their behavior, weaknesses, strengths, etc. Parents need to tell teachers whether their children can hear or not from the beginning and should request. Teachers should also give suggestions or information about children's progress every two months at parent-teacher meetings. And teachers suggest how to teach at home as well." (Participant Zaw)

Similarly,

"The teacher always needs to communicate with parents. That's why we have communication books. In the communication book, teachers say, "What's going on with a child?" "What did a child learn today?" "Please study this again at home," and "We study new lessons." There is a communication book with the parents, and there is always a discussion with the parents." (Participant Khine)

Teachers should have contact with parents throughout the academic year for the betterment of children with disabilities. In addition to parents, teachers should be able to have positive interactions with colleagues, principals, community members, and organizations. Teachers need support from others. Teachers should be able to get support from other people to foster an effective inclusive classroom. Many of the informants argued the importance of having a positive relationship with everyone. For instance,

"Next is relationship. When it comes to inclusive education, it cannot be done by teachers alone. Therefore, there needs to be a good relationship with parents, teachers, and the community." (Participant Aung)

Another informant also agreed that:

“A teacher is not only a teaching part, but also a part of the responsibility to make the school fair, including everything from how to collaborate with parents and community members.” (Participant Tun)

Therefore, teachers should be able to cooperate with everyone. It was found that having positive relationships with community members, parents, organizations, and colleagues can help them obtain support for making the school environment accessible and for further learning or discussing the child’s needs. The following table illustrates the interviewees' voices on the importance of inclusive education teachers having positive relationships.

Table 5.6

References for “positive relationship with everyone”

References	Meaning
The teacher must also be able to engage with the community. When we say inclusive education, it is just easy to say verbally to support each student's needs. I can’t do that either. I can just do it within my capacity. If it is beyond teachers’ capability, the community needs to participate. For example, if the road is not accessible for coming to school from home or if the parents don’t want their children to go to school because of their attitudes, In these cases, teachers need to engage with the community to get the children involved in school. (Participant Khin)	Engagement with the community for support
If you don’t know, ask your senior teachers. If you have to teach a child with a disability, there are also schools that teach children with disabilities. You need to study if there is training or from the people around you. (Participant Nu)	Learn from colleagues, and engage with organizations
In setting goals, it would be great if we could determine goal how much they can learn. It would be good if teachers, parents, other	Setting learning goals with parents,

References	Meaning
organizations, and people involved in this school could participate. (Participant Khine)	teachers, and organizations
Sometimes, the principles need to support teaching techniques. Besides, the teachers may need teaching aids or budgets. For example, if the toilet is not accessible, the principle needs support. (Participant Khin)	Cooperation with principals for support
It also depends on the community for a disabled child to go to school. It needs cooperation. This relationship is also needed to support technical and teaching. For example, when making a school accessible, we need to cooperate with the people who build the school. We need such things to make classrooms accessible. Then, we have to cooperate with the principle. (Participant Aung)	Cooperate with the community and principal for support
We need cooperation from the organization. Since we are under the Ministry of Education, we have to cooperate with township and district education officers. If the school doesn't accept children with disabilities, we need to make a request. (Participant Htet)	Engagement with the government organization for enrollment.
No matter what is going on at school, teachers need to discuss with other teachers about their children. We need to get advice from other teachers, and if necessary, we invite parents. (Participant Yin)	Discuss with colleagues, and parents
We need to cooperate. Because I can't teach all subjects. Since other teachers also have to teach, we have to discuss more, and if needed, we can discuss with the principal. (Participant Nyo)	Cooperation with colleagues.
Cooperation is necessary for an inclusive education teacher. In a classroom, there is more than one teacher, and the teachers need to raise inclusive education awareness among other subject teachers. (Participant Zaw)	Cooperation with colleagues for awareness raising

Working with others: Another important aspect that inclusive education teachers should possess is the ability to work with others, especially for conducting effective teaching in the classroom. Sometimes, teachers need help from other professionals for successful inclusive education. There are some conditions in which teachers need help from special

education teachers. Mainstream teachers find it difficult to control children with disabilities, especially for identifying their special needs or providing appropriate responses for them. Some of the informants showed a desire to work together with special education teachers:

“It is important in the classroom and in preparing for awareness of IE, For example, if you are not alone in teaching, you need to collaborate with other teachers. The teachers need to work together with special teachers or by collaborating with teachers from other schools.” (Participant Aung)

Similarly,

“Once our children are accepted, that doesn’t mean inclusive. I have to follow up. Mainstream and special education teachers need to communicate every time. Sometimes, mainstream teachers say the child is not totally inclusive. We need to discuss with the principle. And we decided to go to mainstream for 3 days and 2 days for special school.” (Participant Khine)

Another informant who had 13 years of teaching experience supported that:

“I agree to participate in learning together in an inclusive classroom. However, if there is one more teacher who can provide support for such a child, it will be more perfect. I have experienced only two children with disabilities during my 13 years of teaching, and I do my best to meet their needs. But there are situations that can’t fill their needs. It would be great if there was a teacher who understood special needs in their classroom.” (Participant Phyo)

In addition to the special education teachers, there are other young professionals that can support teachers during the lesson. Inclusive education teachers should be able to work together with children without disabilities. There are so many reasons for which a teacher cannot immediately get support from special education teachers, especially in developing countries. In that case, teachers should be able to use the available resources for successful

inclusive education. Some of the informants also reported that inclusive education teachers should be able to cooperate with children without disabilities for effective teaching and behavior management.

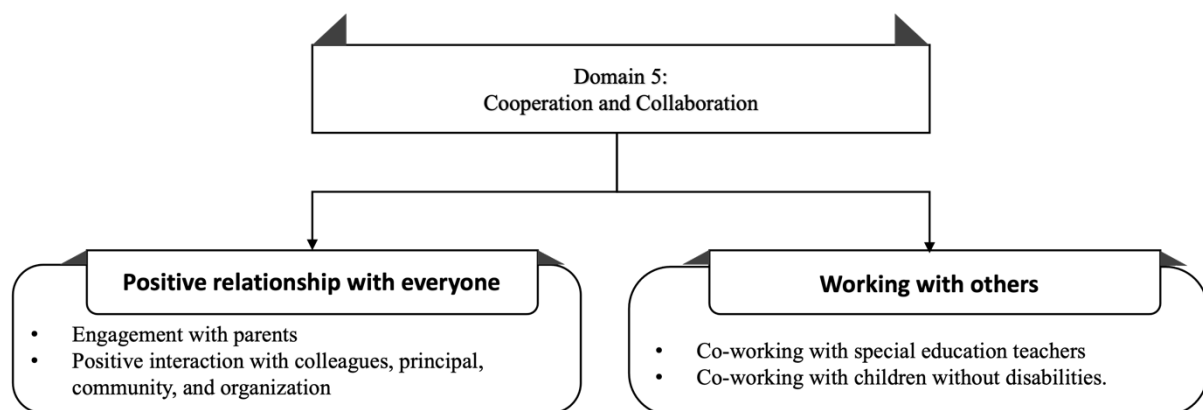
“In order to be successful in teaching, we cannot do it alone. It is not only your subject. If you are in your classroom, you have to cooperate with other children in your class.” (Participant Nu)

“If we include children with disabilities in the inclusive classroom, it will be a burden on the teachers. What can teachers do? When I say resources, I don’t just mean teaching aids. You can also use children as resources. In our classroom, children have different abilities. There are slow learners and quick learners. In that case, the teacher needs to prepare the lesson plan very well. The teachers can assign quick learners to help slow learner as well. The teachers need to know how to use the existing resources very well.” (Participant Khin)

Together these results provide important insights into the importance of cooperation and collaboration skills among inclusive education teachers. Teachers need to have a constant connection with parents to exchange information about their children. In addition, inclusive education teachers should be able to have productive interactions with principals, colleagues, community members, and other organizations for effective instruction and to get support for preparing an inclusive classroom environment. Inclusive education teachers should be able to work with other professionals, especially special educational professionals, to better understand children with disabilities. Interestingly, teachers should be able to cooperate with other children without disabilities in the class to create an inclusive classroom environment.

Figure 5.9

Domain 5: Cooperation and Collaboration



5.2.6 Domain 6: Professional Ethics

In this context, professional ethics refers to the expected rules of behavior among a group of teachers. It is a guiding principle that requires teachers to conduct themselves in a professional manner. In order to create a more inclusive classroom environment, inclusive education teachers should be interested in their own professional development. Teachers in inclusive education must be willing to learn in order to instruct students with disabilities. In addition, teachers should be interested in raising awareness of inclusion among parents, teachers, and other community members by educating or discussing the benefits of inclusive education's ultimate objective. This domain includes two essential areas of competence: (1) being a lifelong learner and (2) promoting awareness of inclusion.

Being a lifelong learner: Every teacher should be a lifelong learner. This area of competence refers to the teacher's ethic of being interested and engaged in continuous professional development to implement inclusive education effectively. First of all, teachers should have a strong willingness to learn to teach children with disabilities. Teachers have to prepare first for diverse classrooms. Some of the teachers pointed out the importance of willingness:

“Teacher is lifelong learner. Your curiosity and willingness are important.”

(Participant Nu)

“It would be like learning by doing” (Participant Khin)

“The second value is how to change ourselves to improve these children”

(Participant Win)

“The teachers need to have willingness for learning” (Participant Aung)

Teachers should have a strong desire to learn to teach effectively in an inclusive classroom and should engage in training, workshops, or seminars for their professional development. Some of the informants argued that they needed to participate in training to level up their knowledge and skills:

“Teachers should at least participate in teacher training or pre-service training about inclusive education.” (Participant Tun)

“It is important to give teachers technical training. It was not done by just letting children with and without disabilities study together under the title of inclusive education. Teachers require extensive training for this role. You have to use a lot of techniques.” (Participant Khine)

“You have to ask. You have to read books. You have to contact the special school. the teachers need to attend conference or seminar if provided” (Participant Mya)

Sometimes, one-time training is not effective for teachers. They need to have continuous professional development training. One of the interviewees explained:

“Providing continuous professional development is also become important. If the teachers are given training within few days and no follow up, they no longer use the knowledge in their classroom, and the course is not effective for teachers.... one time training can't improve teacher competency, and we need to provide different modality. After one-time training, the teachers need to engage self-

directed activities, and followed by peer learning circle and finally by coach. We need continuous professional development rather than one-time.” (Participant Khin)

In short, inclusive education teachers should be life-long learners. They should always try to improve their skills and knowledge necessary for inclusive education practices. Participation in training, seminars, or workshops is part of their professional ethics for being an inclusive education teacher.

Promoting awareness of inclusion: Efforts at individual growth alone will not bring about educational equity for all students. We need to share our knowledge and understanding. Teachers must be able to share their understanding of inclusive education and promote awareness of inclusive education. For instance, teachers should explain to other children without disabilities about children with disabilities and about human rights. Otherwise, conflicts or misunderstandings among children could happen. When there are children with disabilities in the classroom, it is important to educate all children about inclusive education. Some informants said that:

“For the next step, the teacher needs to put a mindset like him/her to the children without disabilities... The teacher needs to tell children to see being disabled and without disability as identities such as different genders, religions, and ethnicities.” (Participant Khin)

"We must convey to students that they are all unique individuals." It must be said that children with disabilities have their own weaknesses but also strengths. First, we need to educate children without disabilities. The teachers have to explain to understand that children with disabilities should have the same opportunities as everyone else, and they want to play as you play, and you need to support them. You have to teach children not to reveal their weaknesses.” (Participant Mya)

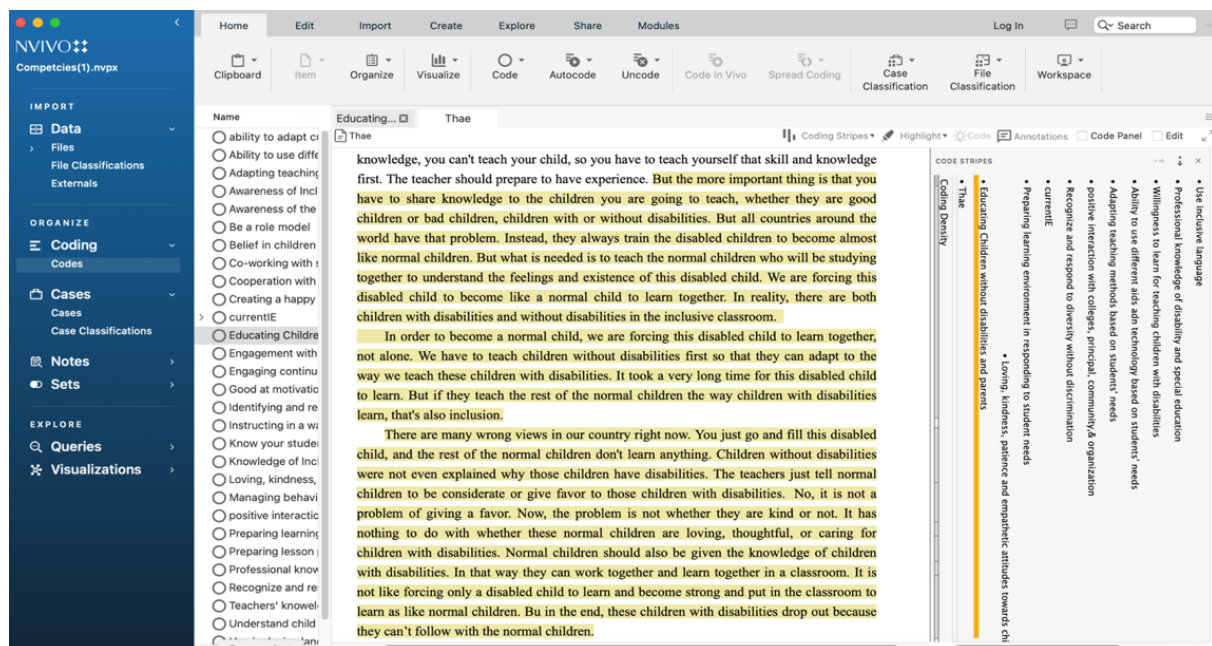
It was found that teachers must educate children without disabilities to be able to improve their awareness of disability and the right to education for everyone. Similar ideas were also added by another informant. She voiced out clearly and strongly that:

“But the more important thing is that you have to share knowledge with the children you are going to teach, whether they are good or bad children, children without or with disabilities. But all countries around the world have that problem. Instead, they always train the disabled children to become almost like normal children. But what is needed is to teach the children without disabilities who will be studying together to understand the feelings and the existence of this disabled child. We are forcing this disabled child to become like a normal child and learn together. In reality, there are both children with disabilities and without disabilities in the inclusive classroom.” (Participant Win)

The interviewee strongly recommends that teachers should educate children without disabilities. Children without disabilities should be educated about the characteristics of each type of disability, which would improve the positive learning environment. The following NVivo output further elaborates on the interviewee's ideas.

Figure 5.10

Example Output for Increasing Awareness of Children Without Disabilities.



In addition to children, teachers also need to increase awareness of inclusive education among parents and colleagues. Parents of children without disabilities sometimes do not want their children to study together with children with disabilities. They believe that it would affect their children's academic achievement or that their children will copy undesired behavior. In that case, the teacher should provide awareness-raising discussions with parents. For example,

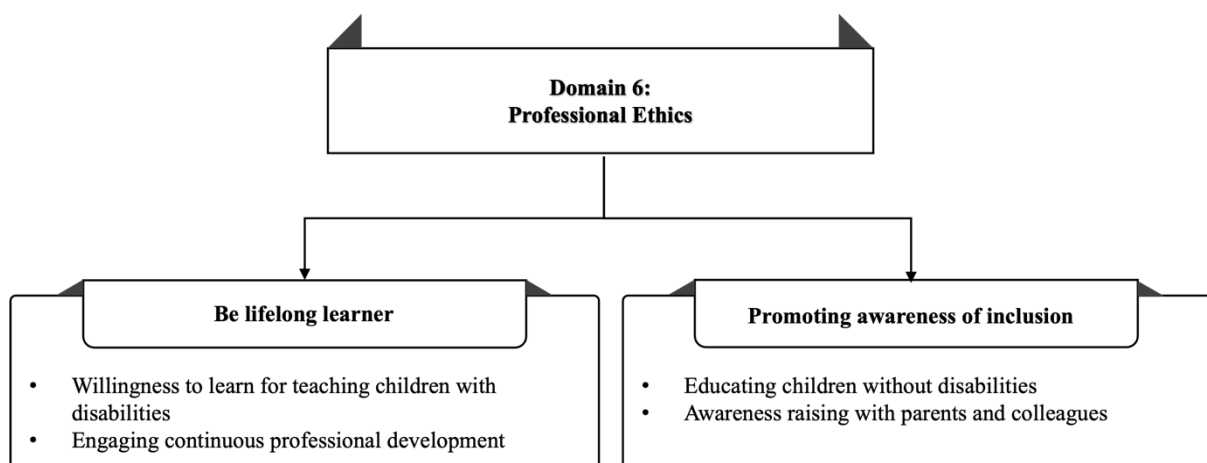
“Parents don’t want their children to be friends with children with disabilities because they worry that bad behavior will spread to their children as well. Since they are learning, they can affect the wrong behavior of disabled children in their children. For example, some preschool teachers are afraid that children without disabilities will imitate behavior if there are children with behavior problems. Besides, if they are slurred, parents worry that their children will imitate such slurred speech.” (Participant Aung)

This example points out that we need to educate everyone around children with disabilities. Parents and teachers should have the right attitude towards implementing inclusive education. Therefore, inclusive education teachers should promote inclusive education awareness for successful inclusion.

In conclusion, inclusive education teachers should be willing to pursue their own professional development. They should join training or activities to nourish themselves. In addition, they should be willing to promote awareness of inclusive education, as it cannot be achieved by only one knowledgeable person. Teachers should educate others, including children without disabilities, parents, and colleagues, to create an effective inclusive classroom.

Figure 5.11

Domain 6: Professional Ethics



5.3 Proposed Competencies Framework for Inclusive Education Teachers in Myanmar

Based on the results of the semi-structured interview, six core competencies relating to teaching and learning have been identified as the basis for teachers working in inclusive education classrooms, as follows:

1. Knowledge of inclusive education
2. Supporting all learners
3. Classroom and behavioral management
4. Using inclusive instruction and techniques
5. Cooperation and collaboration
6. Professional ethics

In the following section, these core competencies are presented along with the associated areas of competence. These areas of competence are made up of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Domain 1: Knowledge of Inclusive Education

This area of competence include:

- Awareness of Inclusive Education Knowledge, and Policies
- Knowledge special needs and resources

“**Awareness of Inclusive Education, Knowledge, and Policies**” includes the following areas of knowledge:

Knowledge of Inclusive Education Concept, Theory, and Value

- Teachers should have basic knowledge of inclusive education as the right to education, equality, and no discrimination.

- Teachers should know that inclusive education is not only about children with disabilities, but it is also all about children who are deprived of equal access to education.
- Teachers should know the values and benefits of inclusive education.
- Teachers should understand that inclusive education is not just physically placing children in the class but rather facilitating meaningful participation in all learning activities.

Awareness of Inclusive Education Policies and Regulations

- Teachers should recognize regional inclusive education policies and practices.
- Teachers should be aware of the international framework and regulations underpinning inclusive education principles and policies.

“Knowledge of special needs and resources” includes the following areas of knowledge:

Professional knowledge of disability and special education

- Teachers should understand the nature and characteristics of different types of disability.
- Teachers should know special education pedagogy including how to support each student’s needs in the classroom.

Knowledge of accessible support

- Teachers should be aware of accessible services for children with disabilities.
- Teachers should know how to get support for effective teaching and learning.

Domain 2: Supporting All Learners.

This area of competence include:

- Awareness of children with disabilities
- Positive attitudes towards disability
- Respect learner rights

“**Awareness of Children with Disabilities**” includes the following areas of knowledge and attitudes”

Know your students.

- Teachers should know individual students' personal backgrounds and emotional states.
- Teachers should be able to identify each student’s needs and level of readiness.
- Teachers should know individual students’ strengths and weaknesses to support the best for them.

Understanding Child Psychology and Development

- Teachers should be able to understand each child's psychological and emotional condition.
- Teachers should have a basic understanding of age-specific developmental milestones.

“**Positive attitudes towards disability**” includes the following attitudes:

Belief in children

- Teachers should believe that the children are able in different ways.
- Teachers should set expectations for every child based on their readiness.

Loving, kindness, patience, and empathy towards children

- Teachers should be patient in dealing with children with disabilities.
- Teachers should have empathetic attitudes to the diverse needs of learners.
- Teachers should welcome children with disabilities with love and kindness without discrimination.

“Respect learner rights” includes the following areas of knowledge, skills, and attitudes:

Recognizing and responding to diversity without discrimination.

- Teachers should be able to listen and value learners’ voices.
- Teachers should respect differences and treat every child equally.
- Teachers should recognize learners’ needs and respond to individual needs.
- Teachers should be able to remove barriers that limit a child's participation in the class.

Identifying and responding to students’ interests and needs

- The teacher should be aware of barriers that each student might face in an inclusive classroom.
- Teachers should be able to discover and support each child’s interests based on the child’s needs.
- Teachers should be able to identify types of special needs and respond based on the nature of the learner’s disability.

Domain 3: Classroom and Behavioral Management

This area of competence include:

- Fostering inclusive environment
- Managing behavior challenges

“Fostering an inclusive environment” includes the following areas of knowledge, skills, and attitudes:

Creating a happy and safe environment

- Teachers should be able to create a friendly and peaceful learning environment among students.
- Teachers should be able to provide environments where all children can learn happily.

Preparing learning environments in responding to student needs

- Teachers should be able to create classroom environments that are accessible for all.
- Teachers should know how to arrange seats depending on learners' needs.
- Teachers should be aware of individual learning needs and assess problems accurately.

Good at motivation, facilitation, and building relationships.

- Teachers should be able to encourage children to participate in classroom activities.
- Teachers should be able to build rapport with students for effective teaching and communication.
- Teachers should possess counseling skills.

“**Managing behavior challenges**” includes the following areas of knowledge, skills, and attitudes:

Use inclusive language

- Teachers should be able to use inclusive and non-discriminatory language.
- Teachers should be aware of highlighting differences or labeling when communicating with children with disabilities.

Managing behaviors

- Teachers should be able to set classroom rules together with students from the beginning of the school year.
- Teachers should know positive step-by-step ways of handling behavioral challenges.
- Teachers should be able to create a respectful environment.

Be a role model.

- Teachers should behave equally without discrimination as a model for all children.
- Teachers should show positive attitudes towards children with disabilities to encourage this behavior in other children.

Domain 4: Cooperation and Collaboration

This area of competence include:

- Positive relationship with everyone
- Working with others

“Positive relationship with everyone” includes the following areas of knowledge, skill and attitudes:

Constant engagement with parents

- Teachers should be able to create a good relationship with parents.
- Teachers should discuss the child’s needs and progress regularly with parents.
- Teachers should collaborate with parents in developing an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Positive interaction with colleagues, principals, the community, and organizations

- Teachers should understand and value teamwork.
- Teachers should collaborate with colleagues or senior teachers to better support learners’ needs.
- Teachers should work with principals in supporting individual student’s needs.
- Teachers should engage with community members to create an accessible school environment.
- Teachers should be able to interact with government and non-government organizations.

“Working with others” includes the following areas of knowledge, skill and attitudes:

Co-working with special education teachers.

- Teachers should collaborate with special education teachers in assessing and planning effective learning environments.
- Teachers should discuss with special education professionals how to handle behavioral problems effectively.

Co-working with children without disabilities.

- Teachers should be able to use the existing resources including other children without disabilities to support children with disabilities.
- Teachers should cooperate with the other children in teaching and behavioral management.

Domain 5: Using Inclusive Instruction and Techniques.

This area of competence include:

- Adapting instructional materials
- Using inclusive teaching strategies

“Adapting instructional materials” includes the following knowledge, skills, and attitudes:

Preparing lesson plans based on students’ needs.

- Teachers should be able to prepare lesson plans depending on the types of disability.
- Teachers should consider each student's abilities and weaknesses in preparing lesson plans.

Adapting the curriculum and goals

- Teachers should be able to adapt curriculum contents depending on the readiness of children.
- Teachers should be able to plan individualized education programs to meet each learner’s needs.

“Using inclusive teaching strategies” includes the following knowledge, skills, and attitudes:

Instructing in a way conducive to inclusion

- Teachers should be able to adapt teaching methods depending on learners’ needs.
- Teachers should recognize the learner’s needs and learning styles to support the best for them.
- Teachers should be able to facilitate cooperative learning or group discussion where all students help each other.
- Teachers should be able to create an inclusive learning environment where everyone participates actively.

Ability to use different teaching aids and technology based on student needs.

- Teachers should prepare different teaching aids beforehand in respect of learner’s needs.
- Teachers should be familiar with ICT and adaptive technology to support flexible approaches to learning.

Domain:6 Professional Ethics

This area of competence include:

- Be lifelong learners.
- Promoting awareness of inclusion

“Be lifelong learners” includes the following knowledge, skills, and attitudes:

Engaging continuous professional development

- Teachers should be committed to acquiring new knowledge, skills, and teaching methods needed to teach children with disabilities.

- Teachers should engage in in-service training and workshops for professional development.

Willingness to learn about teaching children with disabilities.

- Teachers should be lifelong learners.
- Teachers should be able to find opportunities for improving their profession.
- Teachers should always reflect on their experiences and learn from them.

“Promoting awareness of inclusion” includes the following areas of knowledge, skills, and attitudes:

Educating children without disabilities

- Teachers should increase awareness of inclusive education and the nature of disability among children without disabilities.
- Teachers should be able to impart the value of diversity and inclusion among children without disabilities.

Raising awareness among parents and colleagues.

- Teachers should explain to all parents the right to education, but not privilege.
- Teachers should promote inclusive awareness among colleagues.

The following figure illustrates the competencies framework for inclusive education teachers in Myanmar.

Figure 5.12

Competencies Framework of an Inclusive Education Teacher in Myanmar



Table 5.7

Final Lists of Components of Competencies of An Inclusive Education Teacher

Initial Codes	Axial Codes	Emergent Codes
Knowledge of inclusive education concepts, theory, and value	Awareness of Inclusive Education Knowledge, Policies	Awareness of inclusive education
Awareness of Inclusive Education Policies and Regulations		
Professional knowledge of disability and special education	Knowledge of special needs and resources	
Knowledge of accessible support		
Know your students	Awareness of children with disabilities	Supporting all learners
Understanding child psychology and development		
Belief in children	Positive attitudes towards disability	
Loving, kindness, patience, and emphatic attitudes towards children		
Recognizing and responding to diversity without discrimination	Respect learner rights	
Identifying and responding to individual student's interests and needs		
Creating a happy and safe environment	Fostering an inclusive environment	Classroom and behavioral management
Preparing learning environments in responding to student needs		
Good at motivation, facilitation, and building relationship	Managing behavior challenges	
Use Inclusive Language		
Managing behaviors		
Be a role model.		
Engagement with parents constantly	Positive relationship with everyone	Cooperation and collaboration
Positive interaction with colleagues, principals, the community, and organizations	Working with others	
Co-working with special education teachers.		
Co-working with children without disabilities.	Adapting instructional materials	Using inclusive instruction and techniques
Preparing lesson plans based on students' needs.		
Adapting the curriculum and goals	Inclusive teaching strategies	
Instructing in a way conducive to inclusion		
Ability to use different teaching aids and technology based on student needs.		
Engaging in continuous professional development	Be life-long learners	Professional ethics
Willingness to learn for teaching children with disabilities.		
Educating children without disabilities	Promoting awareness of inclusion	
Awareness raising with parents and colleagues		

5.4 Section III: How do teachers perceive their competence with respect to the implementation of inclusive education in their classroom?

This section outlines the results of semi-structured interviews regarding how teachers perceived themselves as competent for being inclusive education teachers. The interview was conducted with thirteen teachers working with children with different types of disabilities. The results will be discussed based on the framework outlined in the previous section (5.3). Therefore, this section will cover how much teachers feel competent regarding these six domains: (1) knowledge of inclusive education, (2) supporting all learners, (3) classroom and behavioral management, (4) using inclusive instruction and techniques, (5) cooperation and collaboration and finally (6) professional ethics. The following table describes the participants' background information.

Table 5.8

Profile of Participants

No	Name	Gender	Age	Education	Position	Experience with CWDs	Training
1.	Phyu	Female	43	B. Sc (physics), DTEC	PAT	Yes	No
2.	Mya	Female	55	B.A (Philosophy)	PAT	Yes	Yes
3.	Nu	Female	46	B. Ed	SAT	Yes	No
4.	Hla	Female	54	B. Sc (Zoology), PGDT	JAT	Yes	Yes
5.	Phyo	Female	33	B.A (English), DTEC	PAT	Yes	Yes
6.	Oo	Female	43	B. Sc (Botany)	JAT	Yes	No
7.	Su	Female	51	B.A	JAT	Yes	No
8.	Yin	Female	36	B.A (English)	SAT	Yes	No
9.	Zin	Female	42	B. Sc (Physics)	JAT	Yes	No
10.	Nyo	Female	51	B. Sc (Math), PGDT	JAT	Yes	No
11.	May	Female	48	B.A (History)	JAT	Yes	Yes
12.	Aye	Female	47	B.Sc. (Zoo)	JAT	Yes	No
13.	Lwin	Female	47	B.A (History)	JAT	Yes	Yes

5.4.1 Knowledge of Inclusive Education

When the participants were asked about their knowledge regarding the concept of inclusive education, the majority (77%) described inclusive education as the “right to education for all,” “no discrimination,” and “equal access to education.” On the other hand, 23% found it difficult to conceptualize the concept. For instance, one of the teachers mentioned inclusive education as “*teachers collaborate as possible*” (Participant Aye), while another teacher argued that “*some of them go to special school such as the school for the blind, and so on. But some go to general school such as children with physical disabilities*” (Participant Yin). It was revealed that some teachers still viewed having students with disabilities in their classrooms as an alternate or voluntary form of education, rather than understanding their right to education. It is likely that some teachers teaching in inclusive classrooms are unaware of inclusive education policies and regulations.

Nonetheless, some of the teachers (69%) are aware of accessible forms of support for including children with disabilities. Teachers mentioned that one of the special and inclusive education schools, EDEN, is located in their region. Further analysis of the results also showed that most of the teachers (69%) recognized four different types of disabilities (hearing, vision, physical, and intellectual) based on their classroom experiences. Some of the teachers (23%) were able to identify more than four types of disabilities, such as down syndrome, autism, polio, and cerebral palsy.

5.4.2 Supporting All Learners

There are three primary features of competence that make up this domain, namely “supporting all learners.” These competences include (1) awareness of children with a disability, (2) positive attitudes towards disabilities, and (3) respecting learners’ rights.

Regarding the awareness of children with disabilities, 100% of the teachers reported that they tried to learn more about the children with disabilities in order to support them when

it comes to inclusion. Teachers argued that they need to know everything about the children, including their ability to learn, their attitudes, type and nature or characteristics of the disability, interests, needs, and psychological conditions. For instance,

“Some parents don’t know that their child can’t see well. The child looked at the book very closely, I’ve noticed. Then I need to inform their parents. The children didn’t tell also” (Participant Nyo)

Another teacher also insisted that:

“Since I am a new teacher, I have to ask the previous teachers about this child’s situation and attitude. Sometimes their parents told me about the child, their interests, and their needs. I need to ask everyone related to the child. Mainly from the previous teachers and parents.” (Participant Phyo)

It can be found that teachers believed that knowing about children is essential for future inclusiveness. Teachers tried to get information about the children from various sources but mostly from parents and previous class teachers. One primary teacher who is teaching a child with autism reported that:

“Since the child has attended this school from KG, I learned from KG teachers how the child is doing. They said that the child is clever and simple to learn. However, if he wants to, he insists. Not like a normal child, he has to be taken care of a lot by the teacher. And the child doesn’t accept that he’s wrong. He has to be right all the time. He gets very angry if teachers give the wrong mark.” (Participant Mya)

To conclude, all teachers perceived knowing about children as a priority for teaching in inclusive classrooms, and teachers were aware of how to gather this information.

Regarding attitudes towards children with disabilities, some of the participants (30%) indicated that children with disabilities should be welcomed warmly in the mainstream

classroom. However, their perception of children with disabilities may come across as feeling pity for them. For instance,

“If such a child with a disability comes to school, I would like to accept him wholeheartedly. It is not because they want to be disabled, but because of their destiny or fate.” (Participant Su)

“In my mind, teaching them is like doing charity. I can’t do a lot for them because there is no time.” (Participant Zin)

“He is one of the human beings, and one of the students. The teacher needs to tell other children to support him. The teacher also needs to support.” (Participant Mya)

“Since these children have come to my classroom, they are my children.”
(Participant Phyu)

Some of the participants showed supportive attitudes toward inclusive classrooms. They would like to support children with disabilities for effective teaching.

“I told the child not to worry if you can’t come to school when you feel unwell, teachers will copy all the notes. I don’t want him to have any stress.” (Participant Hla)

“They need to be treated warmly, and the other children in the class also need to be treated warmly... It won’t bother me anymore. I’ll learn from them. Teachers must be a little more careful. I have to tell everyone to support that child.”
(Participant Nyo)

In contrast, one of the teachers showed an unfavorable attitude toward teaching children with disabilities in an inclusive classroom and preferred special education for children with disabilities:

“It is good for learning with disabilities and without disabilities. Because in schools like ours, such children are only a few, it is convenient for them to study with other children. They are not the majority. If there are a lot of children with disabilities in the classroom, I think that there are small schools that they open specially for those children with disabilities. I think they should study. They will think that they can do the same, and they will be happy in their lives. I didn’t exclude them because of their disability.” (Participant Su)

In conclusion, it can be concluded that 92% of teachers showed positive attitudes towards children with disabilities despite attitudes influenced by their belief in fate or destiny and charity. The teachers showed empathetic attitudes towards children with disabilities. On the other hand, a minority of teachers preferred to educate children with disabilities in separate schools even though they did not want to exclude students. Therefore, teachers want to accept children with disabilities in their mainstream classrooms but still doubt the effectiveness of inclusive education for all children, especially for children with disabilities.

When talking about the respect of learners’ rights, the results showed that all teachers recognized the right to education for children with disabilities, and they all respect and treat children with disabilities in their inclusive classrooms. Teachers understand that all children should be treated equally without discrimination. Most of the teachers were able to identify and respond to individual students’ needs and show respect for learners’ rights for inclusion. For instance, a teacher teaching a child with a physical disability reported that:

“I think they should not be excluded and should be treated the same as others.

When I think about it, sometimes, for example, let’s say that a child without disabilities comes to greet me, and I want a child with disabilities to come and help

me by carrying my basket. I just want him to feel that he was treated like others, and he can carry that. I don't want to exclude them." (Participant Su)

Similarly, another two participants also described how they treat all children equally without discrimination:

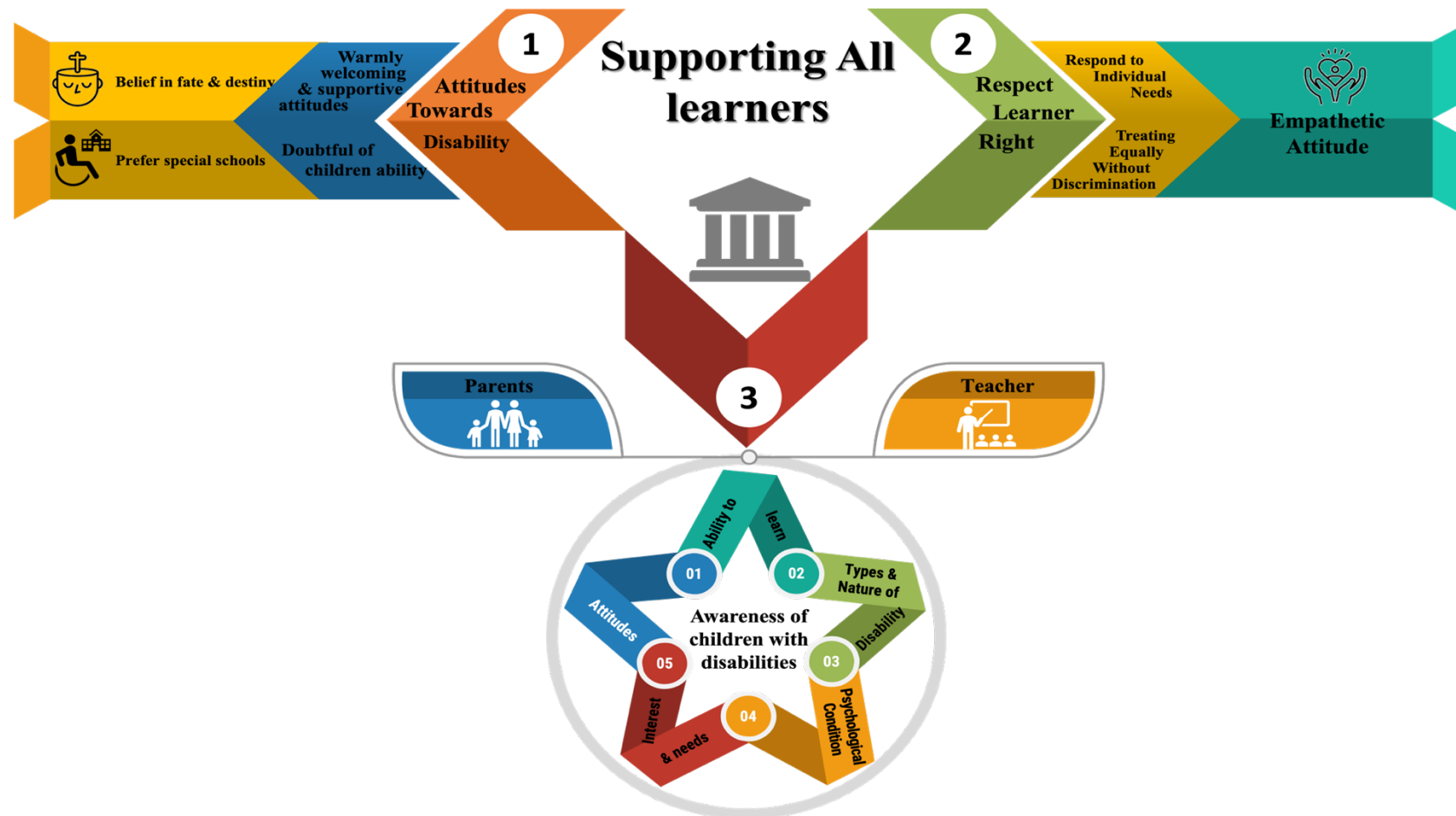
"They should be treated equally. Other children will need to be treated equally. I teach them not to discriminate and to treat everyone equally. They were also asked to participate if they played." (Participant Zin)

"As a teacher, I treat children equally. Regardless of children, teachers need to be careful when telling them, even when disciplining them. In school activities, without putting aside those children with disabilities, when others are sweeping, he can participate by doing something that he can." (Participant Oo)

It was found that most of the teachers recognized diversity and respected the right to education for children with disabilities. Based on their comments, teachers provided equal opportunities for all children regardless of their abilities. For instance, it was found that children with disabilities also participated in every school activity. Teachers provide small activities to include children with disabilities in the classroom. On the other hand, the researcher would like to conclude that not every teacher's way of treating students equally equates to a "right to education." Teachers' ways of behaving equally were grounded on their humanitarian attitudes. For instance, one of the teachers mentioned *"I treated him equally not to feel downhearted"* (Participant Aye). In addition, "thought as my own children," and "children will not feel discouraged" were mentioned by some of the informants in their interviews. The following figure shows the results of the "supporting all learners" domain:

Figure 5.13

How Teachers Support All Learners in Inclusive Classrooms



5.4.3 Classroom and Behavioral Management

The "Classroom and behavioral management" component consists of two crucial competencies. These competencies are (1) fostering an inclusive environment, and (2) managing behavior challenges. How teachers viewed themselves in relation to these competencies will be further upon in the sections that follow.

Regarding fostering an inclusive environment, it was discovered that about 85% of teachers fostered an inclusive classroom environment by developing a classroom atmosphere that was responsive to each student's needs and by encouraging students to develop positive relationships for a safe environment. For instance, teachers made seating arrangements in consideration of children's needs. A teacher who is teaching a child with a vision disability said that:

"When there is a child with low vision, I ask a child to sit in the front row, close to the board. We have a class rotation system, and we change the seating every day. A child doesn't want to admit it, and he wants to rotate like other children even though he can't see well. Their mind is like that. I need to gently encourage the child to sit in the front row. I need to arrange for some children who are in good relationships with him to help when he can't see." (Participant Nyo)

Similarly,

"Regarding the child, the child I was teaching had a hearing disability, so he was asked to sit in the closet with the teacher even though we used a rotation system in the class." (Participant Zin)

Teachers identified children's needs and arranged the seating accordingly. It was noticeable that teachers' kindness and patience in guiding the right way also matter in creating an inclusive environment. Teachers believed that a child with a disability should be seated together with someone who is in a good relationship or good at studying to help them out. A

primary school teacher who has experience in teaching children with hearing, physical, and intellectual disabilities also echoed that:

“I asked him to sit between his two friends to help him. Since primary school children have to sit in CCU style in groups, I have to arrange children who study hard beside him. His friend needs to remind him to write also.” (Participant Phyo)

In addition to seating arrangements, teachers showed that they have encouraged children to participate in classroom activities and build a close relationship with children to create an inclusive environment. Some of the interviewees mentioned that they praised children with disabilities when they participated. For instance,

“I asked questions to him like other children and praised him when he can answer.” (Participant Phyo)

“If he could answer correctly sometimes, I have to praise him.” (Participant May)

Most of the teachers encouraged children for being emotionally ready to study in the inclusive classroom. They praised and motivated children for any improvement they had made. In addition, teachers prepared the classroom environment to be inclusive within their capacity. They arranged seats depending on their learning needs. However, none of the teachers reported about the importance of building close relationships with children for effective teaching.

In relation to managing behavioral challenges, it was found that teachers used different techniques for preventing and managing behaviors. The most commonly found methods were setting rules, using Buddha’s teachings and moral discipline. Only a small number of those interviewed reported that they set classroom rules for managing behavioral challenges from the beginning of the school year. For instance,

“As soon as they enter the classroom, the teacher needs to create a situation to make all the children united by doing classwork in groups. The teacher needs to set

classroom rules in advance. Don't play on others' weaknesses. Everyone has their strengths and weaknesses, and tell them to help each other." (Participant Mya)

Similar ideas were also reported:

"I have already told these children from the beginning of the year not to tease each other too much. I had already set classroom rules when I entered the classroom."

(Participant Nu)

It was found that only a very small number of teachers set classroom rules before the class started. It was noted that teachers set classroom rules by themselves without discussing with the children. Some of the teachers managed their behaviors by referencing Buddha's teachings.

"We need to teach them. In Buddhism, if you teased other people weakness, there is karma." (Participant Hla)

"I am also a Buddhist. So, I always say things like that so that any child can understand. Anyway, parents also disciplined by story telling the buddha speeches."

(Participant Nu)

Another method teachers used was teaching moral values. Teachers taught moral and civic education as compulsory for every child. They taught all children to have empathy and help each other to prevent behavior challenges. For instance,

"We have moral and civic subjects for all children. If there are children with disabilities in class, I have to discipline all children to have empathy for each other."

I told every child to take care of him and not to tease." (Participant Phyto)

"At the beginning of the school year, the teacher needs to control the classroom by giving psychological teaching, such as empathy, taking care of each other, and so on, rather than teaching lessons. If you can change their opinions and feelings, there will be no problems. I have to tell children without disabilities as well."

Children with disabilities don't want to be born with disabilities, but it happens because of fate. A teacher needs to discipline all children not to say about their weaknesses based on our human ethics or morale. Teachers need to teach moral values, and there will be no problems in the classroom.” (Participant Phyu)

It could be concluded that most of the teachers managed inclusive classrooms by teaching children moral values, human ethics, and Buddha teachings to have empathy and support children with disabilities. On the other hand, a small number of teachers explained individual differences to help to create a safe and respectful environment.

“I had to explain the situation to the other children. This child can do things you can't. The child has only a hearing disability, but he is smarter in other areas than other children, such as running. Don't tease. He is disabled, but able to do other things.” (Participant Zin)

“I need to discuss the potential issues that may arise among children beforehand.” But if that happens, I need to tell all children that even though they are disabled, they also have other strengths. For example, some of your friends, even though they are not very intelligent, are good at drawing. If you need his help, you can ask him for it. I describe the strengths of both children with disabilities and without disabilities. You all are brothers and sisters and must support each other. Someone will know what you don't know, and we need to fill in each other, and the classroom will be peaceful.” (Participant Nu)

Overall, these results indicated that most of the teachers managed children's behavior in an inclusive classroom by teaching moral and civic values to have empathy, take care of each other and support each other. A few teachers disciplined students based on Buddha's teachings of “Karma,” “Fate”, and “destiny.” However, a very small number of teachers

managed the classroom by setting rules before the class. Teachers were skillful in creating a respectful environment by pointing out that different people have different abilities. Conversely, none of the teachers possessed knowledge and skills in using inclusive language.

5.4.4 Using Inclusive Instruction and Techniques

The result of this domain, “using inclusive instruction and techniques” will be discussed under two main areas of competencies (1) adapting instructional materials and (2) inclusive teaching strategies. Teachers were asked “How do you prepare for teaching in an inclusive classroom?” and “How do you adapt your instruction for teaching in an inclusive classroom?”

Regarding adapting instructional materials, it was found that most of the teachers found it difficult to adapt the curriculum. Teachers reported that:

“It is not easy. At our school, there are only a few staff members; we have to teach many subjects. Also, I have to teach many classes. We have to teach all children equally, but if they don’t understand, I told them to come and ask me.” (Participant Lwin)

“It was already determined which chapter must be completed each month. Despite having a set schedule, I must still consider the needs of regular children. I teach all equally. ...And there are not many teachers at school. And there are ten subjects, and the teachers are so busy the whole day.” (Participant Phy)

It can be concluded that teachers were not able to provide differentiated instruction based on individual student’s learning needs because of a shortage of teachers and a centralized curriculum. It might also be a lack of knowledge for implementing differentiated instruction or adapting the curriculum. Teachers were teaching with their originally designed or prepared lesson plans for all children without adapting the material for children with disabilities.

With regard to inclusive teaching strategies, however, very few teachers encouraged children to work in groups and instead promoted active discussion to allow children to share their strengths and weaknesses and support each other. One middle school teacher reported that:

“What I teach now is to form groups. If there is a group, there are three levels in that group (A, B, and C). Because the child who got an A in those groups always led the conversation and automatically became the leader of the group. When the leader didn’t want his team to lose, when there was a question that C-level children could answer, other children gave him the opportunity to answer. He became involved in the group discussion.” (Participant Hla)

Similarly,

“During the practical period, the other children help the disabled children and let him sit in the corner of the room. Without hurting his body, he could help in checking the weight as much as he can.” (Participant Nu)

It was found that teachers fostered collaborative learning which can also improve a child’s sense of belongingness in the learning community. It was also noticeable that teachers created a learning environment to complement each other’s weaknesses. In addition, some teachers provided instruction depending on learners’ needs to ensure that every child could engage in meaningful learning experiences. One informant who was teaching a child with a hearing disability argued that *“I need to teach math with gestures”* (Participant Zin). Similarly, another teacher who is teaching both hearing and intellectual disabilities echoed that:

“I need to teach in a way that they can understand. If you are going to teach a child with a hearing disability, you have to speak loudly or use gestures.” (Participant Phyoo)

“Let's say there is a child with vision difficulty in your class. You can't clear the whiteboard that you have written, like teaching in the normal classroom. And you need to write a letter slightly larger than usual. You need to think like that. If you have a child with an intellectual disability, it will take more time. You can't teach them all. I will teach only the main point.” (Participant Su)

Based on their comments, teachers ensured that all course materials were accessible to students with different types of disabilities by using gestures and readable fonts and by giving students enough time. A few teachers created an inclusive learning environment by recognizing individuals' learning needs and encouraging active participation in the class. Two teachers who were teaching children with physical disabilities explained how they created an inclusive learning environment:

“Intelligence is good. He can study. But in practice, when the child is asked to write on the whiteboard outside, if you ask his name, he may not want to. If you ask everyone but don't ask him, he may feel sad. So, volunteer. Who will go out? If he wants to participate, I need to choose a girl who will compete with him. At the time, his height was quite short because of his twisted legs, so I intentionally chose to be the same height as him. If he finds a tall friend with him, he will feel bad for his weakness. So, we need to do it carefully.” (Participant Oo)

In the other case:

“There is no special preparation because the child's intelligence can follow the lesson...For special attention, if I asked something and he wanted to answer, I asked him to answer with a loud voice. Other children were asked to stand up to answer, but he can answer from his place without standing up. For a child with intellectual disabilities, I need to take note of what he can answer during teaching.

Then asked what he could. The question will be easy, but it will be difficult for him.

However, he will be happy since he can answer in front of the class.” (Participant

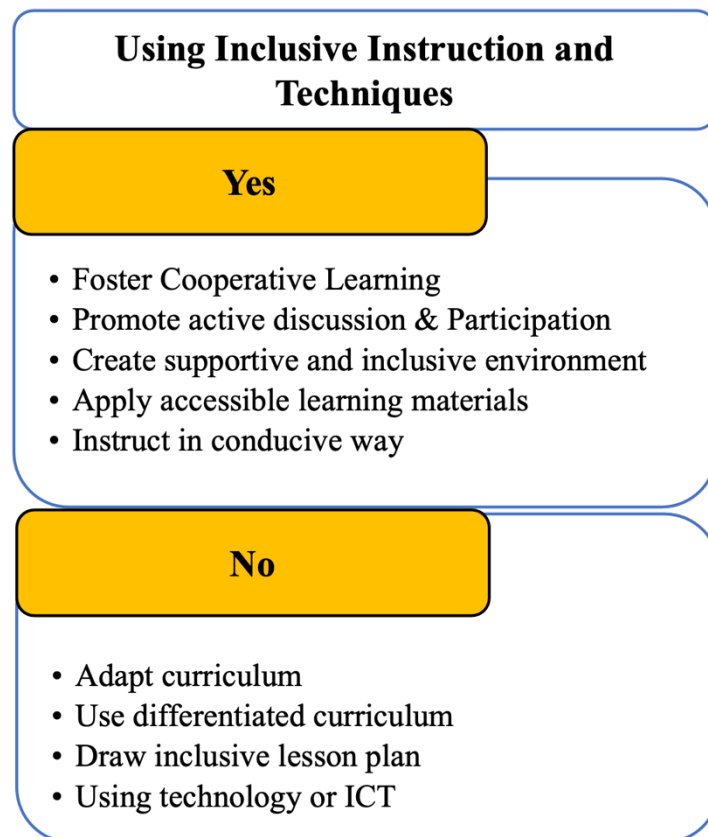
Phyu)

Looking at these two cases, the teachers took care of the individual student's weaknesses and fostered an inclusive environment without highlighting their disabilities. Teachers paid attention and provided conducive forms of instruction to motivate learners to be in the classroom.

To conclude regarding teachers' competence in using inclusive instruction and techniques, it is impractical for teachers to prepare differentiated instructions that provide different learning materials and activities to meet the varying needs of students. None of the teachers had been trained to prepare lessons in consideration of each learner's specific needs. However, some teachers adapted teaching methods using role-play or other visual learning aids depending on the student's needs. Some teachers conduct instructions in a way conducive to inclusion. Some teachers believed in the effectiveness of cooperative learning and encouraged children to be active participants in the discussion. Some teachers provided additional support to improve understanding of the lesson during free time. It is interesting to note that no one reported the use of advanced ICT or adaptive technology to support learners' diverse needs.

Figure 5.14

Perceived Teachers' Competence of Inclusive Instruction and Techniques



5.4.5 Cooperation and Collaboration

In general, each of the teachers perceived that cooperation with different parties was important for successful inclusive education. All teachers reported that they have collaborated with parents throughout the academic years in different ways. One of the teachers reported that she discussed with the child's parents when she found out the child's condition:

"During the first few weeks of schooling in Grade 6, I thought that a child could follow like other children, and I taught all the same. Later, I found out that there was no note in her book when I checked. Why? Her friends told me that she couldn't write when I dictated but could write only by watching. A child can't remember anything I said. Then, I asked the parent and explained her condition." (Participant May)

Similarly, Teacher Swe indicated that:

“Parents always came to school and discussed the situation with the teacher. Whether a child can follow the lesson or not? How to approach. Also, I asked parents, how is the child doing at home? How is the child's psychological state? How do you deal with it? I discussed this with parents.” (Participant Swe)

Similar ideas were reported by another two teachers who are teaching children with physical disabilities in their classrooms.

“I told his parents to remind him study at home. And I also told his parents to drop and pick up earlier to prevent any incident.” (Participant Su)

“I discussed with parents about his attendance of 75% for the exam, and asked parents to pick up 10 minutes earlier.” (Participant Nu)

Surprisingly, one of the teachers commented that she had to learn from the parents:

“His mother is very good. The child is trained very well. Mother had attended all the courses related to children with disabilities. I consulted with his mother. I had to learn from parents also.” (Participant Zin)

The results suggest that all teachers should maintain a healthy relationship with the parents. They discussed the condition of the children and offered each other whatever help they could offer. Teachers, too, drew on the parents' knowledge. In addition to regular engagement with parents, teachers also collaborate with coworkers and exchange information about students. The children's conditions are reported to upper-level teachers via junior-level teachers. For instance, a primary school teacher who had experience in teaching a child with autism indicated that:

“Since the child has attended this school since KG, I heard from the KG teachers how the child is doing in KG.” (Participant Swe)

Similarly,

“Since I am a new teacher, I have to ask the previous teachers about the children's situation and attitudes. Sometimes their parents told me about their child, their interests, and their needs. I need to ask everyone who is related to the child. Mainly from the previous teachers and parents.” (Participant Phy)

As mentioned above, teachers mostly exchanged information from grade to grade. Homeroom teachers also had greater responsibility for sharing information about children in their class. Most of the teachers mentioned as follows:

“I told every teacher about having a child with a disability in my classroom in advance. So, if the teacher wants to ask a question, even though you can ask other children by calling in front of the class, how about a child with a disability? A teacher can just go near him and ask. I need to cooperate with other teachers. After making friends with other teachers, I can ask about my child's condition.” (Participant Oo)

“I have to tell other class teacher not to change his seat to other place and to let him to copy note” (Participant Hla)

“There are subject teachers, and we had discussion. I asked Math teacher if he can count or not.” (Participant Kay)

It was discovered that teachers shared student data across grade levels. Although they did exchange information, there appeared to be little deep discussion among them. In addition to parents and colleagues, all teachers mentioned that they needed support from the other children without disabilities in the classroom. For instance, one of the teachers who was teaching a grade 3 child with physical disabilities mentioned that:

“I need to ask other children without disabilities to help a child with a disability when doing activities during the class. For example, for teaching in the playground,

he needs to take a chair for him to sit on, and his friend helps him move.”

(Participant Phyu)

Similarly, a teacher who was teaching a child with a visual disability echoed that:

“Since I teach History, there is no difficulty in teaching most of the time. I explain them and discuss with them. But when I write notes on whiteboard, the child who sit next to him help if a child can’t see because of vision. I need to get help from the other children. If a child doesn’t have full notes, other children need to copy for him. I need more help from other children. The teacher has only about 45 minutes of interaction, but they are seeing each other whole day.” (Participant Nyo)

It turns out that every teacher knows that having children without disabilities support students with special needs is a win-win situation. They all assist children with disabilities in the areas of mobility and copying notes. Even though all teachers acknowledged the necessity of cooperation with parents, other teachers, and students without disabilities, they appeared to have little cooperation with the principal. Out of 13 teachers, only 5 said they had a discussion with the principal about accommodating students with special needs. For instance,

“I asked the child, do you want to go back early when the school finishes? Because he can slip or fall down with many children. Then, I discussed the principle of letting him go back early.” (Participant Oo)

Similarly, another teacher who is teaching a child with a physical disability reported that

“The classrooms from A to F were located on the first floor; he is in B. The classroom was moved to the ground floor since he used a wheelchair to come to school after discussion with the principal and other teachers.” (Participant Nu)

Accordingly, just 38% of teachers have a guiding interaction for helping students with disabilities. Furthermore, every teacher claimed that she or he does not collaborate with any

private, non-profit, or special education institutions or teachers. Overall, it was determined that all of the teachers acknowledged and collaborated with parents, coworkers, students without disabilities, and the principal, even though none of them worked together with special education teachers or organizations.

5.4.6 Professional Ethics

In response to the questions, "Would you like to participate in training for your professional development?" and "Have you ever promoted inclusive education awareness to others?" less than half of the teachers were able to participate in inclusive education training. Their reluctance to participate in training was primarily due to their heavy workload and recently revised curriculum. For instance,

"I want to attend if I have time. But right now, I don't have time. I have to take care of a large staff at school." (Participant May)

"Not really. Now, because of the new Grade 12 system, I have to study a lot. And I am also busy with so many activities at school. If the training is short, I may be able to join." (Participant Yin)

As a result, it became clear that not all of the teachers were fully committed to professional development in order to succeed in such a diverse learning environment. They make decisions based on a number of criteria. In contrast, the remaining half of the teachers possessed a strong desire to study or improve their profession relating to inclusive education.

"I am going to study. I am going to learn the teaching method. You can't teach effectively without learning. If the school offers training, I will attend." (Participant Hla)

"In order to meet their needs, I must fulfill myself. If I don't know how to teach those children, I need to learn. Then, I need to ask for advice from teachers who

have had this kind of experience. Once I receive such advice, I need to dedicate as much time as possible to teaching them. We need to prepare a lot from our side...There is no perfect person yet, in my opinion. There is still a lot to learn, and sometimes we also need to learn from children. During teaching, I need to ask myself what I need to study, what my weaknesses are, and what my attitude is."

(Phyu)

Some teachers were found to have strong motivations for self-improvement in order to better accommodate their increasingly diverse groups. They acknowledged that teachers must be lifelong learners and should always seek to acquire new knowledge. It was also revealed that teachers are also self-reflective and strive for future improvement. In addition, the results demonstrated that they bring awareness of inclusive education among children and other teachers, but not so much for parents and community people. Some of the teachers mentioned that they also need to educate children without disabilities in their classrooms. For instance,

"I would like to give a message to other children without disabilities: if you see those children with disabilities in their environment or at work in the future, you should not exclude them and try to support them in any way you can." (Participant Phyu)

(Phyu)

"I explained it to other children. This child can do things that you can't. The child has only difficulty hearing, but he is smarter in other areas than other children, such as running. Don't tease. He is disabled but able to do other." (Participant Zin)

On the other hand, some teachers educate children without disabilities in other ways:

"I need to teach children without disabilities. In Buddhism, if you tease other people's weaknesses, there is karma." (Participant Hla)

"I have to tell the children without disabilities in advance. It's not a choice, but a result of fate or destiny. Don't tease others weaknesses." (Participant Su)

“I have a responsibility to educate children without disabilities about their lives. His life is not like yours. You all need to understand and empathize with their weaknesses. They are not the same, and they have weaknesses. So, you need to help them and show empathy.” (Participant Nyo)

As stated, some teachers are unable to raise awareness of inclusive education in the proper manner. Rather than emphasizing the "equal right to education," the method of educating children without disabilities was primarily centered on humanitarian and religious values. Conversely, all teachers (100%) reported sharing their experiences teaching students with disabilities with their colleagues whenever they deemed it essential.

5.5 General Perceived Competence of Teachers to Teach in Inclusive Classroom

The level of teacher confidence in implementing inclusive education was explored. All teachers were asked, “How do you define your own level of competence when it comes to implementing inclusive education?” A total of 13 educators were surveyed, and just 3 admitted feeling prepared to introduce inclusive education into their classrooms. Strong desire drives them. One of the participants (who has experience in teaching a child with a hearing disability for one year and no training in inclusion) mentioned that

“I still have many requirements to include them, but I feel confident to do so”

(Participant Zin).

In this sense, the teacher's previous experience and willingness enable her to feel competent and confident in including children with disabilities, regardless of her training. The rest of the teachers who responded to this question, however, claimed that they lack the confidence to implement inclusive education as shown in the following table.

In conclusion, regardless of their expertise, the majority of teachers lack the confidence necessary to implement inclusive education in their classrooms. Their lack of teaching expertise, combined with factors such as a centralized examination system, large class sizes, and varying types and levels of disability, undermine their confidence in its effectiveness. In addition, it was discovered that age does not make a difference in their perceived competence for inclusion.

Table 5.9*References for Perceived Competence of teachers to IE*

References	Reasons
“Since I don’t know the teaching methods needed to teach all types of children with disabilities.” (Participant May)	Unskillful in teaching methods
“I can’t teach if there are a lot of children in the classroom. For example, there are 80 students in one classroom. I can’t teach them all effectively.” (Participant Phyu)	Class size
“Since the children I met were all good at intelligence, I don’t feel stressed. I don’t have much responsibility for that. If the children were not good at intelligence, I don’t know.” (Participant Aye)	Types of disability
“I am not too confident since I haven’t met with children with severe disabilities.” (Participant Nyo)	Level of disability
“It depends on the type of disability. But I can’t teach CB children who can’t even hold pencils. There are some children who can’t walk very well, and it will be very difficult.” (Participant Mya)	Types of disability
“I am not sure because I haven’t trained. So, I don’t know how to handle them effectively.” (Participant Oo)	No training
“I feel that I still have many requirements.” (Participant Zin)	Not skillful
“This is what we are struggling with now. We can teach them only a few parts that will be included in the exam because the exam system is stressful.” (Participant Lwin)	Centralized exam system

5.6 Section IV: How Teachers Feel Commitment Towards Implementing Inclusive Education?

Teachers' levels of commitment to implementing inclusive education practices were investigated. Teachers were asked, "Would you like to practice inclusive education in your classroom in the upcoming semester?" to understand their commitment to inclusive education

implementation. It was discovered that only 3 out of 13 teachers were interested in bringing inclusive education into their classrooms. For instance, these teachers mentioned that:

“I want to teach my best even though I don’t know teaching methods. They came to school for study, I have to.” (Participant May)

“I want to teach them. I want them to be educated as like other children.”
(Participant Su)

“I want to include them as much as I can. Even without training, and a lot of challenges. I will.” (Participant Zin)

On the other hand, most of the teachers hesitated to implement inclusive education in their classrooms. Their motivation or commitment to inclusive education is affected by a variety of circumstances including their lack of knowledge of teaching methods, having big class sizes, types of disability, heavy workloads at school, and finally their preference for special education for children with disabilities. For instance, a primary school teacher who is teaching a child with a physical disability said that:

“It depends on the number of children in the classroom and, most importantly, the nature of the child.” (Participant Phyu)

“Children with severe disabilities should be separated. I don’t know how to teach a child who can’t hear. I don’t know how to teach using sign language, and if they can’t reply to me back and if I can’t teach them to understand, there will be difficulty. Furthermore, teachers are required to instruct all other children without disabilities in accordance with the prescribed curriculum. Then the teacher was so busy with many kinds of reporting, such as writing a daily diary, a register of attendance, a monthly report, etc. For those children with disabilities, teachers need to teach hardly even one lesson. So, they should be taught separately. They

have exams also. Questions can't be the same. Actually, understanding the language of those problems is the main problem for teaching.” (Participant Mya)

Repeatedly, another informant expressed her desire as:

“Intelligence is very important. Otherwise, the kid will feel stressed. If the difference among children is too great, a child can have emotional pain. I can't accept all, especially, intellectual and vision disabilities.” (Participant Yin)

It was discovered that the vast majority of teachers were not devoted to fostering an environment where all students could learn and develop. Because of their inexperience in teaching, they were hesitant to incorporate children with special needs into their classrooms. On top of that, teachers' busy workloads were cited as a reason why they were unable to accommodate students with special needs. Most crucially, they think that special education is the best choice for children with noticeable differences. In addition, there is no difference in teachers' perceived commitment toward implementing inclusive education by age.

Despite the fact the teachers were not committed to inclusion, they are currently teaching children with disabilities in their classrooms, so it is interesting to explore why teachers accepted those children with disabilities in their classrooms. Therefore, teachers were asked, “Could you please share whether your choice to implement inclusive education in your classroom is primarily driven by your acknowledgment of the right to education, or a sense of obligation or a strong sense of responsibility as teachers?”

Only 30% of the participants mentioned that they recognized the right to education for those children with disabilities and they would like to practice inclusive education in their classroom. However, almost half of the interview participants (38%) reported that they accepted children with disabilities because of their strong sense of responsibility as teachers. Teachers felt that they had the responsibility to teach whoever came to their classrooms whether they had a disability or not. For instance,

“After the principal accepted us at our school and a child was enrolled in my classroom, it was my responsibility.” (Participant Phyu)

“He was not in my classroom, but my classroom was located near the stairs. So, other teachers asked me to accept them in my class, and I accepted.” (Participant Phyu)

On the other hand, some of the teachers said that they accepted those children because of their obligation to do so:

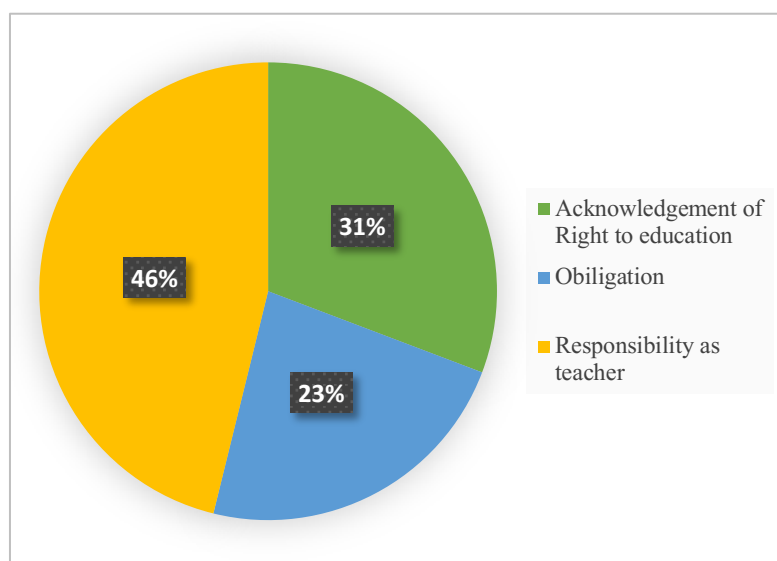
“The child has passed every grade, and I have to accept him. I have to teach the child enrolled in my class; it is my responsibility.” (Participant Mya)

“I don’t know the right to education for children with disabilities, and I accepted a child because a principle told me to.” (Participant Zin)

Taken as a whole, the majority of teachers were not committed to implementing inclusive education in their classrooms, and they welcomed such students primarily due to their role as a teacher and their obligation to do so, rather than as an acknowledgment of the child's right to an education.

Figure 5.15

Why Teachers Commit to Implement Inclusive Education



5.6.1 Relationship Between Teachers' Perception of Competence and their Commitment to IE

This section addresses how teachers' perceptions of their ability or confidence to administer inclusive education affects their commitment to inclusive education. Referring to the previous results, it was found that 23 percent of teachers feel confident and competent to teach children with disabilities in their classrooms together with children without disabilities. Likewise, just 23% of teachers demonstrated commitment to adopting inclusive education in their classrooms. It was reasonable to assume that teachers who perceive themselves as competent in inclusive education are more likely to demonstrate a commitment to its implementation. To confirm this statement, teachers were asked, "Whether your feeling of competence in handling an inclusive classroom influences your willingness to implement IE in the future?"

It was found that most of the teachers reported that if they were more knowledgeable about teaching methods and felt competent, they would be more willing to implement inclusive education. For instance,

"If I know more about the teaching methods, and how to handle inclusive classroom, I will be more willing to accept children with disabilities." (Participant May)

Similarly,

"It is very important. If you don't feel confident to teach children with disabilities, teaching will not be successful. The child can suffer emotional pain. But, if I know how to teach well, I will be more willing to implement inclusive education."

(Participant Hla)

In contrast, very few teachers argued that even if they felt competent to teach all children in the same classroom regardless of their strengths and weaknesses, they would be unwilling to implement inclusive education in the future. Teachers thought that special education was the

best option for children with disabilities regardless of the teacher's ability to implement inclusive education. For example,

"If they were involved, it would be difficult. I would like to give 10 messages, but because of a child with a disability, other children can't get them fully. I am afraid that other children will not get them all. If all are included, the child with a disability will feel stress. When I have to repeat it again and again, the other children will get bored too. And I am thinking about how to teach even a child without a disability right now. I don't think it is a good idea to let a child with a disability study together, it will affect the rest of the children." (Participant Lwin)

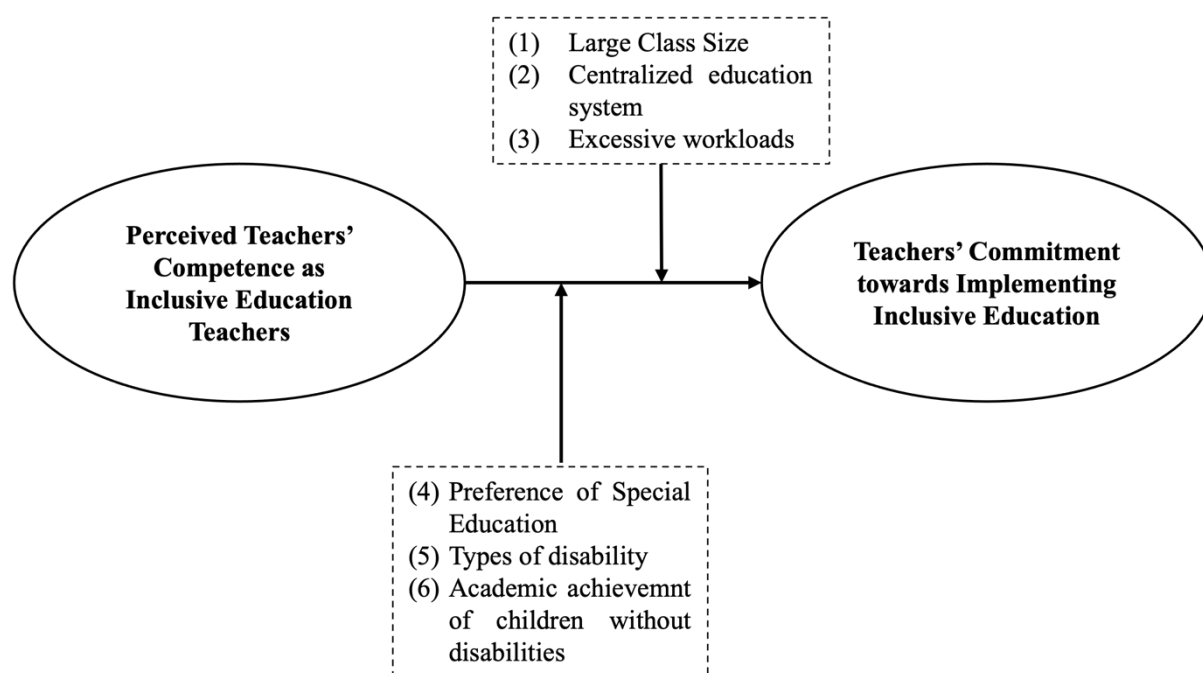
"Even if I know how to teach, the teacher needs to teach all children according to the prescribed curriculum. Then the teacher was so busy with many kinds of reporting, such as writing a daily diary, a register of attendance, a monthly report, etc. For those children with disabilities, teachers need to teach hardly even one lesson. So, they should be taught separately. They have exams also. Questions can't be the same. Actually, understanding the language of those problems is the main problem for teaching." (Participant Mya)

While the majority of teachers asserted the necessity of their feeling of competence or confidence for committing to inclusive education, only a small number of teachers claimed an unwillingness to implement inclusive education. Although teachers' perceptions of their own competence have a substantial impact on their commitment to integrating students with disabilities in the classroom, it appears that few other factors influence their relationship. These include class size, types of disability, a centralized examination system, excessive workloads, the academic achievement of children without disabilities, and, most crucially, their preference for special education.

The following figure illustrates the relationship between teacher competence and commitment, and how their relationship was influenced by other factors.

Figure 5.16

Relationship of Perceived Teacher Competence and Commitment Towards Implementing Inclusive Education



CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study has explored teachers' competence and commitment to implementing inclusive education in Myanmar. A grounded theory-qualitative research design was used. Three sequential coding processes called open, axial, and selective were used to analyze the data collected from in-depth semi-structured interviews. This chapter addresses the rationale behind the expected and unexpected findings of the study based on previous studies and the theoretical background. Further, this chapter discusses implications by drawing on the findings and provides suggestions for implementing a comprehensive inclusive education system. This chapter concludes with a statement of the study's limitations, followed by suggestions for further research.

6.1 Discussion

This study investigates four primary research questions. As noted at the beginning of Chapter 1, the first question was to investigate and provide a framework of core competencies for inclusive education teachers in Myanmar. Second, this study examined teachers' perceptions of their own competence as inclusive education teachers, relative to the framework that was constructed. Third, this study evaluated teachers' commitment to the implementation of inclusive education. Lastly, the study investigated the relationship between teachers' perceived competence and commitment towards implementing inclusive education. The following is a comprehensive discussion of the study's results in light of its stated objectives.

RQ1 - Basic competencies framework of inclusive education teacher: Participants in this study reached a consensus on six core competency domains that are essential for effective inclusive education teachers. Each domain comprises distinct categories of competencies based on knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These domains are (1) awareness of inclusive education; including awareness of inclusive education, knowledge, policies, and knowledge of special

needs and resources, (2) supporting all learners; including awareness of children with disabilities, positive attitudes towards disability, and respect for learners' rights, (3) classroom and behavioral management; including fostering inclusive environment and managing behavioral challenges, (4) using inclusive instruction and techniques; including adapting instructional material and inclusive teaching strategies, (5) cooperation and collaboration; including positive relationship with everyone and working with others, and finally (6) professional ethics; including being life-long learners and promoting awareness of inclusion.

It was found that the provided competency framework mirrors the principles of Bandura (1990), who stated that competence includes cognitive, social, and behavioral skills that must be organized and successfully coordinated to achieve a range of objectives. Therefore, this research adds to the growing body of evidence that confirms the existence of multiple entities of competence, which have previously been identified by researchers (Kunter et al., 2013; Mulder, 2017; White, 1959). In addition, this framework reflects the “profile of inclusive education teachers” developed by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2012), despite a few differences. Valuing learner diversity, working with others, supporting all learners, and personal and professional development are considered essential competencies in European countries, whereas, in this study, these concepts were referred to as awareness of inclusive education, support for all learners, collaboration and cooperation, and professional ethics. Contrary to the European Framework, competencies in instruction and classroom and behavioral management were also included in this research.

One unexpected finding in this study was that teachers revealed “being a role model” as an essential competency for managing behavior in the inclusive classroom, which supports Bandura's social learning theory. Social learning theory is a method known to increase desired behavior in children by observing and imitating the behavior of the models (Bandura, 1977). In this study, participants recognized the importance of teachers' behaviors in managing the

behavioral challenges in the inclusive classroom. However, caution must be exercised since the conclusion may not just reflect teachers' recognition of Bandura's theories, but also their perception of a novel profession that required them to function as role models.

RQ2 - Perceived competence of teachers for implementing inclusive education: This study revealed that most of the teachers (78%) felt less competent to implement inclusive education in their classrooms. Not surprisingly, most of the earlier research in Myanmar also found that teachers lacked proper training for inclusion (Aung & Sakurai, 2022, 2023). The prevalence of such challenges among the world's least developed nations cannot be questioned. For instance, the Global Education Monitoring Report also reported the lack of teachers' readiness for inclusion (UNESCO, 2020). On the other hand, inconsistent findings were reported by Durdukoca (2021), and DeniZ and ILiK (2021) who argued for a moderate degree of professional competence for inclusion. Despite this, the question remains for both educators and policymakers as to why teachers have not been provided adequate preparation for this shift to inclusion.

In addition, despite the recognition that teachers are generally less competent for inclusion, this study explored teachers' perceptions of their competence in the six domains. Concerning the awareness of inclusive education, the study revealed that more than half of teachers were aware of the proper concept and goals of inclusive education, and they identified at least four major types of disability. Nonetheless, not all teachers are knowledgeable about regional and international inclusive policies and legislation. This finding also highlights the lack of understanding about inclusive education, especially in the education sector, for which it is recommended that awareness initiatives be increased. Consistent with this conclusion, a recent survey found that secondary school teachers believed that they needed to learn more about the philosophy and methods of inclusive education and were unfamiliar with the

regulations governing inclusive education (DeniZ & ILiK, 2021). In a similar vein, Abbas and Naz (2016) advocated for a greater number of awareness programs, addressing participants' lack of understanding of inclusive and special education. Werner et al., (2021) echoed the notions of the significance of teachers' inclusive police knowledge. Teachers who were familiar with more inclusive policies exhibited more self-efficacy and more favorable attitudes toward inclusion (Werner et al., 2021).

Concerning supporting all students, first, it was discovered that all teachers believed that knowing the type and nature of the disability and the psychological conditions, attitudes, interests, and learning abilities of their students was crucial for including children with disabilities in the general education classroom. The majority of this information was gathered through close relationships with the student, including parents and former teachers. Secondly, this study found that 92% of teachers showed positive attitudes toward children, even though their attitudes seemed to be influenced by their belief in fate, destiny, and charity. Third, it was discovered that all teachers respect diversity and the right to education and provide equal opportunities for all; however, their approaches to treating students equally were grounded on empathetic attitudes. Based on these three findings, it was concluded that most of the teachers support children with disabilities in the acknowledgment of the right to an education; however, it was based on the aspect of charity and cultural or religious model of disability.

According to the charity model, children with disabilities were viewed as "victims of circumstance who should be pitied," whereas the religious model viewed disability as "a punishment from God for a particular sin" (Retief & Letšosa, 2018). In this study, teachers mentioned the terms "fate," "destiny," "charity," "pity," and "karma," all of which also connect with a cultural paradigm that is generally transmitted from generation to generation based on spiritual beliefs (Johnson et al., 1999). These findings relate directly to earlier studies undertaken in Myanmar (Aung & Sakurai, 2022, 2023). Even if there has been a shift towards

a social model (EDCD, 2015), the charity and cultural models still exist in the setting of Myanmar and have a significant impact on teachers' approaches to and understanding of inclusive education. Therefore, this study explains how ingrained spiritual or cultural values continue to coexist in every community, particularly in Buddhist-belief nations, and offers interesting insights into how a new social model can gain influence over the currently dominant charity and cultural models in Myanmar and perhaps beyond. For instance, in Bhutan, Sakurai (2021) mentioned “how to legitimize a traditional Karmic perspective” as one of the challenges for inclusive practices (p.301).

Turning now to the teachers' perceived competence in classroom and behavioral management, it was found that 85% of teachers identified the needs of the children and fostered an inclusive environment. Teachers created learning environments conducive for all children to study together by promoting membership among children and using positive reinforcement, which were also approaches mentioned by Soodak (2003). A similar finding was reported by Abb and Rashid (2020) who indicated that more than half of the teachers in Nigeria had skills in creating conducive learning environments or motivating children to be self-motivated learners. In addition to classroom management, this study found that the teachers' behavior control tactics depended more on moral and civic values, as well as Buddhist teachings, and less on the right to education. It is similar to the idea of Schuelka (2015) who noted the role of religious influence on the perception and practice of inclusion. On the other hand, Majoko (2019) proposed that teachers should use diverse behavioral and psychodynamic strategies and approaches, create an environment friendly to individual needs, and evaluate the impact of behavioral management strategies. It may be argued that inclusive education teachers in Myanmar modified the classroom environment and addressed behavioral issues, despite obtaining technical training for inclusion, which may have resulted in the utilization of traditional moral, civic, and Buddhist teaching to promote inclusivity.

This study also revealed that teachers found it extremely challenging to adapt the curriculum and provide individualized instruction based on students' needs. However, none of the teachers has received training in inclusive education. Previous studies also reported that teachers were not skillful in providing inclusive instruction in the inclusive classroom (Das, 2013; Marin, 2014; Rabi & Zulkefli, 2018). For instance, Marin (2014) reported that most teachers have never heard of or used instructional strategies designed specifically for inclusive education and they are not confident about their adoption. Similarly, this study also found that teachers had never heard of differentiated instruction, individualized education plans, and universal design learning, which are the most common strategies for inclusion. An inconsistent finding was reported by Durdokoca (2021), who found that most of the in-service teachers from Turkey perceived themselves as competent for inclusion, especially in using different teaching methods, but not in diagnosis and assessment. Nonetheless, this study found that teachers tried their best to teach children with disabilities in their classrooms. Some of the teachers reported the use of cooperative learning or discussions and provided additional teaching during their free time. Teachers ensured that all learning materials were accessible to all by using gestures, readable fonts, and pictures. No one reported using advanced ICT or adaptive technology for this purpose.

Regarding cooperation and collaboration, it was discovered that all teachers collaborated with parents, teachers, principals, and children without disabilities in the same class to support children with disabilities in the classroom. This conclusion is consistent with the rationale of several other studies, which emphasized the significance of cooperation with everyone in the inclusive classroom for the development and achievement of children with disabilities (Ariani et al., 2019; Deng et al., 2017; Hamill et al., 1999; Şahan, 2021; Serbia et al., 2020). On the other hand, this study reported that none of the teachers worked together with special education teachers or organizations. This finding is consistent with previous studies in

Myanmar that reported a lack of cooperation between special schools and regular schools (Tonegawa, 2022). However, this is in contradiction with previous studies arguing the importance of collaboration with special education professionals (Alghazo & Alkhazaleh, 2021; Al-Natour et al., 2015; Khan et al., 2017; Mofield, 2020; Razalli et al., 2020).

Finally, it is interesting to note that half of the teachers were not willing to participate in training for teaching children with disabilities in their inclusive classrooms, while other teachers were strongly committed to their professional development. Participants reasoned that the newly updated curriculum greatly increased their workload and required attendance at many training sessions. They have to study extensively prior to the lesson, as the updated curriculum is quite challenging. However, these factors indicate that teachers are not intrinsically motivated to acquire new knowledge due to their heavy workloads and limited free time. But this may also be due to teachers' skepticism about the benefits of inclusive education. This finding is in line with the notions of the Expectancy-value theory proposed by Eccles et al. (1983), which states that an individual's motivation for a certain conduct is dependent on his or her anticipation of positive outcomes and the value of the behavior itself (Wigfield & Cambria, 2010). The results of this study support the ideas presented by Eccles et al., such that teachers' negative perceptions of their own competence and the importance they place on the advantages of inclusive education affected their desire to participate in professional development concerning inclusive education. As a result, this research calls attention to stakeholders, legislators, and professional development providers to increase teachers' motivation for professional development by increasing their understanding of inclusive objectives and addressing barriers to participation.

RQ3 - Teachers' commitment towards implementing inclusive education: According to the results of this survey, the vast majority of teachers are not convinced of the concept of inclusive education and would rather not include disabled children in their classrooms. Their lack of

commitment towards inclusive education results from several challenges, including their lack of knowledge of teaching methods, large class sizes, the different types of disability, their heavy workload at school, and finally their preferences for special education. These problems mirrored prior findings in the context of Myanmar (Aung & Sakurai, 2022). It is understandable that recent curriculum modifications have strained teachers, requiring them to commit a great deal of time and effort to study the new curriculum. Nevertheless, it is evident that teachers are not committed to implementing inclusive education in their future classrooms. It is consistent with the findings of a study conducted in the western United States, which found that primary school teachers exhibited a low level of commitment, ambiguity, and unfavorable attitudes toward the implementation of inclusive education and were unaware of or opposed to the benefits of inclusion (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003). This study also reported similar ideas that some of the teachers believed that special education is the best choice for children with disabilities.

Despite teachers' lack of commitment to inclusive education, students with disabilities were nonetheless taught in general classrooms. This study further discovered that teachers were committed to implementing inclusive education because of their strong sense of responsibility as teachers and their obligation to teach students assigned to their care, and not because of their acknowledgment of the right to education. This conclusion may be reasoned on the basis that teachers were habituated with the idea that a “teacher has obligation to welcome all students who are coming to school” and unconsciously conflating this with the “right to education.” Further, Singaja Sayadaw's "Duties of Teachers," which has been used as a manual for teachers ever since its early days in Myanmar, explicitly states that teachers must not discriminate among children on the basis of personality, intelligence, or background (Mon, n.d.). This deeply-held belief in the social-cultural setting of Myanmar may affect their view of commitment to teaching children with disabilities.

RQ4 - Relationship between teachers' competence and commitment towards IE: This study found that 23% of teachers feel competent and confident as inclusive education teachers, while 23% of teachers also showed commitment towards implementing inclusive education in their classrooms. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that teachers who feel confident and competent are more likely to commit to the implementation of inclusive education. This finding resonates with the previous studies which argued that teacher competence had a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment (Everwijn et al., 1990; González et al., 2018; Siri et al., 2020; Suantara et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021). However, caution must be applied, as the finding was drawn based on a small sample size. Even though this conclusion must be taken with caution, it was supported by self-determination theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan, and Self-efficacy theory by Bandura. SDT asserted that satisfaction of innate psychological needs, such as competence, relatedness, and autonomy, could lead to an individual's optimal functioning (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2004), whereas Bandura affirmed that an individual's level of self-efficacy significantly influences the amount of effort they will exert and the length of time they will persist in the face of obstacles and negative experiences (Bandura, 1997). This study supports the idea that teachers who feel competent as inclusive education teachers would commit to implementing inclusive education regardless of the problems they may face. On the other hand, few teachers argued that their feeling of competence as inclusive education teachers does not influence their commitment toward implementing it. Other factors such as class size, type of disability, a centralized examination system, excessive workloads, the academic achievements of children with disabilities, and their personal preferences for special education inhibit their commitment towards inclusive education.

6.2 Conclusion

The study proposed a competency framework for inclusive education teachers consisting of six domains grounded on knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These competencies are (1) awareness of inclusive education, (2) supporting all learners, (3) classroom and behavioral management, (4) inclusive instruction and techniques, (5) cooperation and collaboration, and (6) professional ethics (See fig 6.1). This study also found that most of the teachers (78%) felt less competent in including children with disabilities in their classrooms. Teachers mentioned that their willingness to include these students depended on the type and level of disability of the child. In addition, teachers felt that they still lacked knowledge of teaching methods for children with special needs. They also felt that the school and education system were still less inclusive as a result of large class sizes and the centralized examination system.

This study also investigated how teachers perceived their competence in each domain of the competency framework developed in this study. First, more than half of teachers recognized the goals and concept of inclusive education; however, no one was aware of the regional and international policies and regulations concerning inclusive education. Secondly, most of the teachers possessed knowledge about their students, showed positive attitudes towards disability, and supported children in acknowledgment of their right to education. However, their support is based more on the charity and religious models of inclusion rather than a rights-based model. Third, 85% of teachers identified the needs of their students and provided conducive learning environments for all children. They also used collaborative learning and positive behavioral management, including praising, to encourage desirable behavioral outcomes. However, it was found that teachers mostly applied moral and civic education and Buddhist teachings to manage behavioral challenges in the inclusive classroom.

Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers still need knowledge and skills for managing classroom and behavioral challenges in the inclusive classroom.

Fourth, regarding inclusive instruction and techniques, all teachers found it very challenging to adapt the curriculum and provide individualized instruction based on the learning needs of individual students. However, teachers used cooperative learning or discussion and provided additional teaching. They also used gestures, readable fonts, and pictures to make learning more conducive. However, it was notable that teachers were not knowledgeable and skillful in using individualized lesson plans, differentiated instruction, and universal design learning, which are common strategies for inclusion, nor did they use adaptive technology or advanced technology for inclusion. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers were practicing inclusion with the available resources and knowledge they had in hand, but still lacked special instruction and techniques for a more successful inclusive classroom.

Fifth, it was found that all teachers cooperated with parents, colleagues, principals, and children without disabilities to better understand children with disabilities and better support their achievement in the inclusive classroom. However, there was no cooperation with special education teachers or schools and other non-government organizations. Finally, it was found that all teachers promoted awareness of inclusive education among their colleagues and children to promote inclusion. However, it was interesting to note that only half of the teachers were willing to participate in professional development training for inclusion, despite their lack of knowledge and skills.

With respect to their commitment to inclusive education, most of the teachers were not willing to implement inclusive education in their classrooms, and some of the teachers were doubtful about the benefits of inclusive education. In addition, this study further found that teachers included children with disabilities in their classrooms because of their strong sense of responsibility as teachers and their obligation to do so, not because of their acknowledgment

of the right to education for all children. This study also showed that there is a relationship between teachers' perception of competence and their commitment toward inclusive education, even though there are some factors influencing this relationship. Large class sizes, different types of disability, a centralized education system, excessive workloads, concerns about the academic achievement of children without disabilities, and their doubts about the benefits of inclusive education greatly influence teachers' commitment to inclusive education, even when they feel competent to do so.

Overall, it can be concluded that most teachers showed positive and supportive attitudes toward children with disabilities; however, they still lack knowledge and skills in classroom and behavior management, inclusive instruction, and techniques. Their way of providing inclusion is mainly influenced by their social-cultural belief in the merit of supporting needy persons, which corresponds to the charity model of inclusion. Teachers' cooperation and collaboration boundaries are still very limited and need to be expanded. Even though earlier studies reported the need for professional development for inclusion, not all teachers were willing to participate owing to their heavy workloads and busy schedules. As a result, teachers were not fully committed to inclusive education. In addition, this study found that the more teachers perceived themselves to be competent for inclusion, the more willing they were to commit to implementing inclusive education. However, other factors also affect this relationship.

6.3 Implications

The findings from this study have significant practical implications. One of the applications is related to the use of the proposed competency framework. The framework was developed based on the opinions of inclusive education teachers and trainers who were involved in its implementation. Therefore, it provides a guideline for developing future

inclusive competency frameworks nationwide in Myanmar and perhaps beyond. It calls attention to the policymakers, educators, and stakeholders of the need for a competency framework to accompany the transition to inclusivity. In addition, its implications extend to teacher education programs. For instance, this study highlighted a lack of awareness among teachers of inclusive education, classroom and behavioral management, and inclusive instruction and techniques, which will require re-evaluating existing pre-service and in-service teacher training programs. In that case, the provided framework can be used in preparing the curriculum and course guidelines for teacher education programs and other professional development training opportunities, to provide teachers with the necessary competencies to excel in the inclusive and diversified classroom.

In addition, it is useful for teachers to do self-reflection on the effectiveness of teaching in the inclusive classroom and to be able to identify their own weaknesses and areas for improvement. The teachers can assess their performance as outlined in the framework. This study helps to compensate for the dearth of research on competencies for inclusive education and provokes future researchers by highlighting the need for context-related competency frameworks during this inclusive transition. It also highlights the current lack of teacher competence, lack of awareness of inclusive policies and regulations, and doubts concerning the benefits of inclusion, urgently calling for the stakeholders and educators to improve their awareness-raising programs, and to deliver the practices of inclusion more effectively. This study also revealed that cultural and charity models coexist and have a substantial impact on teachers' perceptions of the inclusion of children with disabilities. Teachers still viewed inclusion as a charitable act and mostly used Buddhist teachings to address behavioral challenges in the classroom. To address these concerns immediately, a rights-based approach should be embraced, and workshops, seminars, and training programs should be provided. Sharing success stories of inclusive education by principals would also provide inspiration.

This study also found that teachers were not willing to participate in professional development for inclusive education, suggesting that principals, education officers, and other stakeholders should focus on improving teachers' willingness to participate in professional development by understanding their concerns and motivating them with incentives, as well as by fostering a school culture of learning and respecting their autonomy.

This study also contributes to the theoretical understanding of the relationship between competence and commitment, as outlined by the self-determination theory and self-efficacy theory. This study demonstrated that teachers who perceived themselves as competent for inclusion were more willing to commit to the implementation of inclusive education in the future. However, this study expands on the relationship between competence and commitment by identifying some of the key aspects that influence their relationship.

In short, this study has significant implications for combating discrimination and moving towards an inclusive society in Myanmar and beyond. This study addressed one of the basic challenges for achieving “zero discrimination” in education by developing the basic competencies of inclusive education teachers, which will help nurture knowledgeable and skillful teachers. Policymakers, educationalists, teachers, teacher educators, curriculum developers, parents, and children will all benefit from this study. This study also sheds light on the importance of improving teachers’ perceived competence in their commitment to implementing inclusive education. Therefore, this study provides a reference for developing a nationwide inclusive education teacher competency framework and contributes to the ultimate goal of education, “Education for All” in Myanmar and beyond.

6.4 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Study

Although this study provides a deeper understanding of teachers’ competence and commitment toward inclusive education, there are some limitations. First, the generalizability

of these results should be considered with caution. For instance, as all the data used in this study were from only one region of Myanmar, there is a possibility that the samples did not capture the wider population. Further studies using large sample sizes are strongly recommended.

Second, another limitation of this study was the exclusion of the ideas of other stakeholders including parents, teachers, principals, teacher educators, and children. Thus, to increase the generalizability of the findings, especially in developing a competency framework, future research including different stakeholders should be conducted. Future studies would benefit from updating and validating the existing competency framework, which will increase the reliability and validity of the framework to increase its applicability.

Third, even though this study addressed the weaknesses of the online interview, it is still possible that there could be some missing non-verbal cues that could provide additional insight into their responses. Therefore, future studies should be undertaken using face-to-face interviews with participants to obtain more authentic responses.

Fourth, while qualitative research enables the researcher to provide a deep understanding of the problem under study, the interview used in this study did not offer a general understanding of the study. For instance, this study did not provide a general insight into teacher competence and commitment. The use of the interview method prevents validation from different aspects of the suggested competency framework. Further study using both qualitative and quantitative methods, such as classroom observations, and surveys, would be useful to give more authentic and contextually rich data in detail.

Finally, although this study showed the relationship between teacher competence and commitment towards inclusive education based on the self-efficacy and self-determination theory, whether a teacher's competence predicts the teacher's commitment towards inclusive education was not yet addressed. According to the self-efficacy and self-determination theories,

perceived competence is a likely predictor of commitment behavior, but further study is needed to investigate the impact of teachers' competence on their commitment, as well as factors that mediate their relationship in inclusive settings.

To conclude, as the world's education systems become more inclusive and diverse, more stakeholders, policymakers, educationalists, and practitioners will need to have articulated qualifications for teachers that reflect this shift. Students and the school system as a whole would benefit from having teachers who are well-qualified and dedicated to achieving educational goals. Findings from this study also highlighted the importance of having a context-related competency framework for teachers in the inclusive movement and called for the attention of other stakeholders, policymakers, and researchers in different countries to develop national competency frameworks for inclusive teachers. Therefore, each country should specify how to train more qualified teachers and to achieve better outcomes of the "no one left behind" strategy to ensure committed pledges towards worldwide societies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Projects working on CWDs by ECDC



Myanmar Information Management Unit

Disability and Education Projects in Myanmar (People with Disabilities Only)



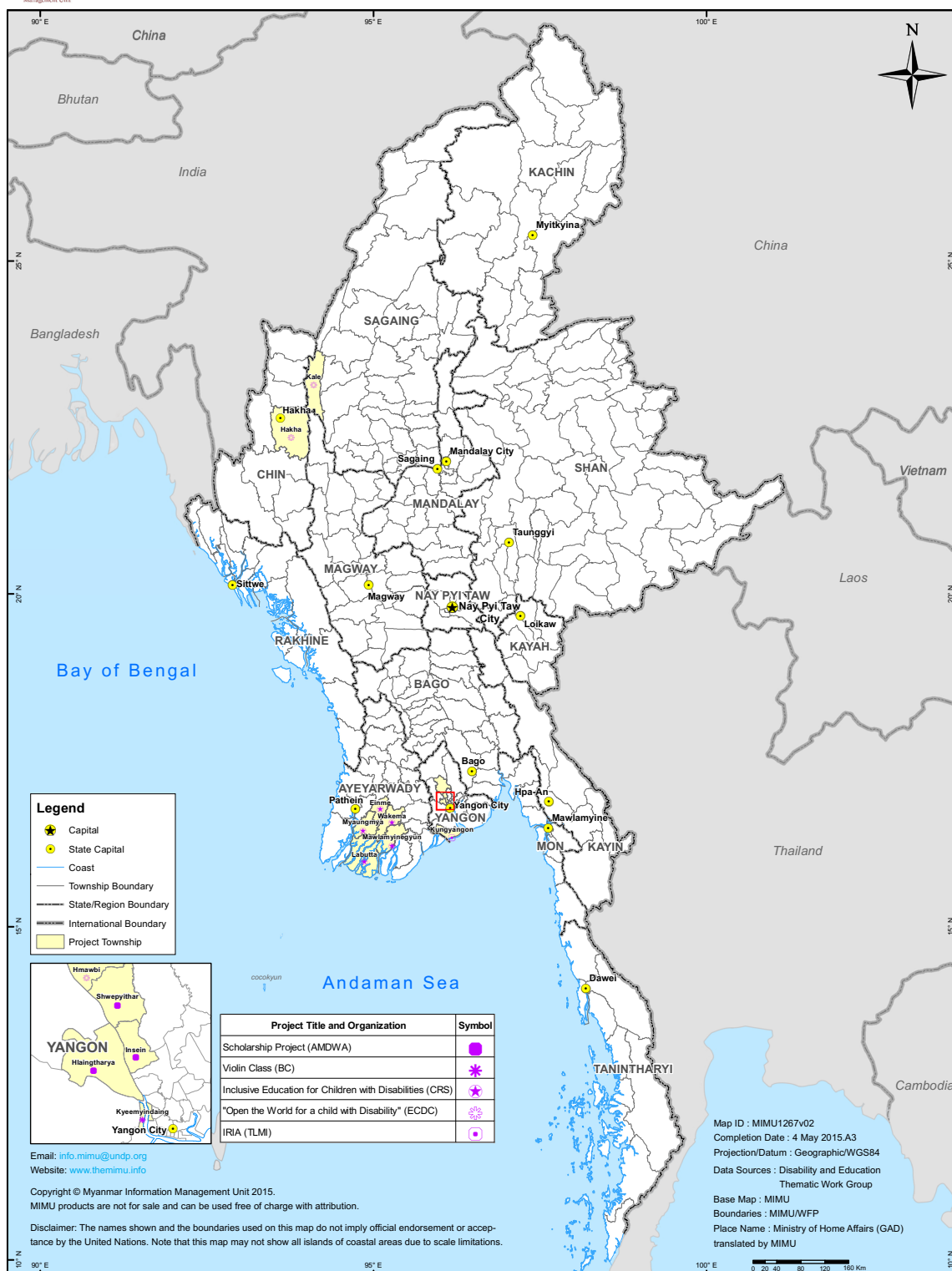
Government
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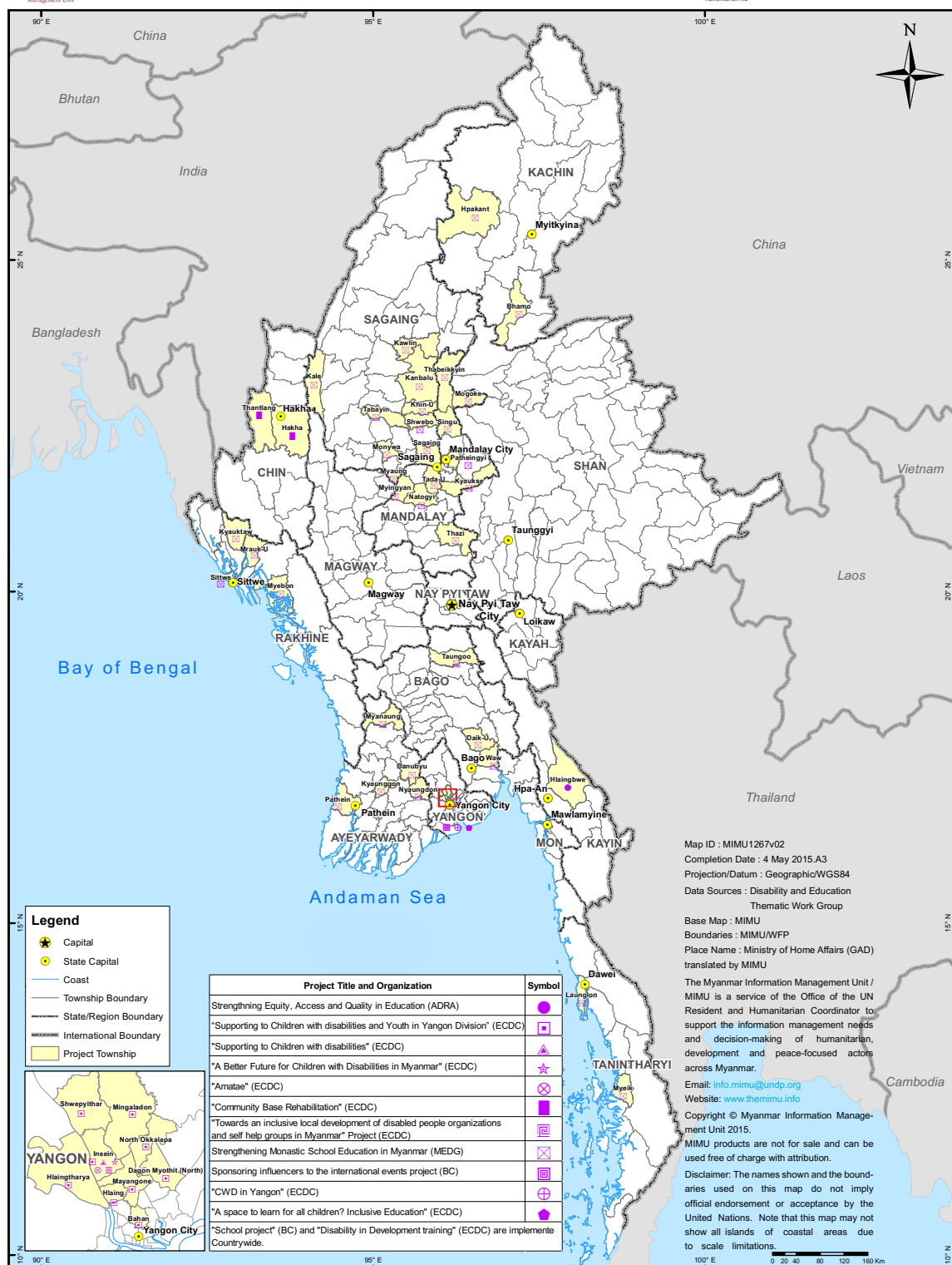


Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Embassy of Switzerland in Myanmar



Disability and Education Projects in Myanmar (All People including People with Disabilities)



The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Ministry of Education



Year 1 Semester 2

EDU1201
Educational Studies

Student Teacher Textbook

9.3. Inclusive Education

In this sub-unit of eight periods, you will focus on developing classroom practice that involves all learners. This means that all students are involved in the lesson, whatever their gender, ethnicity, attainment and disabilities. You will also explore how peace education can help students to flourish. You will develop your understanding of this topic by reading some theory and research findings, and compare and contrast it with your own experiences. You will then also apply these ideas to first adapt a lesson plan, then write a lesson plan that will incorporate what you have learnt and involve all learners. You will present these ideas in a group to the whole class and learn to peer-assess the presentations from others.

9.3.1. Inclusive education in the classroom

Expected learning outcomes

By the end of the lesson, you will be able to:

- Define inclusive education;
- Identify examples of inclusive education during classroom observations or in lesson plans and explain how it is an example of inclusive education.



Inclusive education³¹

What does it mean to 'involve all'?

The classroom is a reflection of the diversity in culture of our society. Students come from a diverse aware of backgrounds. We cannot ignore these differences. Instead, we should celebrate them. These differences become a vehicle to move beyond our experiences to learn more about each other and the world. All students have the right to an education and the opportunity to learn regardless of status, ability and background. This is recognised in the international rights of the child.

³¹ Source: TESS-India, *Key resources*

Schools and teachers have a very important role in this respect. We all have prejudices and views about other that we may not have recognised or addressed – we sometimes divide the world into ‘us’ and ‘them’ and make assumptions about each of these groups. However, as a teacher, it is your responsibility to recognise each of your students as an individual with their own unique abilities and characteristics. Whether knowingly or not, your underlying assumptions and views will affect how equally your students learn. By considering all students as individuals and not attaching assumptions based on their group, you can take steps to guard against unequal treatment of your students.

Here are three key principles to ensure you involve all in learning:

1. **Noticing:** Observant teachers should be able to notice when a student is: doing well, struggling, able to relate well to others or not. You may witness changes within your students that may reflect deeper issues. Being equitable requires that you are able to notice your students actively and intentionally; particularly to students who may feel marginalized or unable to participate.
2. **Focus on self-esteem:** Teachers should build self-confidence in their students. Students who have healthy self-esteem know their own strengths and weaknesses. They are able to form positive relationships with others; regardless of background. They are able to understand and display mutual respect. Teachers are prominent figures who have great opportunity and weight to build a student’s self-esteem.
3. **Flexibility:** Teachers have to be adaptable. There may be many instances where a particular activity or lesson plan is not working for the classroom, for a specific student, or for specific groups. Being flexible enables teachers to be able to accommodate and adjust for student’s needs.

Use the following approaches to help uphold the three principles of inclusive teaching:

- **Model good behaviour:** Students will look to you for guidance. As one of the central adult figures in their lives you hold a large degree of influence. Students will mirror your behaviour. Be an example to your students – treat all of your students with respect and value all of them equally. Demonstrate that everyone, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, or class, should be treated with respect.
- **Set High Expectations:** Students are ever-growing and ever-changing. All of them will have an opportunity to learn and succeed in their classes. Regardless of whether

a student seems to be struggling to understand a certain class, do not assume that they will never be able to understand. Do not lower your expectations, as this will discourage your students from striving for better. Setting high expectations for all your students - academics and behaviour wise - will ensure that students are aware of what is expected from them and encourage them to persevere.

- **Bring variety to the classroom:** There is no one fits all solution to teaching a particular subject to students. Everyone has a different learning style – kinaesthetic, visual, aural, physical etc. bring variety to your teaching methods within class and offer students the choice to decide what learning activities would best suit their learning style.
- **Relate lessons to everyday life:** Students can disengage from class if what they are learning seems too abstract or is not relevant to their reality. You can address this by connecting what students are learning to their lived experience their local context, and your own experience.
- **Be mindful of language:** Words are incredibly powerful. They carry a lot of weight and can leave lasting impressions on people. They carry a lot of weight and can leave lasting impressions on people. Be thoughtful of what language you use in front of your students. Use positive and affirming language towards your students. Do not ridicule or tear your students down with comments such as “you’re annoying me today.” Rather, be solution oriented and use phrases such as “your behaviour seems off today and is a distraction for me. Is there any reason why you are finding it hard to concentrate today?”
- **Challenge stereotypes and bias:** Challenge your student’s learned stereotypes and biases associated with people in regards to race, ethnicity, gender. Find and use resources that challenge traditional images or stereotypes of people, communities and countries. For example: show that both boys and girls can be business people.
- **Create a safe, welcoming learning environment:** All students need to feel safe and welcome at school. You are in a position to make your students feel welcome by encouraging mutually respectful and friendly behaviour from everyone. Think about how the school and classroom might appear and feel like to different students. Think about where they should be asked to sit, and make sure that any students with visual or hearing impairments or physical disabilities sit where they can access the lesson. Check that those who are shy or easily distracted are where you can easily

include them.

Specific teaching approaches

The following are specific approaches to use to promote inclusivity at different points of your teaching:

- **Questioning:** You may find in your classroom that the same students will raise their hands to answer your questions. It is important that you involve other students seem to be less likely to answer questions in class so that all students get a chance to engage with you and the material. You can direct questions to specific students, specifically asking students who are less engaged. Provide students with some “thinking time” before inviting contributions from specific students. Ask students to pair up or get into groups to build their confidence to participate in larger class discussions.
- **Assessment:** Assessment can provide you an opportunity to get to know your students better. Develop a range of methods of formative assessment that will allow you to better understand each student’s unique strengths and areas for improvement. Formative assessment will give you accurate information rather than assumptions that are drawn from a generalized view of certain students who you may not know as well. Understanding each individual’s strength and weakness will put you in a good position to respond to their individual needs.
- **Group work and pair work:** When considering how to divide your class in groups or take pairs, take into account that the goal of any class should be to include everyone and encourage students to value one another. Be mindful of your classroom dynamics – you can pair a more confident student with a quieter student so that both can encourage each other to speak up and be reflective. You can pair two quieter students together so that they are able to challenge each other to speak up more.
- **Differentiation:** Provide a variety of ways that students can complete a particular task. Different students will have different needs, wants, and styles. Offering students flexibility as to how they can complete the task they are faced with can allow them to take ownership of how to complete the task and take responsibility for their own learning. For example, when asking students to plan for a group presentation, allow them to present in different modes. Students could present an oral presentation, or a colourful poster, or a skit. This allows students to be creative with what

they are learning.



Assessment

- List three reasons why a teacher should address inclusive education issues in the classroom.
- Describe three teaching approaches a teacher could use to ensure the classroom is inclusive for all.

Self-study

UNESCO's International Bureau for Education lists indicators from international research that are associated with movement towards greater inclusion in classrooms.³²

The lesson inclusion indicators are as follows:

1. Teaching is planned with all students in mind.
2. Lessons encourage the participation of all students.
3. Students are actively involved in their own learning.
4. Students are encouraged to support one another's learning.
5. Support is provided when students experience difficulties.
6. Classroom discipline is based on mutual respect and healthy living.
7. Students feel that they have somebody to speak to when they are worried or upset.
8. Assessment contributes to the achievement of all students.

Think back to a lesson you recently attended or taught yourself. Choose one indicator listed above and analyse the lesson. What could be done to make the lesson more inclusive?

³² UNESCO IBE: *Reaching Out to All Learners: A Resource Pack for Supporting Inclusive Education* (2016). http://www.ibe.unesco.org/sites/default/files/resources/ibe-crp-inclusiveeducation-2016_eng.pdf

9.3.2. Special education

Expected learning outcomes

By the end of the lesson, you will be able to:

- Define special education; and
- Identify examples of special education during classroom observations or in lesson plans and explain how it is an example of special education.

Special education

Special education refers to education provision for students who have special educational needs. Special Educational Needs (SEN) students have some specific challenges that those without SEN do not face. It does not mean they are not smart, talented or capable. Having special educational needs can be permanent but also temporarily. Teachers have the responsibility to help SEN students overcome the barriers they have to participate fully in the learning process.

There are several conditions that can lead to students needing special care in their education:^{33, 34}

- Physical conditions: for example, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, chronic asthma, epilepsy and pregnancy;
- Developmental conditions: for example, Down's syndrome, autism, dyslexia, processing disorders, dyspraxia and autistic spectrum;
- Behavioural/ emotional conditions: for example, attention deficit disorder/ hyperactivity, bi-polar, oppositional defiance disorder, and so on;
- Sensory conditions: for example, blindness, visually impaired, deaf and limited hearing; and
- Social conditions and circumstances: for example, poverty, abuse, trauma, bereavement, migration and English as an additional language (EAL).

³³ Turnbull, A. P. (1995). *Exceptional lives: Special education in today's schools*. Tappan, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

³⁴ Finesilver, C., & Rodd, M. (2016). 11 Working mathematically with students with special educational needs. *Learning to Teach Mathematics in the Secondary School: A Companion to School Experience*, 208.

9.3.3.

Planning for inclusive education

Expected learning outcomes



By the end of the lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand and discuss inclusive education and special education;
- Discuss factors that can exclude students and propose strategies for active participation and equal opportunities for students to learn while in school; and
- Discuss strategies for adopting learning to fit with an inclusive classroom.

In this lesson, you will work in groups. You will be asked to plan a lesson for a certain topic and age group, incorporating ideas to make it inclusive for all. Each group will present their plans to the whole class. You will assess your peers and your peers will assess you.

Peer-assessment

Students can get more involved in understanding how to guide their own learning through using peer assessment. Peer assessment is not about asking the students to “do the marking”, which is the teacher’s job. Peer assessment is about helping students understand such things as examination criteria, for example, why they have to set out their working, or what makes a good poster describing how to use the inverse of addition to work out a subtraction problem. Peer assessment is done by asking the students to assess an answer or a poster produced by someone else, using criteria set out by the teacher. In peer assessment, it is not the students’ job to give a grade but to give helpful feedback to the other student(s) and to think really about how to meet the criteria so that they can apply that knowledge in their own work. Research by Black et al. found that being involved in informal peer assessment can help students become more accurate in their own self-assessment.³⁵

³⁵ Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & William, D. (2003). *Assessment for Learning: Putting it into Practice*. Maidenhead UK: Open University Press.

To expand on each of these conditions, and the educational needs they entail, is beyond the scope of this lesson. A good approach is to investigate this further when you have a student with specific special needs in your class, for example, by doing a search on the internet. You might also want to refer to lesson 8.5.2 as the basis of learning.

Bear in mind that even two students with the same diagnosis might not have much in common in terms of the educational support they need. Sometimes it will not be obvious what the special educational need is and an unmet need may present as a behavioural issue. For example, students with limited hearing who are having trouble listening to a teacher may react by being easily distracted and creating distractions in the classroom. There is no single solution, which works for all.

However, to help you prepare to teach students with SEN in general, consider the following good teaching practice steps:

- Try a range of different teaching strategies and learn what helps and what does not by observing student responses.
- Watch and listen to all your students, but for those with SEN take a particular interest (and they will be interesting to teach!).
- Learn what individuals do well and not-so-well from what they say, do, write, draw or communicate.
- Keep an eye out for signs of progress or new achievements, the tiny steps as well as giant leaps, and celebrate them.
- Appreciate and enjoy the diversity of the 21st century classroom.



Assessment

- Explain in three sentences what special education entails.
- Explain why special education could be beneficial in the context you will be teaching.

Self-study

What do you think will be some the barriers for you to implement ideas of special education? What can help you overcome these?



Assessment

Explain why doing peer assessment is part of the professional role of a teacher. Refer to the Myanmar Teacher Competency Standard Framework (TCSF) to help you with this question.

Self-study

Think back to the last presentation of another student you attended. In what way could peer assessment have helped you and the student who was presenting to progress in learning?



Review questions

1. What is the skill of 'noticing' and why is it useful?
2. How can you prepare to teach SEN students in general?
3. What is the purpose of peer-assessment?

Appendix C: Competencies of Inclusive Education Teachers in Previous Studies

Authors	Country	Competencies
European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2012)	(25/44)Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Demark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switherland, United Kingdom.	(1) Valuing Learner Diversity (2) Working with others (3) Supporting all Learners (4) Personal Professional Development
Kuyini et al., (2016)	Ghana	1) Identifying special needs, (2) screening and assessment, (3) curriculum materials and instructional modification, (4) use of strategies such as peer tutoring, (5) cooperative learning, (6) collaboration, (7) problem-behavior management
Majoko, (2019)	Zimbabwean	(1) Screening and assessment, (2) differentiation of instruction, (3) classroom and behavior management, (4) collaboration
Abba & Rashid, (2020)	Nigeria	Methodological, (2) motivational, (3) material utilization, (4) instructional process, and (5) teaching evaluation competence.
DeniZ & İLiK, (2021)	Konya	(1) Teaching Methods and techniques, (2)IEP, (3) Diagnosis and evaluation, (4) Duties and responsibilities, (5) Material development, (6) parent education/cooperation, (7) legal regulation.
Şahan, (2021)	Turkey	(1) Teaching Methods and Techniques, (2) An Individualized Education Program, (3) Diagnosis and Assessment, (4) Task and Responsibilities, (5) Family education and collaboration
Das, (2013)	Delhi (India)	(1) professional knowledge concerning exceptional children (2) classroom climate of acceptance (3) communication with parents, community, and colleagues (4) assessment of students' needs (5) classroom management (6) goal setting (7) resources for classroom learning (8) instructional

Authors	Country	Competencies
		techniques (9) personalized curricula (10) evaluation of student progress.
Jadhav, 2020	Pune (India)	Knowledge, (2) skills, and (3) attitudes
Rabi & Zulkefli, 2018	Perak (Malaysia)	(1) Evaluation and monitoring skills, (2) teaching strategies, (3) classroom management
Deng et al., 2017	China	(1) Teaching and instruction, (2) communication and cooperation, (3) attitudes and beliefs, (4) reflection and development.
Mu et al., 2015	China	(1) Attitudes, (2) knowledge, (3) skill, and (4) Agency
Dingle et al. (2004)	California	Integrity, ethics, and professional judgment, (2) fostering a fair and respectful environment, (3) having positive regard for students, families, and professionals, and (4) having interpersonal skills that are considerate, sensitive, nonjudgmental, supportive, adaptive, and flexible.
Hamill et al. (1999)	Miami & Cincinnati (US)	(1) Cooperation, (2) Flexibility, (3) Ability to adapt instruction, (4) Knowledge of student with disabilities, learning style, alternative assessment, (5) classroom management

Appendix D: Participant Consent Form (In English and in Burmese)

Research Title: Exploring Teachers' Competence and Commitment towards Implementing Inclusive Education in Myanmar

Researcher: Pan Su Aung
Ph.D. Candidate
Graduate School of Humanities and Social Science
Hiroshima University

Dear Participants,

I would like to invite you to participate in research entitled "Exploring Teachers' Competence and Commitment towards Implementing Inclusive Education in Myanmar." One of the aims of this research is to develop a fundamental competencies framework for an inclusive education teacher, and the findings will be valuable for enhancing the teacher education curriculum in order to increase the quality of teachers and ensure that all children receive a quality, equitable education. Therefore, I would like to request special education teachers, inclusive education teachers and professional trainers working in the field of inclusive and special education to participate in this study. I truly respect your experiences and expertise, and I appreciate your cooperation.

Your participation in this study will consist of an interview lasting approximately one hour. You will be asked a series of questions about your opinion regarding the basic competencies of an inclusive education teacher based on your knowledge and experiences. Your participation is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. There is no penalty for discontinuing participation.

For confidentiality, the interview will be recorded; however, your name and face will not be recorded. Your name and identifying information will not be associated with any part of the written report of the research. All of your information and interview responses will be kept confidential. The researcher will not share your individual responses with anyone other than the research supervisor.

You will be paid 20000 kyats for participation in this interview. You will be paid immediately after the interview ends. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at d213224@hiroshima-u.ac.jp.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above information. I am aware that I can discontinue my participation in the study at any time.

Signature _____

Date _____

သုတေသနတွင်ပါဝင်ကြောင်းသဘောတူညီချက်

သုတေသနခေါင်းစဉ် - Exploring Teacher Competence and Commitment Towards Implementing Inclusive Education (လူတိုင်းအကျိုးဝင်ပညာရေးကို အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ရာတွင် ဆရာ/ဆရာမများ၏ တက်ကျွမ်းမှုနှင့် နှစ်မြုပ်ထားမှုတို့ကို ရှာဖွေခြင်း)

သုတေသီ - ပန်ဆုအောင်, Ph.D. Candidate
Graduate School of Humanities and Social Science,
Hiroshima University

မင်္ဂလာပါရှင်

“Exploring Teacher Competence and Commitment Towards Implementing Inclusive Education in Myanmar” ခေါင်းစဉ်ဖြင့် သုတေသနတွင် ပါဝင်ရန် လေးစားစွာ မေတ္တာရပ်ခံခြင်းပါတယ်ရှင်။ ဤသုတေသန ၏ရည်ရွယ်ချက်များထဲမှတစ်ခုသည် လူတိုင်းအကျိုးဝင်ပညာရေးကို အကောင်အထည်ဖော်မည့် ဆရာ/ဆရာမများတွင် ရှိသင့်သည့် အခြေခံတက်ကျွမ်းမှုစံသတ်မှတ်ချက်မူဘောင်ကို (Inclusive Education Teacher Competencies Framework) ရေးစွဲရန်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ သုတေသနရလဒ်များသည် အနာဂတ်ဆရာ/မများ၏ အရည်အသွေးမြှင့်တင်ရန်နှင့် ကျောင်းနေအရွယ်ကလေးများအားလုံး သာတူညီမျှ ပညာရေးရှိရန် ဆောင်ရွက်ရာတွင် အထောက်အကူပြုနိုင်မည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ သို့ဖြစ်ပါ၍ အထူးပညာရေးသင် (special education teachers) ဆရာ/မများ၊ လူတိုင်းအကျိုးဝင်သင် (inclusive education teachers) ဆရာ/မ များ နှင့် အထူးပညာရေးနှင့် လူတိုင်းအကျိုးဝင်ပညာရေးသင်တန်းပို့ချနေသော ပညာရှင်များအား ဤသုတေသနတွင် ပါဝင်ဖြေဆိုပေးရန် လေးစားစွာ မေတ္တာရပ်ခံခြင်းပါတယ်ရှင်။ ဆရာ/မ တစ်ဦးတစ်ယောက်ချင်းစီ၏ အသိပညာဗဟုသုတ အတွေ့အကြုံများကို လေးစားလျက် ပူးပေါင်းဆောင်ရွက်မှုကို အထူးပင် ကျေးဇူးတင်ရှိပါတယ်ရှင်။

သင်သည် တစ်နာရီ နီးပါးကြာမြင့်သော online interview တွင်ပါဝင်ရမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ သင်၏ အတွေ့အကြုံဗဟုသုတများကို အခြေခံ၍ လူတိုင်းအကျိုးဝင်သင်ဆရာ/မများတွင်ရှိသင့်သည်။ တက်ကျွမ်းမှုနှင့် ပတ်သက်သော မေးခွန်းများ

မေးမြန်းသွားမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ သင်၏ ဤသုတေသနတွင်ပါဝင်မှုသည် သင်၏ဆန္ဒအလျောက်ဖြစ်ပြီး အချိန်မရွေး အကြောင်းပြချက်မပေးပဲ နှုတ်ထွက်နိုင်ပါသည်။

Interview ပြုလုပ်နေစဉ် အသံကို မှတ်တမ်းတင်ထားမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ သို့သော် သင်၏အမည်ကိုမှတ်တမ်းတင်မည် မဟုတ်ပါ။ သင်၏အမည်နှင့် အခြားသောသင်၏ အချက်အလက်များကို သုတေသနအစီအရင်ခံစာ၏ မည်သည့်အစိတ်အပိုင်းတွင်မျှ ရေးသားဖော်ပြမည် မဟုတ်ပါ။ သင့်၏အချက်အလက်များအားလုံးနှင့် interview ဖြေဆိုမှုအားလုံးကို လျှို့ဝှက်ထားမည် ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ သုတေသနကျမ်း ကြီးကြပ်သူမှလွဲ၍ အခြားမည်သူနှင့်မျှ မျှဝေမည်မဟုတ်ပါ။

ဤသုတေသနတွင်ပါဝင်သောအားဖြင့် ၂၀၀၀၀ ကျပ် လက်ခံရရှိမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ interview ပြီးဆုံးတာနှင့် တစ်ခါတည်း ရရှိမှာဖြစ်ပါသည်။ ဤသုတေသနနှင့်ပတ်သက်၍ မေးခွန်းများ သိရှိလိုသည်များရှိပါက d213224@hiroshima-u.ac.jp ကို ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါသည်။

အောက်တွင် လက်မှတ်ထိုးခြင်းဖြင့် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့သည် အထက်ဖော်ပြပါ အချက်အလက်များကို ဖတ်ပြီး နားလည်ကြောင်း အသိအမှတ်ပြုပါသည်။ သုတေသနတွင် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့၏ပါဝင်မှုကို အချိန်မရွေး ရပ်တန့်နိုင်သည်ကို သိရှိပါသည်။

လက်မှတ် _____

ရက်စွဲ _____

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Welcome and thank you for your participation today. My name is Pan Su Aung, and I am a graduate student at Hiroshima University conducting my research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Education. The objective of my research is to identify the basic competencies and commitment of teachers to include children with disabilities in general education classroom in Myanmar.

The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. I would like to request your permission to record this interview, so that I may not miss any important information. Your responses will remain confidential. Your participation is completely voluntary. You can withdraw the participation in any time of interview. Your personal information will be anonymous and will not be mentioned in any part of the written report of the research. All of your information and interview responses will be kept confidential.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Personal Background Information

First of all, I would like to ask your personal background information. Could you please tell me your:

- Name, age, position, and department or faculty,
- highest degree obtained, and
- year started working in the current position,
- previous experience of working or teaching children with disabilities.

Core Content

1. Could you tell me the basic knowledge teachers should have for inclusion of children with disabilities in general education classroom?
 - What should teacher know and understand about children to teach children with disabilities in general education classroom? Provide with examples.
 - What should teacher know about inclusive education to implement successful inclusive classroom?

2. What are the basic essential skills that teachers need to possess to successfully include children with disabilities in general education classroom?
 - Could you tell me your opinion about how can inclusive education teacher create safe and supportive learning environment for all children?
 - How can teacher manage the classroom without any conflict among children?
 - As a teacher in an inclusive classroom, what skills should a teacher have to provide effective instruction to all children?
 - As a teacher who will teach in an inclusive classroom, how should the curriculum be adapted? What skills teachers need to do so?
3. Could you tell me any professional beliefs or attitudes that teachers should have for implementing inclusive education?
 - How should teachers perceive of inclusive education?
 - How should teacher behave to students with disabilities in an inclusive classroom?
4. Could you tell me the basic professional ethic that teachers should have for successful implementation of inclusive education?
 - How can teachers improve their profession for inclusion?
 - Do you believe that cooperation and collaboration amongst teachers are still essential for developing successful inclusive classrooms? How? Why? Provide with example.
 - Do you believe that teachers' ability to communicate with others are still essential for developing successful inclusive classrooms? How? Why? Provide with example.
5. Do you think that teachers' ability to reflect on their own emotional experiences is crucial to the success of inclusive classrooms? How? Why? Provide with example.
6. How do you define your own level of competence when it comes to implementing inclusive education in your classroom?
7. Could you please describe your level of commitment when it comes to implementing inclusive education practices in your classroom?
8. Could you please share whether your choice to implement inclusive education in your classroom is primarily driven by your personal desire, a sense of obligation, or a strong sense of responsibility? And give me reason.

9. In your opinions, how do your feeling of competent in handling inclusive classroom influence your willingness to adopt inclusive practices in the future? Why?

Closing

10. What else, if anything, would you like to add that we did not talk about regarding key competencies teachers need to successfully include children with disabilities in regular classrooms?

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Semi-structured Interview Guide

မင်္ဂလာပါရှင်။ ယနေ့သုတေသနမှာ ပါဝင်ဖြေဆိုပေးတဲ့အတွက် အထူးပင် ကျေးဇူးတင်ရှိပါတယ်ရှင်။ ကျွန်မနာမည်ကတော့ မပန်ဆုအောင်ဖြစ်ပါတယ်ရှင်။ ယခု ဂျပန်နိုင်ငံ Hiroshima Universityမှာ International Education Development Program ဖြင့်တက်ရောက်သင်ကြားနေပါပြီး ပါရဂူဘွဲ့ အတွက် သုတေသနပြုလုပ်နေပါတယ်ရှင်။ ယခုသုတေသန၏ ရည်ရွယ်ချက်များထဲမှ တစ်ခုကတော့ (inclusive education) လူတိုင်းအကျုံးဝင်သင်ဆရာ/မများမှာ ရှိသင့်သည့် တက်ကျွမ်းမှု (အသိပညာ၊ ကျွမ်းကျင်မှု၊ သဘောထား) များကို ရှာဖွေဖော်ထုတ်သွားမှာ ဖြစ်ပါတယ်ရှင်။

Interview မှာ ပျမ်းမျှအားဖြင့် တစ်နာရီခန့် ကြာမြင့်မည် ဖြစ်ပါတယ်ရှင်။ interview ပြုလုပ်နေစဉ် အရေးကြီးသော အချက်အလက်များ မလွတ်သွားစေရန် interview အား အသိမ်းထားခွင့် တောင်းဆိုလိုပါတယ်ရှင်။ သင်၏ ဆွေးနွေးချက်များကို လျှို့ဝှက်ထားမည် ဖြစ်ပါတယ်ရှင်။ သင်၏ ကိုယ်ရေးအချက်အလက်များကိုလည်း လျှို့ဝှက်ထားပြီး မည်သည့် သုတေသန၏ အစီရင်ခံစာများမှာ ဖော်ပြသွားမည် မဟုတ်ပါ။

ထို့အပြင် သင်၏ပါဝင်မှုသည် သင်၏ဆန္ဒအလျောက်ဖြစ်ပြီး မည်သည့်အချိန်မဆို interview မှ နှုတ်ထွက်နိုင်ပါသည်။ ပူးပေါင်းဆောင်ရွက်မှုအတွက် ကျေးဇူးတင်ပါတယ်ရှင်။

ကိုယ်ရေးအချက်အလက်

ပထမဆုံးအနေဖြင့် သင်၏ အောက်ပါ ကိုယ်ရေးအချက်အလက်များကို မေးမြန်းချင်ပါတယ်ရှင်

- (၁) နာမည် ၊ အသက်၊ ရာထူး ၊ အလုပ်အဖွဲ့အစည်းနာမည်
- (၂) အမြင့်ဆုံးပညာအရည်အချင်း
- (၃) လက်ရှိနေရာတွင် စတင်လုပ်ကိုင်ခဲ့သောခုနှစ်
- (၄) မသန်စွမ်းကလေးများနှင့် သင်ကြား (သို့) လုပ်ကိုင်ခဲ့ဖူးသော အတွေ့အကြုံ

အကြောင်းအရာ

(၁) မသန်စွမ်းကလေးများကို ပုံမှန်စာသင်ခန်းများတွင် သင်ကြားရာတွင် (inclusive education classroom) ဆရာ/မ တစ်ယောက်မှာ ရှိသင့်သည့် အခြေခံ ဗဟုသုတ အသိပညာများကို သင်သိသမျှ ပြောပြပါ။

- မသန်စွမ်းကလေးများကို ပုံမှန်စာသင်ခန်းများတွင် သင်ကြားရန်အတွက် ဆရာတစ်ယောက်အနေဖြင့် ကလေးနှင့်ပတ်သက်၍ မည်သည်တို့ကို သိရှိနားလည်သင့်သနည်း။ ဥပမာနှင့်တကွ ဖြေဆိုပါ။

- ထိရောက်သော Inclusive classroomကို အကောင်အထည်ဖော်နိုင်ရန် လူတိုင်းအကျိုးဝင်ပညာရေးနဲ့ ပတ်သက်၍ ဆရာတစ်ယောက်အနေဖြင့် မည်သည်တို့ကို သိရှိထားသင့်သနည်း။

(၂) မသန်စွမ်းကလေးများကို ပုံမှန်စာသင်ခန်းများတွင် သင်ကြားရာတွင် (inclusive education classroom) ဆရာ/မ တစ်ယောက်မှာ ရှိသင့်သည့် အခြေခံ တက်ကျွမ်းမှု (skills) များကို ဖော်ပြပါ။

- inclusive classroom မှာသင်ကြားမယ့်ဆရာ/မ တစ်ယောက်အနေဖြင့် ကလေးများအားလုံး လုံခြုံဘေးကင်းပြီး ထိရောက်သော သင်ကြားရေးပတ်ဝန်းကျင်ကို မည်သို့ ဖန်တီးနိုင်သနည်း။ ဥပမာနှင့် ရှင်းပြပါ။
- inclusive classroom မှာသင်ကြားမယ့်ဆရာ/မ တစ်ယောက်အနေဖြင့် ကလေးများကြားမှာ (behavioral problems) ပြဿနာများမရှိဘဲ စာသင်ခန်းကို မည်သို့ စီမံခန့်ခွဲမည်နည်း။ မည်သည့် skills များလိုအပ်ပါသနည်း။
- inclusive classroom မှာသင်ကြားမယ့်ဆရာ/မ တစ်ယောက်အနေဖြင့် ကလေးများအားလုံးအတွက် ထိရောက်သော သင်ကြားမှုကို ဆောင်ရွက်ပေးရန်အတွက် ဆရာတစ်ယောက်တွင် မည်သည့် ကျွမ်းကျင်မှုများ ရှိသင့်သနည်း။
- inclusive classroom မှာသင်ကြားမယ့်ဆရာ/မ တစ်ယောက်အနေဖြင့် သင်ရိုးညွှန်းတမ်းကို မည်သို့ပြုပြင် ပြောင်းလဲသင့်သနည်း။ ထိုသို့ ဆောင်ရွက်ရန် မည်သည့် ကျွမ်းကျင်မှုများ ရှိသင့်သနည်း။

(၃) လူတိုင်းအကျိုးဝင်ပညာရေး အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ရန် အတွက် ဆရာ/မတစ်ယောက်မှာ ရှိသင့်သော ယုံကြည်မှု စိတ်နေသဘောထားများကိုဖော်ပြပါ။

- ဆရာ/မများသည် လူတိုင်းအကျိုးဝင်ပညာရေးအားမည်ကဲ့သို့ သဘောထားသင့်သနည်း။
- Inclusive စာသင်ခန်းထဲတွင် မသန်စွမ်းကျောင်းသား/သူများကို မည်ကဲ့သို့ ပြုမူဆက်ဆံသင့်သနည်း။

(၄) လူတိုင်းအကျိုးဝင်ပညာရေး အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ရန် အတွက် ဆရာ/မတစ်ယောက်မှာ ရှိသင့်သော အခြေခံ လုပ်ငန်းနှင့်ပတ်သက်သော (professional ethics) ကျင့်ဝတ်များကို ဖော်ပြပါ။

- ဆရာ/မများသည် လူတိုင်းအကျိုးဝင်ပညာရေးအားအောင်မြင်စွာ ဆောင်ရွက်နိုင်ရန် မိမိ၏အသက်မွေးဝမ်းကြောင်းကို မည်ကဲ့သို့တိုးတက်အောင်ဆောင်ရွက်သင့်သနည်း။

- ဆရာ/မများအကြား ပူးပေါင်းဆောင်ရွက်မှုသည် ထိရောက်သော inclusive classroom ကို အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ရန် လိုအပ်သည်ဟုထင်ပါသလား။ မည်သို့ လိုအပ်သည်ဟု ထင်ပါသနည်း။ အဘယ့်ကြောင့်နည်း။ ဥပမာဖြင့် ရှင်းပြပါ။
- ထိရောက်သော inclusive classroom ကို အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ရန် ဆရာ/မတစ်ယောက်အနေဖြင့် အများနှင့် ပြောဆိုဆက်ဆံနိုင်သောစွမ်းရည် လိုအပ်သည် ဟုထင်ပါသလား။ မည်သို့ လိုအပ်သည်ဟု ထင်ပါသနည်း။ အဘယ့်ကြောင့်နည်း။ ဥပမာဖြင့် ရှင်းပြပါ။

(၅) ထိရောက်သော inclusive classroom ကို အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ရန် ဆရာ/မတစ်ယောက်၏ မိမိ၏စိတ်ခံစားချက်၊ အတွေ့အကြုံများကို ပြန်လည်တွေးတောဆင်ခြင်နိုင်စွမ်း (emotional expereinces) သည် အရေးကြီးသောဟု သင်ထင်ပါသလား။ မည်သို့ လိုအပ်သည်ဟု ထင်ပါသနည်း။ အဘယ့်ကြောင့်နည်း။ ဥပမာဖြင့် ရှင်းပြပါ။

နိဂုံး

ပုံမှန်စာသင်ခန်းများတွင် မသန်စွမ်းကလေးများကို ပုံမှန်ကလေးများနှင့် အတူတကွသင်ကြားနိုင်ရန် အတွက် (inclusive classroom) ဆရာတစ်ယောက်တွင် ရှိသင့်သည် တက်ကျွမ်းမှုများ (အသိပညာ၊ ကျွမ်းကျင်မှု၊ စိတ်နေသဘောထား) များနှင့် ပတ်သက်၍ သင် အခြားဘာများ ပြောချင်ပါသနည်း။

သင်၏ပူးပေါင်းမှုအတွက် ကျေးဇူးအများကြီးတင်ပါတယ်ရှင်

Appendix F: Follow up Semi-structured Interview Questions

Name :

How do you perceive your own competence to implement inclusive education?

1. Awareness of Inclusive Education

- (a) How do you understand Inclusive Education?
- (b) Do you know any policies or regulations relating to inclusive education in Myanmar or worldwide?
- (c) Do you know types of children with disabilities?
- (d) Do you know the characteristics of children with disabilities?
- (e) Do you know any accessible services for children with disabilities that you can get any help for inclusion?

2. Supporting all learners

- (a) How do you try to know about children and what are important for you to know?
- (b) Do you know developmental milestones of children with respect to ages?
- (c) How do you feel of having children with disabilities in your classroom?
- (d) Do your belief that children with disabilities have also abilities in different ways?**
- (e) How do you respond individual differences in your classroom?**
- (f) Have you ever recognized the barriers that the child can have in your classroom?

3. Classroom and behavioral management

- (a) Do you know any inclusive language for interacting with children with disabilities?
- (b) How do you call a child with disabilities in your classroom?
- (c) Have you ever encouraged children for active participation in your classroom?
- (d) Do you prepare any classroom environment for those children with disability?
- (e) Do you set classroom rules together before the class?

4. Using Inclusive Instruction and techniques

- (a) Do you know how to draw lesson plan in considering of each individual differences?
- (b) Do you know individualized education program?

- (c) Have you ever adapted curriculum for the children?
- (d) What kinds of teaching methods do you used to use your classroom?
- (e) Have you ever used any technology or teaching aids for teaching CWDs in inclusive classroom?

5. Cooperation and collaboration

- (a) Do you have any cooperation with parents and how?
- (b) Do you ever consult with your colleagues about children with disabilities?
- (c) Do you cooperate with your principle for supporting children?
- (d) Have you ever contacted with other organizations (special schools or non-government organization)?
- (e) Have you ever worked together with special education teachers?
- (f) Have you ever asked help for children without disabilities for those children with disabilities?

6. Professional ethics

- (a) Do you want to join any training for your professional development?
- (b) Have you ever promoted inclusive awareness to other people around you?

7. How do you define your own level of competence when it comes to implementing inclusive education in your classroom? 1, 2, 3, 4

Research Question 3

8. Could you please describe your level of commitment when it comes to implementing inclusive education practices in your classroom? 1, 2, 3, 4
9. Could you please share whether your choice to implement inclusive education in your classroom is primarily driven by your personal desire, a sense of obligation, or a strong sense of responsibility? And give me reason.
10. In your opinions, how do your feeling of competent in handling inclusive classroom influence your willingness to adopt inclusive practices in the future? Why.

Appendix G: Research Ethics Clearance Result

Application Number: HR-HUM-001194

審査結果通知書/ Research Ethics Clearance

通知年月日/ Date of notification

2023年8月30日/ August 30, 2023

PAN SU AUNG 殿

広島大学大学院人間社会科学研究科長/ Dean, Graduate School of Humanities and
Social Sciences

小林 信一/ Kobayashi, Shinichi

研究タイトル/ research title

Exploring Teachers' Competence and Commitment towards Implementing Inclusive
Education in Myanmar

申請年月日/ date of application

2023年8月23日/ August 23, 2023

判定結果/ result

承認/ accepted

判定理由又は勧告

別紙参照

Appendix H: Descriptive analysis of Knowledge and perception towards IE of teachers

Characteristics	Knowledge of regional/international laws and policies	Knowledge of different types of disabilities	Right concept of IE	Perception towards IE
Khin	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aung*	✓	✓	✓	✓
Khine	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zaw	X	✓	✓	✓
Tun	✓	✓	✓	✓
Win	X	✓	✓	✓
Htet*	X	✓	✓	✓
Phyu	X	✓	✓	X
Mya	X	✓	✓	✓
Nu	X	✓	✓	X
Hla	X	✓	X	X
Phyo	X	✓	X	✓
Oo	X	X	✓	✓
Su	X	✓	✓	X
Yin	X	✓	X	X
Zin	X	✓	✓	X
Nyo	X	X	✓	X
May	X	X	✓	X
Aye	X	X	X	X
Lwin	X	✓	X	X

သို့

ညွှန်ကြားရေးမှူးချုပ်

အခြေခံပညာဦးစီးဌာန(ရုံးချုပ်)

နေပြည်တော်

ရက်စွဲ၊ ၂၀၂၃ ခုနှစ်၊ ဧပြီလ ၅ ရက်

အကြောင်းအရာ။ သုတေသနစာတမ်းအတွက် အခြေခံပညာကျောင်း(၅)ကျောင်းတွင် ဒေတာ
ကောက်ယူခွင့်ပြုပါရန်တင်ပြခြင်း

၁။ အကြောင်းအရာပါကိစ္စနှင့်စပ်လျဉ်း၍ အခြေခံပညာဦးစီးဌာန(ရုံးချုပ်)၊ နေပြည်တော်တွင် တာဝန်
ထမ်းဆောင်လျက်ရှိသော ကျွန်တော်ဦးစောစတီဗင်(လ/ထညွှန်မှူး)သည် မသန်စွမ်းကလေးများ၏
ပညာရေးအတွက် ဆရာများ၏အခန်းကဏ္ဍနှင့်စပ်လျဉ်းသည့် သုတေသနစာတမ်းအားဖြုရန် အောက်ပါ
အခြေခံပညာကျောင်းများရှိ သင်ကြားရေးဝန်ထမ်း ဆရာ၊ ဆရာမ (၁၅)ဦးခန့်ထံမှ Semi-structured
Interview (online or in-person) နည်းလမ်းဖြင့် qualitative data ဆက်သွယ်ကောက်ယူရန် ပြင်ဆင်
ဆောင်ရွက်လျက်ရှိပါသည်။

(က) အမှတ်(၁) အခြေခံပညာအထက်တန်းကျောင်း၊ အင်းစိန်၊ ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီး

(ခ) အမှတ်(၂) အခြေခံပညာအထက်တန်းကျောင်း၊ အင်းစိန်၊ ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီး

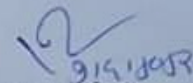
(ဂ) အမှတ်(၉) အခြေခံပညာအလယ်တန်းကျောင်း၊ အင်းစိန်၊ ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီး

(ဃ) အမှတ်(၁၁) အခြေခံပညာအလယ်တန်းကျောင်း၊ အင်းစိန်၊ ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီး

(င) အမှတ်(၅၂) အခြေခံပညာမူလတန်းကျောင်း၊ အင်းစိန်၊ ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီး

၂။ ၂၀၂၃ ခုနှစ်၊ ဧပြီလကုန်ပိုင်း မှစ၍ ဒေတာကောက်ယူမည်ဖြစ်ပါကြောင်း၊ ကောက်ခံရရှိသည့်
data များကို သုတေသနကျင့်ဝတ်နှင့်အညီ ဖော်ပြပါလေ့လာမှုအတွက်သာ အသုံးပြုမည်ဖြစ်ပါကြောင်း
တင်ပြအပ်ပါသည်။

၃။ ခွင့်ပြုနိုင်ပါရန်နှင့်လိုအပ်သည်များအား ပံ့ပိုးလမ်းညွှန်မှုပြုနိုင်ပါရန် တင်ပြအပ်ပါသည်။


စောစတီဗင်

လ/ထညွှန်ကြားရေးမှူး