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Voices Of Inclusion: Parental Awareness and Lived Experiences at Pilipog Elementary School

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of parents rearing neurodivergent kindergarten learners, focusing on parental awareness and inclusive kindergarten education practices Five emergent themes were identified. Synthesizing these themes, subthemes, and formulated meanings, a Theory of Intervened Inclusion surfaced. This theory emphasized that the Theory of Intervened Inclusion is not an automated, systemic process and procedures in adherence to the mandate of inclusive education. Rather, it is a deeply human, teacher-centric intervention tactic where limited knowledge and vocabulary of parents towards inclusion in kindergarten predicated their limited awareness alongside their scarce economic situation. Oftentimes, it is captured in the dire need for presence in school as their neurodivergent children struggled with academics and social belongingness. In turn, kindergarten teachers, driven by empathy and commitment, intervened to ensure that their neurodivergent learners were accorded equal opportunities to learn and provided with the equitable services they rightfully deserve through inclusion in kindergarten education. From this newly developed theory, an output was designed: the Teacher-Parent Inclusive Narrative Communication Log (TP-INCL). To maximize its local relevance and usability for families, this intervention tool is translated into Binisayang Pinulungan as Giya ug Pamalihug. Ultimately, these findings demonstrate that while the classroom provides an accepting foundation, long-term inclusive success requires systematic, localized tools and institutional support to bridge the communication gap between home and school.

KEYWORDS

Inclusive Education, Neurodivergent Kindergarten Learners, Parental Awareness, Lived Experiences, Husserlian Phenomenology,

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1. Introduction

Inclusive education has become an important educational commitment that recognizes the rights, dignity, diversity, and individual learning needs of every child. In early childhood education, inclusion extends beyond providing access to regular classrooms; it involves creating learning environments where children with diverse developmental characteristics can actively participate, develop meaningful relationships, and receive appropriate educational support. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2021) emphasizes that children with disabilities continue to encounter inequalities in educational participation, social acceptance, and access to essential services, highlighting the importance of removing barriers to their development. Similarly, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2021) advocates educational systems grounded in equity, cooperation, inclusion, and shared responsibility. These perspectives establish that meaningful inclusion requires the collective participation of schools, families, and communities. For neurodivergent kindergarten learners, the involvement of parents is especially significant because they possess firsthand knowledge of their children's developmental characteristics, communication preferences, emotional responses, strengths, and support needs. Consequently, understanding parental experiences provides an important foundation for developing inclusive educational practices that respond to the realities of young learners.

Neurodivergent children may demonstrate differences in communication, attention, social interaction, sensory processing, emotional regulation, and approaches to learning. Such differences should not automatically be interpreted as deficiencies but understood within the broader context of individual development and the learning environment. The World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund (2023) emphasize that children with developmental disabilities require coordinated, family-

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centered, and inclusive systems of support that promote their participation, development, and well-being. In addition, Nilfyr and Ewe (2025) highlight the importance of interactions and supportive environments in understanding emotional self-regulation among preschool children. These findings underscore the importance of responsive interactions between children and the adults who support their development. Parents raising neurodivergent kindergarten learners often become familiar with their children's unique patterns of behavior, communication, emotional expression, and adjustment to everyday experiences. Their knowledge can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the child when appropriately shared with teachers. Therefore, parental narratives are valuable sources of information for understanding how neurodivergent learners experience inclusion within the kindergarten setting.

The participation of parents in inclusive education is particularly important because the experiences of neurodivergent children are influenced by relationships between home and school. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2021) highlights the importance of meaningful interactions and responsive relationships in improving the quality of early childhood education and care. In relation to school inclusion, Mitchelson et al. (2024) examined parental experiences of moving or considering moving autistic children between mainstream schools, illustrating how educational placement decisions may be shaped by families' experiences and perceptions of available support. Similarly, Vogel-Campbell (2025) explored parental perceptions of inclusion in the development of district community schools, emphasizing the value of considering family perspectives when examining inclusive educational environments. These studies demonstrate that parents are not merely observers of their children's educational experiences but important participants whose perspectives can inform school practices. Their experiences may reveal concerns about classroom participation, communication, acceptance, accessibility, and educational support that are not always apparent through teacher observations alone. Accordingly, examining parental voices can contribute to a deeper understanding of how inclusive education is experienced by families.

Parental awareness and understanding of inclusive education also influence how families interpret educational opportunities and participate in decisions concerning their children. Parents may encounter uncertainty regarding developmental differences, available interventions, appropriate educational accommodations, and the responsibilities of schools in providing support. Choi (2025), in a qualitative study of parents of children with developmental disabilities, explored parental uncertainty and information needs, demonstrating the relevance of accessible information and responsive professional support to families' experiences. Likewise, Ain (2025) examined parental involvement and barriers in educational transition services for students with autism spectrum disorder, highlighting concerns related to family participation and collaboration with educational institutions. Although these studies involve different educational and service contexts, they demonstrate the importance of listening to parents when examining support systems. For parents of neurodivergent kindergarten learners, awareness of inclusive education may develop through personal experiences, interactions with teachers, consultations with professionals, and observations of their children's participation in school activities. These experiences may influence how parents perceive the meaning of inclusion and the extent to which they believe their children are understood, accepted, and appropriately supported.

In the Philippine educational context, inclusive education is supported by Republic Act No. 11650, otherwise known as the Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act, enacted in 2022. The law strengthens the country's commitment to providing equitable educational opportunities, appropriate support services, and mechanisms that improve access to education for learners with disabilities (Republic of the Philippines, 2022). However, the existence of legislation does not automatically establish how families experience inclusion in individual schools. Andrada and Barrot (2025), in their study of parental involvement during online learning among learners with special educational needs, provide Philippine-based evidence concerning the experiences of parents in supporting their children's education. Meanwhile, Lindsay et al. (2025), through a systematic review examining disability and rurality, identified issues relevant to the experiences of families raising children with disabilities in rural settings. These studies suggest the importance of investigating inclusive education within particular social, geographical, and institutional contexts. For families in local communities, factors such as access to educational information, available school support, parental understanding, communication practices, and community attitudes may influence how inclusion is perceived and experienced.

Despite increasing attention to inclusive education, there remains a need to examine how parents understand inclusion through their everyday experiences of raising neurodivergent children. Research on inclusive education has addressed institutional practices, educational support systems, and the experiences of learners and families. However, the ways parents interpret educational inclusion may differ according to their children's developmental characteristics, the responsiveness of schools, and the relationships established with teachers. Perrelet et al. (2025), in a systematic review of empirical studies concerning inclusive education for autistic students, call attention to the need for meaningful community partnerships in identifying and supporting educational inclusion. Within the context of Pilipog Elementary School in Cordova, Cebu, the present study seeks to understand the voices of parents raising neurodivergent kindergarten learners, particularly their awareness, understanding, concerns, and lived experiences regarding inclusive education. Rather than assuming that the presence of neurodivergent children in regular kindergarten classrooms is sufficient evidence of inclusion, the study recognizes the importance of examining how parents make sense of classroom participation, peer relationships, teacher responsiveness, educational accommodations, and home–school communication. The specific research gap addressed by the study concerns the limited context-specific understanding of these

parental experiences at Pilipog Elementary School and how their narratives may inform a responsive school–family communication approach.

To address this research gap, the present study adopts a phenomenological orientation to explore the lived experiences of parents rearing neurodivergent kindergarten learners and their awareness and understanding of inclusivity in kindergarten education. Smith et al. (2022) explain that interpretative phenomenological analysis focuses on how individuals make sense of significant experiences within their personal and social contexts, supporting the examination of parental narratives as sources of lived meaning. The study will analyze the utterances of participating parents to identify emerging themes and subthemes that reflect their understanding, challenges, experiences, and perspectives concerning inclusive education. Braun and Clarke (2022) emphasize that thematic analysis enables researchers to develop meaningful patterns through systematic and reflective engagement with qualitative data. Furthermore, Saldaña (2021) explains that qualitative coding provides a structured process for organizing, interpreting, and developing analytical insights from participant accounts. Guided by the identified themes and subthemes, the study will derive propositions and develop a context-grounded theoretical explanation of parental experiences and inclusive education. These findings will subsequently serve as the basis for designing a Teacher–Parent Inclusive Narrative Communication Log, intended to facilitate meaningful communication, strengthen collaboration, and provide a practical avenue for sharing observations, concerns, learner progress, and responsive support strategies between teachers and parents. Through this process, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of parental voices and promote inclusive kindergarten practices that recognize neurodivergent learners' individual needs, strengths, dignity, and educational rights.

2. Literature Review

Recent literature on inclusive education emphasizes the significant role of parental awareness, understanding, and lived experiences in promoting the meaningful participation of neurodivergent children in educational settings. Inclusive education extends beyond the physical placement of learners with developmental differences in regular classrooms and involves providing appropriate educational support, social acceptance, and opportunities for active engagement. Gao and Drani (2025), through a qualitative systematic review, examined the social support experiences of parents raising children with autism spectrum disorder, highlighting the importance of understanding family support systems and parental experiences. Similarly, Choi (2025) investigated parental uncertainty and information needs among families of children with developmental disabilities, demonstrating the relevance of accessible information and professional guidance in addressing parental concerns. Tsaputra and Amani (2025) further examined the role of parents in supporting inclusive education for children with autism, emphasizing parental involvement in strengthening children's educational participation. In relation to school inclusion, Hadjikakou et al. (2025) explored the attitudes of parents of neurotypical children toward inclusive education in Cyprus and Greece, providing insights into how parental perceptions may influence the social environment experienced by children with disabilities. Furthermore, Balikci et al. (2025), through a systematic review of early childhood administrators' attitudes toward inclusive education, highlighted the importance of institutional perspectives in shaping inclusive practices. These studies indicate that inclusion is influenced by interconnected family, school, and social factors. Nevertheless, parental experiences may differ according to children's developmental characteristics, available educational resources, community perceptions, and school responsiveness. For parents rearing neurodivergent kindergarten learners, understanding inclusion may involve recognizing their children's strengths, interpreting developmental differences, addressing concerns regarding acceptance, and identifying appropriate educational support. These findings establish the importance of examining parents lived experiences and understanding of inclusivity as a foundation for promoting responsive kindergarten education.

The literature further emphasizes that meaningful inclusive education requires continuous collaboration, effective communication, and shared responsibility between parents and educational professionals. Graham-Clay (2025) examined communication strategies for teachers working with parents of children with special needs, underscoring the relevance of accessible and responsive school–family communication. Similarly, Scarparolo (2025) explored how listening to parents of children with disabilities can inform preservice teachers' understanding of the challenges families experience, demonstrating the value of parental perspectives in developing inclusive professional practice. Jovanović et al. (2025) investigated parental involvement in the education of children with additional support needs during the pandemic across Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia, providing evidence that family participation must be understood within differing educational and social circumstances. In the Philippine context, Andrada and Barrot (2025) examined parental involvement during online learning among learners with special educational needs, offering insights into the responsibilities and challenges encountered by families supporting their children's education.

3. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design using Husserlian descriptive phenomenology to explore the lived experiences, awareness, and understanding of parents rearing neurodivergent kindergarten learners regarding inclusive education. The study was conducted at Pilipog Elementary School, Cordova, Cebu, during School Year 2026–2027. Seven (7) parents or legal guardians of learners with identified developmental or educational support needs were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct experiences with inclusive education. Data were gathered through researcher-developed, expert-validated, semi-structured interview guides and focus group discussions. In-depth interviews lasting approximately 45–60 minutes allowed participants to describe their experiences, challenges, perceptions, and expectations concerning inclusivity. Interviews were conducted in the

participants' preferred language, recorded with informed consent, transcribed verbatim, and translated when necessary. Data analysis followed Colaizzi's seven-step phenomenological method, which involved familiarization with participants' narratives, identification of significant statements, formulation of meanings, clustering of themes and subthemes, development of exhaustive descriptions, identification of essential structures, and participant validation. Researcher bracketing and reflexive journaling were employed to minimize the influence of personal assumptions. From the emerging themes and subthemes, propositions were derived to formulate a context-grounded theoretical explanation of parental experiences. This explanation served as the basis for developing a teacher–Parent Inclusive Narrative Communication Log designed to strengthen home–school communication and collaboration. Research trustworthiness was established through credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity, supported by member checking, triangulation, detailed documentation, and reflexive analysis. Ethical safeguards included institutional permission, research ethics approval, voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, pseudonyms, and secure data management. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw without consequences and were assured that their responses would not affect their children's educational status.

4. Results

Theme 1: Navigating Misconceptions and limited knowledge related to

inclusivity in the kindergarten program

This theme, navigating misconceptions and limited knowledge related to inclusivity in the kindergarten program, conveyed that parents of neurodivergent learners experience a profound information disconnect where they witness the operational execution of inclusive education but completely lack the formal knowledge and informed awareness to understand the purpose of inclusivity in Kindergarten. Typical in public education set up, parents most often have limited idea and knowledge about the programs of the Department of Education (DepEd), Journal of Innovation in Psychology, Education and Didactics [JIPED]. (2024). Efforts have been cascaded down to the grass roots yet still there were parents particularly those who are rearing neurodivergent learners that their children could be admitted in a typical kindergarten program primarily because the DepEd promulgated the mainstreaming of neurodivergent children via the principle of inclusivity in kindergarten education. Despite of the effort of the department still parents in the community still had limited knowledge and information on inclusivity. This contention had also conveyed by Obcial, E., & Capilitan, J. (2026). This corroborated their findings that despite state-led initiatives and policy mandates deployed by the Department of Education (DepEd) still the community especially the parents seemed to have a very low awareness on inclusivity particularly in the kindergarten program. Quite interestingly, Taguiling, M. G. (2022) also have reflected this observation in his study. Yet still, even with quite a number of information dissemination via parent-teacher conference even Brigada Eskwela; parents limited knowledge about inclusive education remained particularly in the kindergarten education.

Subtheme 1.1 Limited knowledge and information about inclusive

education

The baseline understanding of inclusion among parents rearing neurodivergent learners was restricted to basic physical school access, leaving them oblivious to specialized educational opportunities until explicitly confronted during formal assessments conducted by the teacher. In fact, a parent expressed:

“Karon pa gyud nako nahibal-an sa interview nga nag-practice na diay og inclusive education.” I only found out just now during the interview that the school is actually practicing inclusive education. -Parent A.

During the focus group discussion, Parent B honestly expressed:

“Wala ko kahibaw. Wala ko kahibaw unsa na.” I don’t know. I don’t know what that is. -Parent B.

This was seconded by Parent C expressing in dismay that she didn’t know that inclusivity in Kindergarten is observed throughout public education. That even if their children needed specialized attention due to neurodivergent condition still they had the right to be accommodated in a typical kindergarten classroom. Deeming with hope, another parent shared:

“Karon ra ko kahibaw unsa na. Pero, nakadungog na ko ana.” I only found out what it is now. But, I have heard about it before. -Parent D

Another parent seconded:

“Karon ra ko kahibaw unsa na tungod sa atong pag-estorya karon.” I only found out what it is now because of our conversation today. -Parent G

These utterances of parents clearly showed they had misconceptions and limited knowledge regarding inclusive early childhood education. This theme revealed that while parents witness the day-to-day practice of inclusion, they lack the formal vocabulary and institutional awareness to understand its purpose. More so, based on how they responded to the question, it further revealed that they often remained oblivious to specialized opportunities that could be accorded to their children until formal kindergarten assessments were conducted by the kindergarten teachers.

Hence, this implied a critical gap in home-school communication. Since parents had limited awareness relative to inclusivity in kindergarten, it prevented them from becoming proactive advocates for their neurodivergent children. Yatim, N. A. M., & Ali, M. M. (2026) had posited this experienced, too. They further conveyed that parents had insufficient knowledge, inadequate

information, and limited understanding towards inclusivity. By this, they further explained that it serves as direct barriers to parental advocacy for children with educational needs.

Without early, accessible information and targeted educational outreach, families cannot fully collaborate with educators. Based on the systematic review on Participation of Families in Inclusive Education (2023), when schools do not proactively dismantle information barriers, parental engagement drops significantly due to poor communication channels and a total lack of conceptual awareness regarding school policies.

Consequently, families cannot step into the role of co-advocates because they lack the basic educational literacy required to interface with teachers. In fact, Khan, A., & Ahmad, S. (2026) also observed that due to the limited knowledge and understanding towards inclusivity, in this case in kindergarten education; parents were hindered from effectively advocating the rights of their neurodivergent learners. As a result, their children miss out on timely, specialized interventions during their most foundational developmental years. Not only this, but also parents feared that their neurodivergent learners experienced name calling. They could not bear the trauma that their children would suffer from being labelled as special child.

Subtheme 1.2 Stigma and the sense of shame over a "special child"

Label

This subtheme, stigma and the sense of shame over a "special child"

Label, meant that specialized education program otherwise known as SPED was perceived by parents not as supportive interventions, but as punitive, segregating labels that risk institutionalizing and worsening the condition of their children. In fact a parent expressed:

"Dili ko gusto nga muadto sa SPED class akong anak kay nahadlok ko nga mosamot iyang kahimtang." I did not want my child to be put in the SPED class because I was afraid it would make their condition worse. -Parent A.

Another parent seconded:

"Wala siya didto sa SPED sa central, mao na akong kahadlok na maapil siya didto. Kay naay time nga kataw-an akong anak." He was not put in the SPED at the central school, which was my fear—for him to be placed there. Because there are times my child gets laughed at. – Parent C.

Still another parent expressed:

"Nagto-o ko dili siya madawat... nag to-o ko e adto siya sa central nga SPED." I thought he wouldn't be accepted... I thought he would be sent to the SPED at the central school. – Parent E.

The above direct utterances highlighted how parents experienced stigma and sense of shame regarding the name calling, special child or SPED label. Based on their responses both in the in-depth interview and focused group discussion, they viewed specialized education programs as punitive and segregating rather than supportive. Their responses revealed that they developed anxieties on the thought that their children would be placed in SPED classes. In effect it would exacerbate their conditions. They also feared that their children would experience mockery from the classmates. In fact, they feared that this situation could result in social rejection.

Hence, this clearly conveyed that the critical implication of this deep-rooted stigma is that parents may actively resist or delay necessary special education placements out of fear of social alienation. This protective yet counterproductive resistance can lead to prolonged under-intervention, leaving neurodivergent children in mainstream classrooms without the structural accommodations they require to thrive academically and socially. Tan, L., & Ng, S.M. (2026) had observed this experience of parents, too. They concurred that parental resistance often driven by a protective fear of labeling or stigma would lead to a lack of intervention when these neurodivergent kindergarten learners were mainstreamed in a typical kindergarten class. Yet on the other side, parents were also thankful that despite of their fear, they experienced that the welcoming atmosphere of a typical kindergarten classroom gave them in one way or another assurance that their children were in a safe space for learning after all.

Theme 2: Welcoming kindergarten culture as a safe space for

neurodivergent learners

Based from the analyzed utterances of the parents; this theme, welcoming kindergarten culture as a safe space for neurodivergent learners meant that the public school kindergarten classroom served as a vital equalizer where all learners regardless of their developmental needs are welcome and accepted without discrimination. As observed by the parents and based from their experiences, this theme underscored the transformative role of public school kindergarten classrooms as vital equalizers in public kindergarten.

Subtheme 2.1 Non-discriminatory enrollment process

This subtheme emerged as the parents narrated their experiences during the enrollment process. The parents conveyed that the immediate, zero-rejection enrollment policy of public school particularly in the kindergarten program had actually alleviated anxieties of parents. In fact, based on their direct utterances, this institutional policy directly made the parents feel that regardless of the impairments of their children and by virtue of inclusivity in kindergarten they felt that they belong and their children also mattered without discrimination. In this light a parent had this to say:

"Dawaton kaayo sa magtutudlo ang kahimtang sa akong anak. Wala gyud siya nanghukom..." The teacher was very accepting of my child's condition. She never judged. – Parent A

Another parent seconded:

"Dawat ra man nila akong anak, wala ra problema sa pag pa enroll sa eskwelahan." They just accepted my child, there was no problem during enrollment at the school. – Parent B

Still another parent with so much enthusiasm and being grateful to the school and the kindergarten teacher said:

"Gedawat ra sa eskwelahan ang akong bata. Ge enroll siya bisag dili masabtan ang estorya." The school just accepted my child. They enrolled them even though my child's speech cannot be understood. – Parent D

According to the analyzed utterances, parents viewed in relation to their direct experiences during enrollment that the school seemed merely not a physical space for learning, but as an essential sanctuary where their neurodivergent children were accepted and protected from any biases. It tantamount to saying that in this inclusive culture, the traditional barriers of discrimination are actively dismantled, allowing the neurodivergent kindergarten learners to engage alongside their neurotypical peers without the overshadowing fear of isolation, mockery, or restrictive labeling. In fact, in the Journal of Inclusive Education Studies - ResearchGate (2026) had emphasized that by fostering an atmosphere rooted in shared dignity, empathy, and early acceptance, the classroom effectively neutralizes institutional stigmas and bridges socio-educational divides, ensuring that every learner's entry into formal schooling is defined by belonging rather than exclusion.

The profound implication of this welcoming culture is that it serves as an antidote to parental resistance, fostering a strong foundation of trust that encourages continuous educational engagement. When parents witness their children being embraced without prejudice, their defensive anxieties subside, transforming their relationship with the school from one of hesitant avoidance to proactive partnership. This contention was also observed by Wales, J (2025). In adherence to what RSIS International (2023) had emphasized, this lived experience of the parents signaled that ultimately, this inclusive practice posited something noble. It clearly meant that early, stigma-free socialization is not a luxury, but a structural necessity that significantly improved the emotional well-being, social adaptation, and long-term academic trajectories of neurodivergent children during their most impressionable developmental years.

4.1 Subtheme 2.2 Active Social Inclusion

This subtheme, Active Social Inclusion meant that authentic educational inclusion is achieved when the school purposefully integrated exceptional children into shared play, activities, and everyday peer interactions rather than maintaining passive classroom presence.

Hopeful and with deep sense of appreciation a parent had this to say:

"Paapilon ra nila akong anak sa mga duwa, sa mga activites sa school og lain-lain nga program." They let my child participate in games, school activities, and various programs. – Parent D

Another parent seconded so much pride that her child was oftentimes seen participating during school programs and activities:

"Ma appreciate nako nga ma part siya sa klase despite sa iya disabilities." I appreciate that they are made a part of the class despite their disabilities. – Parent F

Based from the direct utterances of the parents, this theme projected a transformative shift in relation to inclusivity in kindergarten. This conveyed that true inclusion occurred only when a school would intentionally include with no hesitation and reservation these neurodivergent kindergarten learners across daily classroom and in-campus activities like shared play, extracurricular and co-curricular activities; so much so in everyday peer interactions. Additionally, the lived experience of the parents particularly for Parents D and F, to witness their children actively participated in school programs and genuinely being made a part of the classroom despite their disabilities provided a profound sense of validation, relief, and pride. Their narratives reveal that moving beyond passive classroom placement effectively dismantles the isolation often felt by special education families. This observation is also reflected in the study of Berman, D. L., & Connor, D.J. (2023). They documented how a classroom became truly an active and meaningful learning community that successfully addressed institutional exclusion and to an extent family isolation. By bringing these children from the sidelines to the center of school life. Along this finding, the American Psychological Association (2021) conveyed that the institution shifts its focus from a deficit-based view of disability to a celebratory model of belonging and shared human experience.

This implied that schools, particularly in the kindergarten program inclusively designed extra and co-curricular school activities that catered to all learners regardless of their neurological profile. In so doing, South African Journal of Early Childhood Education (2025) posited that this cultivate the culture of acceptance in favor of these neurodivergent learners. Hence reducing the stigma that these kindergarten learners had been inflicted upon prior to the noble cause of inclusivity in kindergarten. Furthermore, when a school actively gave equal importance to the visibility of these neurodivergent kindergarten learners, it built immense psychological safety and trust with families. In this light, this would turn parents into deeply invested partners. Thus, thus lived experience of the parents implied that institutional excellence should not be measured by academic scores alone, but by how a

school pay attention to the social cohesion and its advocacy to make every neurodivergent kindergarten learner felt welcome, accepted, and belonged.

Theme 3: Facing social and emotional susceptibility along with environmental

Vulnerability

This theme, Facing social and emotional susceptibility along with environment vulnerability conveyed that to place neurodivergent learners into a typical kindergarten classroom exposed these learners to acute social conflict, peer victimization, and environmental hazards that the physical school infrastructure failed to adequately prevent. In a nutshell, this lived experience of the parents conveyed that placing their neurodivergent learners in a typical kindergarten classroom would lead to a facing heightened vulnerability because traditional kindergarten classroom settings were structurally and socially optimized for neurotypical behaviors and sensory profiles. Thus, these neurodivergent learners were susceptible to social isolation and worse yet, bullying.

Subtheme 3.1 Peer bullying and interpersonal conflict

Based from the utterances of the parents, this subtheme, peer bullying and interpersonal conflict meant that the visible behavioral or physical differences of neurodivergent kindergarten learners so often triggered verbal mockery, physical alienation, and behavioral clashes with other typical learners.

A parent expressed with sadness:

"Daghan og kaaway akong bata sa school, kay siya mangaway man pod sa iyang classmates." My child has many fights in school because he would also pick fights with his classmates. -Parent A

Another parent seconded:

"Ge bully siya sa iyang mga kauban tungod sa kuwang iyang kamot." She was bullied by her peers because of her missing hand. – Parent E.

Still another parent with so much concern expressed:

"Naa koy kabalaka, awayon siya sa iyang mga classmates. E bully siya." I have worries that their classmates will fight them. They will get bullied. – Parent G

The narrated utterances of the parents clearly characterized peer bullying and interpersonal conflict. This lived experience highlighted the immediate social hostility that their neurodivergent children experienced due to their visible physical or behavioral deviations compared to their neurotypical classmates. These utterances of parents exposed a concerning incidents of teasing towards their children related to physical deformity, accidental bowel movement, inability to read correctly and properly, and the like.

Hence, this theme and subthemes revealed that this peer bullying oftentimes would cause interpersonal conflict. As seen in the narrative of Parent A. Her neurodivergent child picked fight not because the child is a bully; but being a neurodivergent kindergarten learner was his reactive behavior or defensive coping mechanism to a bully classmate. So much so, because neurotypical kindergarten learners lack the developmental maturity to naturally comprehend neurodiversity or physical disabilities, they respond to difference with exclusion or provocation. As a result, it triggered behavioral clashes that deepen the emotional trauma of these neurodivergent kindergarten learners.

Subtheme 3.2 Physical Safety risks and Activity Limitations

This theme, physical safety risks and activity limitations, surfaced as the parents lived experiences directly pointed to an overactive or physically unstable their neurodivergent kindergarten learners faced persistent physical safety threats and exclusion from any physical activities may it be inside the kindergarten classroom or outside due to unmonitored spaces and the lack of structural physical support.

Based from the utterances of the parents, they had expressed concern with the continuous exposure of their children whenever activities in school were unmonitored. In addition, they were worried every time the teacher is out of the classroom and the kindergarten learners were left unattended inside the classroom. They worried that during these instances that casualty happened.

In fact, a parent had this to say:

"Naay kausa na disgrasya ang akong bata kay nigawas man siya sa room nag dagan-dagan, nabukol ang ulo." There was one time my child met an accident because they ran out of the room running around, and got a lump on the head. – Parent A.

Another parent expressed her observation regarding safety:

"Kung naay physical activities dili siya makaapil kay lungay siya, unya basin mahadlok iyang maestra." If there are physical activities, they cannot join because they are physically unstable, and maybe the teacher gets scared. -Parent F

These direct utterances of parents implied that spaces and the lack of structural physical support would cause the everyday school environment into a hazardous landscape for neurodivergent kindergarten learners. These situations fundamentally restricted the right of these neurodivergent kindergarten learners to play and actively participate in any learning activity accorded to them. Because these classrooms and playgrounds lack crucial environmental adaptations such as padded corners, secure boundary

markers, sensory-safe zones, and dedicated support aides; the parents expressed that they cannot avoid but be anxious over potential injuries caused by their children's overactive or physically unstable behaviors.

Because of the lack of safety measures accorded to kindergarten learners with neurodivergent needs, oftentimes, as the parents narrated; their children were excluded from these kind of activities. During the FGD, most of the parents expressed that the school must be reminded that under the principle of inclusion; must refrain from resorting to this kind of exclusion. Rather, they believed that the school must make sure that its physical environment and infrastructure are safe for their children while learning in school. Consequently, the physical vulnerabilities of these children, combined with institutional neglect in modifying school infrastructure, create an architecture of exclusion that isolated their neurodivergent learners from essential physical activities and social development alongside their neurotypical peers. The Journal of Elementary and Social Sciences (2025) had manifested this observation in their study. They emphasized that insufficient school building guidelines and physical infrastructure could directly injure and would result to exclusion of neurodivergent learners.

Ultimately, as emphasized by the Journal of Elementary Education and Social Sciences (2025) when school infrastructure remained static, it transformed into a physical barrier that actively penalized diverse learners. The physical vulnerabilities of neurodivergent children, combined with institutional neglect in modifying school surroundings and infrastructure, Mejeur et al., (2018) which was mentioned by Playground Research Group (2026), such condition would lead to the so called literal and figurative architecture of exclusion. In so doing, these physical inadequacies of the school could result to isolation of these neurodivergent kindergarten learners and that could result to sacrificing their social and emotional development.

This theme and its subthemes could underscore the urgent need for active social-emotional intervention over passive mainstreaming in kindergarten program. Public school processes and procedures may implement structured, peer-mediated empathy programs and neurodiversity-inclusive curricula that could dismantle social stigma. Furthermore, kindergarten teachers could be required tailored-fit professional training to look beyond surface-level behavioral clashes. In this manner, they would be able to recognize that the aggression that a neurodivergent kindergarten would resort to is just a distressed, defensive response to peer alienation or unmet sensory needs. Alliance Against Seclusion and Restraint (2026) had observed this circumstance. For this reason this organization had been training teachers on how to reduce seclusion and restraint by recognizing that aggressive and outburst from neurodivergent learners are neurological, distressed, and defensive psychological reactions to overstimulating kindergarten classroom.

Ultimately, the Department of Education (2022) had promulgated that educational policies must mandate stricter protective protocols and vigilant supervision during unstructured peer interactions. The Philippines Ejournal (2025) also corroborated this observation. It posited that adaptive strategies, and professional support needs of public school educators handling neurodiverse learners in the Philippines. It further argued that there was a need for tailored teachers insights to foster safe, trauma-informed learning environments. In fact, parents during the focused group discussion expressed that school like in Pilipog Elementary School may ensure that inclusive spaces could be an avenue to an active protection of the emotional and physical safety their neurodivergent kindergarten learners; rather than leaving them to cope without proper accommodations and modifications.

Theme 4: Fostering the role of the kindergarten teacher as bridge for support

and clinical intervention

The other utterances of the parents predicated this theme, fostering the role of the kindergarten teacher as bridge for support and clinical intervention. Based from the analysis, this meant that in resource-scarce public schools, the kindergarten teacher transcends the responsibility of just a teacher; to a person who can bring hope to provide equal opportunity to these neurodivergent kindergarten learners by providing assistance through monetary just these learners to avail clinical assistance.

Having analyzed the utterances of the parents based from their lived experience, it directed to the one of the self-giving character of a committed teacher. It conveyed further that then important role of a kindergarten teacher in resource-scarce public schools extends far beyond just being a classroom teacher. These kindergarten teachers as observed and experienced by the parents driven by not just their responsibility but also by their committed-self took extra miles of providing assistance to the parents who had limited resources to look for developmental doctors for their neurodivergent kindergarten learners to the clinical support. These teachers according to the parents as they experienced this noble act of the kindergarten teachers earned them the recognition and appreciation of the parents primarily because these teachers became advocates for a child's developmental and psychological needs. In fact, during the focus group discussion, parents confessed that they relied heavily on these kindergarten teachers not just for academic guidance, but as trusted navigators who can spot early signs of neurodivergence. In like manner, the parents were all in agreement that because of their concern to the kindergarten learners who had been tagged in the Learners Information System (LIS) as exhibiting different and specialized need; they stepped into this expanded role. That this time the teachers injected hope into them that as parents the support of the teachers could make a long way to paving an access to equal, quality, and equitable kindergarten education duly for all the five-year old Filipino learners. By their initiative and effort to detect assessment, their kindergarten neurodivergent learners will have equally chance in life.

Subtheme 4.1 Facilitating early detection and assessment

Because parents remain functionally unaware of developmental disorders, the kindergarten teachers were vigilant to any manifestation of kindergarten learners who may have been exhibiting different and special needs. In fact during the focus group discussion, the parents all agreed that kindergarten teachers served as the engine who were ever ready to assess any manifestations of learning difficulties and disabilities. The parents also shared the same observation that their children were subjected to this assessment because kindergarten teachers need to complete the Learner Information System (LIS) at the beginning of the school year. In fact, a parent shared her experience:

"Nag-suggest and teacher kung open ko sa posibilidad nga epa-ases and bata. Getabangan ko sa teacher ug ge-guide." The teacher suggested if I was open to the possibility of having the child assessed... The teacher helped and guided me. -Parent A

Another parent shared her experience by saying:

"Naa to higayon gepaadtu mi sa central school para e-ases and kahimtang sa akong anak." There was an occasion we were sent to the central school to assess the condition of my child. – Paarent B

Still another parent also shared her experience:

"Gepatawag ko sa maestra unya gepa-ases ang bata didto sa central elementary school kay naa man to libre nga assessment." I was called by the teacher and then the child was assessed at the central elementary school because of the free assessment. – Parent D

Based from the above utterances of the parents, it conveyed an experience that rearing a neurodivergent child often began in a state of ambiguity. The parents were most often unaware of what to do with their children who seemed to exhibit developmental disorders. In fact, during the focus group discussion these parents consistently described the teacher of their children as the primary catalyst or the engine for early detection and assessment. Such experience also reflected in Sagun, K.S., et al (2022) observation that rather than recognizing developmental differences independently at home, families relied heavily on the trained eyes and vigilance of teachers who observed their learners in fact everyday inside and outside the kindergarten classroom. In like manner, this experience of the parents also shared the same light with Capinding, A (2021) in his claim that teachers utilized institutional entry points like the Learner Information System (LIS) at the beginning of the school year to mandate early profiling, ensuring no child is left unprofiled. Just yet, Ge, W., et al (2023) shared the same observation with this lived experience of the parents. Cabodoc, A.P. (2025) also observed that kindergarten teachers went through the transition from suspicion to actual diagnosis. Most so often, assessment of kindergarten learners was primarily mediated by the empathy, guidance, and dedication of kindergarten teachers. As Parent A shared, the initial introduction to the idea of neurodivergence was handled as a collaborative invitation when she was asked to come to school so the teacher could discuss with her the situation of her child who needed developmental assessment from developmental doctors. Furthermore, the lived experiences highlighted the accommodations and empathy of the kindergarten teachers which gave the parents relief having known that these teachers were hands-on and at the same time concerned with their children's developmental needs.

Subtheme 4.2 Implementing classroom accommodations and sense of

empathy

This subtheme, implementing classroom accommodations and sense of empathy surfaced since most parents shared their lived experiences related to how the kindergarten teacher accommodated and addressed the needs of their children to the utmost capability of the teachers. The account of the parents meant that in the absence of institutional specialized resources, classroom accommodations were sustained purely through relational adjustments, teacher empathy, and active teacher-mediated intervention against peer discrimination and unguided judgment towards neurodivergent classmates.

With so much gratitude to the teacher, a parent shared:

"Nag adjust ang teacher sa akong anak... Mosabot ra ang maestra" The teacher adjusts to my child... The teacher just understands. – Parent D

Being assured that her neurodivergent child was safe in school, with a thankful heart, a parent added:

"Gepasabot sa ilang maestra ang mga bata nga dili e bully ang bata." The teacher explained to the other children not to bully the child. – Parent E.

With so much appreciation to the dedication of the kindergarten teacher, a parent shared:"Ge aware ko sa maestra, kanang dugay siya mahuman og suwat, gesabot ra sa maestra." The

teacher made me aware that they take a long time to write, but the teacher just understood it. - Parent F.

This particular lived experience of the parents shared in direct utterances projected a reality experienced by the parents when their neurodivergent learners enter the mainstream kindergarten classroom, the lack of formalized institutional backing such as dedicated special education (SPED) classrooms, learning aids, or specialized therapy equipment would most often leave these learners unattended. This subtheme highlighted how kindergarten teachers bridge this institutional deficit through sheer empathy, emotional labor, and tactical classroom modifications. For the parents, sending a neurodivergent child to school is fraught with anxiety regarding safety and academic failure. However, these fears are alleviated by teachers who consciously transform their classrooms into sanctuaries of understanding and patience. This observation mirrored what International Journal of Progressive

Research in Engineering Management and Science (2025) posited that the lived experiences of the participants reveal that accommodations accorded to the neurodivergent learners as experienced by the parents were rarely about instructional materials but most so often rooted on the dedication and the time spent by the kindergarten teachers in making sure that these neurodivergent kindergarten learners were given equal opportunity to learn in a safe and nurturing classroom environment.

In so doing, kindergarten teachers as revealed in the experiences of the parents, voluntarily recalibrate their pacing to match the different progress of their neurodivergent learners. As Parent F expressed with profound appreciation towards the pacing and progress of her child. Aytin Publications (2026) in relation to this experience conveyed that kindergarten teachers; rather than punishing the learner for taking so much time in finishing classroom tasks, the teacher accommodated the neurodivergent learner by extending help and encompassing understanding. This accommodation according to Tandfonline (2026) also manifested as a deeply protective stance against social isolation. Knowing that neurodivergent behaviors can be misunderstood by typically developing peers, teachers actively step in as cultural translators and protectors inside and outside the kindergarten classroom.

Theme 5: Facing pedagogical barriers and limiting parental resources

This theme, facing structural barrier and limiting parental resources emerged as the last lived experience of the parents based form their direct utterances. This meant that the ultimate sustainability of inclusivity in the kindergarten program lies heavily on household poverty, digital alienation, and institutional systemic breakdowns. These barriers completely impeded the parents to provide their neurodivergent learners quality and equitable education.

While the preceding themes spotlighted the profound empathy, vigilance, and commitment of kindergarten teachers, this final theme confronted the harsh structural realities that capped the limits of care that these neurodivergent learners rightfully deserved. The characterization of inclusivity in kindergarten primarily is captured between the ideal partnership of school and the home. This dual partnership was heavily constrained by the glaring circumstances of the economic background of parents rearing neurodivergent children. Due to household poverty; parents, based from their utterances oftentimes impeded them to seek help from a developmental doctor on professional and medical assessment for their children who were tagged in the Learners Information System (LIS) as learners whom had inclination and observed to have manifestations of special and different needs. The insufficient provision of support on the part of the school as an institution to provide quality and equitable kindergarten education due to these neurodivergent learners enrolled in a typical kindergarten program.

Subtheme 5.1 Socioeconomic pressure limiting coping and sustaining

attendance throughout the school year

This subtheme, socioeconomic pressure limiting coping and sustaining attendance throughout the school year emerged based from the utterances of the parents. This meant that the relentless financial demands of informal, survival-based labor stripped parents of the physical time required to engage with the school and even to sustain the intervention sessions required thereafter. Socioeconomic pressure significantly impeded a family's ability to cope with daily challenges. This affected the uninterrupted daily school attendance of their neurodivergent kindergarten learners throughout the school year. Moreover, when parents were trapped in informal, survival-based labor, they faced relentless financial demands that consumed all of their energy and time. This chronic economic strain stripped them of the physical availability required to actively engage with school systems or consistently attend critical intervention sessions. Consequently, the immediate necessity of daily economic survival forced educational and developmental support to take a back seat. This in fact created a barrier that prevented these vulnerable neurodivergent learners from maintaining consistent school attendance.

Having no strands of any regret to her decision as a mother, a parent said:

"Mi-resign ko sa akong trabaho aron maka-focus ko niya." I resigned from my job so I could focus on her. – Parent A

Another parent seconded:

"Kami mga parents nga walay oras sa pag-anhi sa eskwelahan... yawat nalang sa akong pagpangisda maka-kaon mi." We parents who have no time to come to school... my fishing is the only way we can eat. – Parent B.

Still another parent shared:

"Wala mi nagka storya, wala ko'y apil sa gc, wala ko'y facebook og messenger." We haven't spoken, I am not part of the group chat, I don't have Facebook or Messenger. -Parent G

These utterances vividly illustrated the reality that parents were confronted with. Parents who were trapped by financial instability directly had limited capacity to sustain connection with the school. While Parent A chose to resign from employment to focus entirely on her child; yet, it created an impact on their daily sustenance and provisions. Nevertheless, this represented a deliberate, regret-free sacrifice coming from a mother who was concerned with the development of her child in school. Parent B, conversely, highlighted the harsh reality of the subtheme. For this parent, absence from school is not a lack of care, but a necessity of survival. Her honesty towards the economic situation of her family showed that day-to-day survival through informal labor entirely consumed their physical time. This resulted to her being unable to attend school and meetings and other important engagement related to the addressing the need of her child for she had no choice but to prioritize he immediate threat of hunger. She needed to make sure that food is served to her family. Parent G exposed a different layer of socioeconomic pressure, a digital isolation. This only explained that the school heavily relied on social media platforms like Facebook Messenger and Group chats for

announcements, updates, and teacher-parent interventions. In effect, this created a severe communication breakdown where the parent was left completely uninformed making it impossible to support or sustain her child's progress on school throughout the academic year. This was in agreement to what Estorgio, C. R., & Rosil, R. E. (2024) observed. Macabudbud, M. L. E., & Dizon, J. A. O. (2026) also conveyed this situation showed that school disconnection is rarely a choice of neglect. Instead, it is an enforced reality. While one parent might have the capacity to stop working and focus on their child, others were locked out of the school updates due to the exhausting demands of daily survival labor like fishing in the case of parent A and a lack of resources to access digital communication channels.

Subtheme 5.2 Need for institutional and specialized support

This theme, needed for institutional and specialized support, surfaced and meant the complete migration of school-to-home communication to digital platforms like social media group chats created a systemic barrier that isolated parents who may had no smartphones or internet access. More so, the transition to digital-first communication in schools inadvertently created structural inequalities for families without access to technology or perhaps. When schools completely migrate their communication to digital platforms like social media group chats, they create a systemic barrier that isolates parents who lack smartphones or stable internet access. This digital divide prevents vulnerable families from receiving critical updates about their children's education, effectively cutting them off from the school community. To ensure equitable engagement, there is a clear need for institutional and specialized support to bridge this gap. Educational institutions must proactively provide alternative communication channels, digital literacy training, or hardware assistance so that technological limitations do not prevent parents from supporting their children's learning.

In fact, a parent expressed hopefully:

"Mahatagan unta og supporta ang mga bata nga naay lain-lain nga needs sama sa akong anak nga adhd." I hope support can be given to children with different needs like my child who has ADHD. – Parent A.

Another parent seconded:

"Support na makatabang sa iyang pag storya sama anang mga butang para sa therapy sa pag storya." Support that would help them speak, like materials used for speech therapy. -Parent C

Still another parent shared:

"Lisod jod sa maestra ky daghan kaayo estudyante sulod sa room unya lain-lain pa jod og abilidad." It is really difficult for the teacher because there are so many students inside the room and they have different abilities. – Parent D.

These lived experience of parents based from their direct utterances revealed that the transition to digital-first communication in schools inadvertently created structural inequalities for families without access to technology. Macrothink Institute (2024) observed that when schools completely migrated their communication to digital platforms like social media group chats, they created a systemic barrier that isolated parents who lack smartphones or stable internet access.

Family Fund (2026) also corroborated this experience, It further conveyed that this digital divide prevented vulnerable these parents rearing neurodivergent children from receiving critical updates about their children's education, effectively cutting them off from the school community. To ensure equitable engagement, there was a clear need for institutional and specialized support to bridge this gap. Educational institutions must proactively provide alternative communication channels so that technological limitations would not prevent parents from supporting their children's learning.

4.2 What Parents were aware of and experienced as their voices of inclusion in kindergarten education

The voices of inclusion in kindergarten education as experienced by the parents rearing neurodivergent kindergarten learners was deeply shaped by the unique insights and daily realities of families while they tried to hurdle through their daily sustenance and provisions What parents were aware of and experienced while rearing neurodivergent learners. These two sources that captured the voices of inclusion in kindergarten intersected with the actual practice of the school toward the mandate and principles of inclusion in a typical kindergarten program and the lived experiences of the parents that exposed a glaring contrast between the notions of inclusions and the realities of the parents rearing neurodivergent kindergarten learners. Thus, Table 3 laid out the summary of the voices of inclusion as lived and experienced by parents.

Table 3

Summary of the awareness and lived experiences of parents rearing neurodivergent kindergarten learners

EMERGENT THEMES	SUBTHEMES
Theme 1: Navigating Misconceptions and limited knowledge related to inclusivity in the kindergarten program	Limited knowledge and information about inclusive education Stigma and the sense of shame over a "special child" label
Theme 2: Welcoming kindergarten culture as a safe space for neurodivergent learners	Non-discriminatory enrollment process Active social inclusion
Theme 3: Facing social and emotional susceptibility along with environmental vulnerability	3.1 Peer bullying and interpersonal conflict 3.2 Physical safety risks and school Activity limitations

EMERGENT THEMES	SUBTHEMES
Theme 4: Fostering the role of the kindergarten teacher as bridge for support and clinical intervention	4.1 Facilitating early detection and assessment 4.2 Implementing classroom accommodations and sense of empathy
Theme 5: Facing structural barriers and limiting parental resources	5.1 Socioeconomic pressure limiting coping and sustaining attendance throughout the school year 5.2 Need for institutional and specialized support

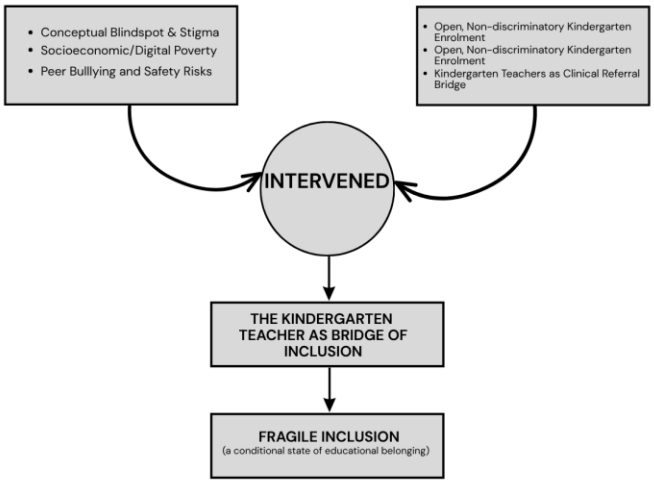
From the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion the emergent themes and their subthemes captured the lived experiences of many parents rearing neurodivergent kindergarten learners. The utterances of the parents that described their awareness and lived experiences characterized their hopes and a limited understanding of their children's needs related to inclusion in kindergarten education. More importantly, their lived experiences captured an opposing lived experiences relative to their ideas and knowledge about inclusion in contrast to their economic status, circumstances, and preoccupations to sustain the daily needs of their families.

The narrative of the parents revealed a complex characterization of structural barriers and unmet needs across multiple themes and sub-themes. Logistically, parents face a need for institutional and specialized support, particularly highlighted by a sub-theme where the complete migration of school-to-home communication to digital platforms creates a systemic barrier that isolates parents without smartphones or internet access. Academically and developmentally, this institutional gap widens into a critical deficit in specialized resources. Parents express an urgent demand for therapeutic interventions, such as speech therapy materials and behavioral support for neurodivergent conditions like ADHD. Furthermore, their testimonies shed light on the immense inability of the school to holistically address the educational and development needs of their neurodivergent learners. More so often, this challenges were placed on the kindergarten teachers. In addition noting that large class sizes and diversity of kindergarten learners in one classroom made individualized instruction nearly impossible for a single teacher. Ultimately, these voices of inclusion underscore that true educational equity requires moving beyond digital and physical placement to provide robust, well-funded institutional scaffolding for teachers and the parents alike. The voices of inclusion as experienced by the parents rearing neurodivergent kindergarten learners leads to the emergence of a theory that is intervened.

Derived from these five themes and their respective subthemes, is a conceptual codes that enveloped the Theory of Intervened Inclusion. Illustrated in Figure 2 is the conceptual configuration of this theory in four tenets.

Figure 2

4.3 The Conceptual Configuration of the Theory on Intervened Inclusion



Hence the theory:

4.4 The Theory of Intervened Inclusion

The four conceptual parameters lead to the four proposition about the intervened inclusion. To wit:

4.5 Proposition 1: Inclusive policy exists on paper, but on the ground,
4.6 it is masked by conceptual invisibility

Parents rearing neurodivergent learners experienced the benefits of inclusion in kindergarten as they were educated by the kindergarten teachers. Anchoring on Themes 1 & 2 along with their respective subthemes projected the parents' mistake of being fearful that when they subject their children to developmental assessment, it might lead to directing their children to enroll in a SPED school, believing that the condition of their children would become worse. Teachers' intervention through correcting this notion pacified the parents. Being informed this time that their neurodivergent children can be accommodated in a typical kindergarten classroom.

4.7 Proposition 2: In under-resourced public schools, the regular
4.8 classroom teacher must absorb the roles of a
4.9 diagnostician, counselor,

and social caseworker.

Parents revealed their limited knowledge and vocabulary related to inclusion in kindergarten education alongside with their scarce resources to seek early intervention. The kindergarten teacher serves as the initial, critical interceptor as revealed and characterized in Theme 4. The empathy, dedication, and commitment of the kindergarten teacher accommodated the specialized needs of the neurodivergent kindergarten learners enrolled in a typical kindergarten classroom. In so doing, the kindergarten teacher steps up as the physical pipeline intervening in the limitations of parents both in their knowledge towards inclusion and in the government-sponsored clinical support like DepEd's Special Needs Education (SNED), where kindergarten teachers are mandated to provide specialized instruction, accommodations, interventions, and support to accord neurodivergent kindergarten learners with quality, equitable, and inclusive kindergarten education.

4.10 Proposition 3: The neurodivergence or physical handicap of a
4.11 kindergarten learner acts as an economic
4.12 multiplier, worsening preexisting household

poverty.

Parent-kindergarten teacher partnership needs to be activated throughout the school year. The existing fracture concerning the economic status and daily circumstances of the parents rearing neurodivergent children pushed them into survival-driven compromises as revealed in Theme 5. Some parents are forced to sacrifice their work completely to provide constant physical care and the psychological needs of their children. The struggling income of parents who either have small-scale fishing or vending completely strips away their time and digital means to engage themselves with the progress and needs of their neurodivergent children in school.

4.13 Proposition 4: Classroom integration and accommodation for
4.14 neurodivergent kindergarten learners do not

guarantee physical or psychological safety.

Parents acknowledge that schools accept neurodivergent learners regardless of developmental needs, which is evident during enrollment. The non-prejudicial enrollment process whoever as reflected in theme 3 and its subthemes the classroom remains highly volatile. Inclusion does not reside solely during enrollment, from which the neurodivergent learners do not sense any discriminatory remarks or actions. It is also through the teaching and learning process that the kindergarten teachers provide equal and equitable accommodation through a differentiated teaching and learning process suited to the needs of the neurodivergent kindergarten learner. The physical risk which the neurodivergent suffer from injuries inflicted by peers, along with hurtful remarks about their physical appearance and deformities that could result in psychological trauma. Until these are addressed, guarded against, and prevented before they happen, inclusion in kindergarten remains fragile. Meanwhile, guided by the principles of inclusion, the kindergarten teacher would make sure to intervene in these circumstances in order to make sure that everyone else is educated relative to the encompassing demands of inclusion in kindergarten education.

Hence, Marjorie M. Terne's theory on Intervened Inclusion posits that, based on the shared lived experiences of the parents rearing neurodivergent learners, the Theory of Intervened Inclusion reveals that inclusive education at Pilipog Elementary School is not an automated, systemic process and procedure in adherence to the mandate of inclusive education. Rather, it is a deeply human, teacher-centric intervention tactic where limited knowledge and vocabulary of parents towards inclusion in kindergarten predicated their limited awareness alongside their scarce economic situation. Oftentimes, it is captured in the dire need for presence in school as their neurodivergent children struggled with academics and social belongingness. In turn, the kindergarten teachers, driven by their sense of empathy and commitment, intervened to make sure that their neurodivergent kindergarten learners are accorded equal opportunity to learn and provided with equitable services that they rightfully deserve by virtue of inclusion in kindergarten education.

And so, the voices of INCLUSION as experienced by the parents were initially INTERVENED by the kindergarten teachers who were actively protecting these neurodivergent learners from systemic stigma, peer hostility, and institutional isolation. Hence, the Theory of Intervened Inclusion.

Along with this theory, an output is derived. The Teacher-Parent Inclusive Narrative Communication Log (TP-INCL), which shall be called in Binisayang Pinulungan as Giya ug Pamalihug. Based on the derived themes, subthemes, and the accompanying formulated meanings, this TP-INCL directly shall address phenomenological experiences of parents rearing neurodivergent learners. Particularly, the lived experiences of Parent G related to Digital Poverty. Since Parent G was not in the group chat and lacked Messenger, this physical or hybrid narrative log serves as an offline communication between the teacher and the parent. Additionally, this TP-INCL captures the concern of Parent B related to having no time to show up and participate in any school-related activities and the progress of her neurodivergent child in school due to prioritizing her work in favor of providing food for her family rather than allotting time to go to school for her child. This narrative log could be brought home with the learner. This will allow the parent to read updates and reply whenever she can at home. Capitalizing on the lived experience of Parent A, who seemed to be highly engaged. Parents, through this TP-INCL, can be deeply focused on their child. This log additionally gives the parent a structured way to document the development and milestones of their children and, at the same time, track interventions at home. Hence, the output of the study.

4.15 Discussions

The findings of the study revealed that the lived experiences of parents rearing neurodivergent kindergarten learners were characterized by limited awareness of inclusive education, concerns about social acceptance, appreciation of welcoming school practices, and dependence on teachers for educational and developmental support. The emergence of five major themes demonstrated that inclusive education was experienced by parents as both an opportunity for their children's participation and a continuing challenge shaped by individual, institutional, and socioeconomic circumstances. The first theme, Navigating Misconceptions and Limited Knowledge Related to Inclusivity in the Kindergarten Program, indicated that several parents initially lacked sufficient information about inclusive education and its implementation in regular kindergarten classrooms. Their uncertainty was further intensified by fears associated with the labeling of their children as having special educational needs and the possibility of being transferred to specialized educational settings. However, the second theme, Welcoming Kindergarten Culture as a Safe Space for Neurodivergent Learners, revealed that non-discriminatory enrollment procedures, teacher acceptance, and opportunities for active participation helped lessen parental anxieties. Parents expressed appreciation when their children were accepted without judgment and included in classroom activities alongside their peers. Nevertheless, the third theme, Facing Social and Emotional Susceptibility Along with Environmental Vulnerability, demonstrated that enrollment and classroom participation did not necessarily guarantee meaningful inclusion. Experiences involving peer bullying, interpersonal conflict, physical safety concerns, and limitations in participation suggested that inclusive education required continuing attention to children's emotional well-being, social relationships, and physical safety. These findings indicated that parents understood inclusion not merely as access to regular kindergarten education but as the assurance that their children were accepted, protected, supported, and provided with equitable opportunities to learn and participate.

Furthermore, the findings emphasized the significant role of kindergarten teachers in addressing the challenges encountered by parents and neurodivergent learners. The fourth theme, Fostering the Role of the Kindergarten Teacher as a Bridge for Support and Clinical Intervention, revealed that teachers served as important sources of guidance, particularly in recognizing developmental concerns, facilitating referrals for assessment, implementing classroom accommodations, and demonstrating empathy toward learners with diverse needs. Parents valued teachers who communicated their children's developmental progress, adjusted instructional expectations, and addressed discriminatory behavior among classmates. However, the fifth theme, Facing Structural Barriers and Limiting Parental Resources, established that financial difficulties, demanding work responsibilities, limited access to specialized services, and digital communication barriers restricted parental participation in school activities. These circumstances demonstrated that limited parental involvement did not necessarily indicate indifference toward children's education but could reflect competing family responsibilities and inadequate communication opportunities. Collectively, the five themes supported the development of the study's Theory of Intervened Inclusion, which explained that the realization of inclusive kindergarten education within the investigated setting depended considerably on teachers' efforts to address gaps in parental awareness, educational support, social acceptance, and institutional resources. The four propositions derived from the findings emphasized the discrepancy between inclusive policies and parental understanding, the expanded responsibilities assumed by teachers, the effects of socioeconomic limitations on family participation, and the continuing need to ensure learners' physical and psychological safety. These findings provided the contextual basis for developing the Teacher–Parent Inclusive Narrative Communication Log (TP-INCL), locally identified as Giya ug Pamalihug. The proposed communication log was designed to strengthen home–school collaboration by providing an accessible means of documenting learners' progress, communicating concerns, monitoring support strategies, and encouraging parental participation even among families with limited time or digital access. Thus, the study highlighted the importance of transforming inclusive education from a policy-driven commitment into a sustained, collaborative, and responsive educational practice grounded in the actual experiences of parents and their neurodivergent kindergarten learners.

5. Conclusion

The study concluded that inclusive kindergarten education depended on parental awareness, teacher commitment, and institutional support. Despite welcoming school practices, parents encountered stigma, safety concerns, financial difficulties, and communication barriers. The Theory of Intervened Inclusion highlighted teachers' essential role in bridging these gaps. Consequently, the proposed Teacher–Parent Inclusive Narrative Communication Log (Giya ug Pamalihug) provided a practical framework for strengthening collaboration, parental engagement, and equitable learning opportunities for neurodivergent kindergarten learners.

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