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INTERPROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICES OF TEACHERS IN THE DIVISION OF DAVAO DEL NORTE

April John Manliguis
Master of Arts in Educational Management, Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc.

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices of teachers in the Division of Davao del Norte. Specifically, it examined the extent of interprofessional identity in terms of interprofessional belonging, interprofessional commitment, and interprofessional beliefs, as well as the extent of inclusive practices in terms of personalized instructional strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, and collaboration and assessment strategies. A quantitative descriptive correlational research design was employed. The respondents consisted of 116 senior high school teachers selected through random sampling from a total population of 211. Data were collected using adapted survey questionnaires that underwent validation and pilot testing. Statistical tools used for data analysis included mean, standard deviation, Pearson product moment correlation, and multiple regression analysis. Findings revealed that both interprofessional identity and inclusive practices were at an extensive level, indicating that these were oftentimes evident among teachers. The results further showed that there was a significant relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices. This implies that teachers with higher levels of interprofessional identity were more likely to demonstrate stronger inclusive teaching practices. Moreover, the domains of interprofessional identity significantly influenced inclusive practices, suggesting that belonging, commitment, and beliefs played important roles in shaping teachers' instructional behaviors. It was recommended that educational leaders strengthen interprofessional collaboration structures, provide targeted professional development, and support teachers in enhancing inclusive instructional strategies. Future researchers may explore additional variables and conduct studies in different educational contexts to further validate the findings.

KEYWORDS: *Interprofessional Identity; Inclusive Practices; Division of Davao del Norte*

INTRODUCTION

Classrooms today are no longer defined by uniformity but by diversity, where learners bring varied abilities, backgrounds, and learning needs that require teachers to move beyond isolated practice toward collaborative and responsive teaching. In this evolving educational landscape, teachers are expected not only to master content and pedagogy but also to work with other professionals in creating inclusive learning environments where every learner can thrive. It is within this context that interprofessional identity, reflected in teachers' sense of belonging, commitment, and shared beliefs toward collaboration, becomes essential in shaping inclusive practices such as personalized instructional strategies, communicative scaffolding, and collaborative assessment. This study examines how these dimensions of professional identity influence inclusive teaching practices among senior high school teachers in the Division of Davao del Norte.

Globally, education systems continue to experience challenges in translating collaborative and inclusive frameworks into actual classroom practice. Although interprofessional collaboration is widely recognized as essential for addressing diverse learner needs, many institutions still operate within disciplinary silos that limit meaningful cooperation among professionals, resulting in fragmented support for learners (Reinders et al., 2020). At the same time, inclusive education remains inconsistently implemented, as teachers struggle to apply strategies such as differentiated instruction, scaffolded communication, and collaborative assessment despite strong international policy support (UNESCO, 2020). These conditions reveal a persistent gap between policy expectations and classroom realities, highlighting the need to strengthen teachers' interprofessional identity to improve inclusive practices (Sharma et al., 2021).

At the national level, the Philippines has enacted policies supporting inclusive education, including the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 and the Inclusive Education Act for Learners with Disabilities. However, implementation remains uneven due to limited teacher training, inadequate resources, and large class sizes, which hinder the effective delivery of inclusive strategies (Javier & Gonzales, 2022). In addition, interprofessional collaboration among educators and allied professionals is not consistently institutionalized, leading to fragmented approaches in addressing learners' diverse needs.

While collaborative practices have been shown to enhance teaching effectiveness, many Filipino teachers still rely on individual efforts due to the absence of structured support systems (De Vera & Yazon, 2023).

In the local context of Talaingod District in the Division of Davao del Norte, these challenges are further intensified by unique socio cultural and geographical conditions. Talaingod is home to a significant population of Indigenous Peoples, particularly the Ata Manobo community, whose learners often experience disparities in access to quality education due to poverty, geographic isolation, and limited educational resources (Eder, 2021). Teachers encounter difficulties in addressing diverse linguistic backgrounds, as many learners use indigenous languages as their first language, resulting in communication barriers that affect comprehension, classroom interaction, and overall academic engagement (Caballero-Anthony & Bakar, 2022). These language gaps hinder the effective implementation of communicative scaffolding strategies and limit students' participation in learning activities.

Moreover, the cultural gap between mainstream educational practices and indigenous knowledge systems poses additional challenges in implementing inclusive education. Teachers often struggle to contextualize instruction in ways that are culturally responsive and meaningful to Indigenous learners, leading to reduced engagement and learning outcomes (Dizon et al., 2021). The absence of adequate training in culturally responsive pedagogy and interprofessional collaboration further limits teachers' ability to work with community stakeholders, such as tribal leaders and local support groups, who play a crucial role in supporting learners. This results in fragmented efforts in addressing the holistic needs of students, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds.

In addition, schools in Talaingod face logistical constraints such as limited access to instructional materials, insufficient infrastructure, and challenges in reaching remote communities, which further affect the delivery of inclusive practices (DepEd Region XI, 2022). Teachers often manage multi grade or overcrowded classrooms, making it difficult to provide personalized instruction and conduct collaborative assessment effectively. These contextual challenges highlight the need for stronger interprofessional identity among teachers, as collaboration with other professionals and community members becomes essential in overcoming resource limitations and addressing diverse learner needs.

More specifically, a critical local issue lies in the gap between teachers' recognition of the importance of collaboration and their actual engagement in interprofessional practices within culturally diverse and resource constrained environments. While teachers acknowledge the value of teamwork, there is a lack of structured opportunities to collaborate with specialists, community leaders, and other stakeholders. This gap limits the development of interprofessional belonging, commitment, and shared beliefs, ultimately affecting the consistency of inclusive teaching practices in Talaingod. As a result, learners particularly those from Indigenous communities may not receive coordinated and culturally responsive support in the classroom.

Despite the growing emphasis on both interprofessional identity and inclusive practices, there remains a significant research gap in examining how these constructs are related, particularly in the context of Davao del Norte. Existing studies have explored inclusive education and teacher collaboration separately, but limited research has investigated how teachers' interprofessional identity influences their implementation of inclusive practices. This lack of empirical evidence constrains the development of targeted interventions that can strengthen both collaboration and inclusion in schools.

This study addresses this gap by examining the relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices among teachers in the Division of Davao del Norte. By focusing on the dimensions of belonging, commitment, and beliefs, the study provides insights into how collaborative identity shapes teaching practices that support diverse learners. The findings are expected to inform professional development programs, collaborative structures, and policy initiatives that enhance inclusive education at both local and national levels.

This study contributes to the advancement of inclusive education by highlighting the importance of interprofessional identity in shaping teaching practices. Strengthening teachers' collaborative identity can lead to more effective and consistent implementation of inclusive strategies, ensuring that all learners are provided with equitable opportunities to succeed. In the context of Davao del Norte, this research supports efforts to build collaborative, responsive, and learner centered classrooms that address the diverse needs of students and promote quality education for all (Reinders et al., 2020).

THE STUDY'S OBJECTIVES

This study determined the relationship between the interprofessional identity and inclusive practices.
Specifically, it sought to:

1. Determine the extent of interprofessional identity in terms of:
   1.1. Interprofessional belonging;
   1.2. Interprofessional commitment; and
   1.3. Interprofessional beliefs.
2. Determine the extent of inclusive practices in terms of:

2.1. Personalized instructional strategies;
2.2. Communicative scaffolding strategies; and
2.3. Collaboration and assessment strategies.
3. Establish whether there is a significant relationship between the interprofessional identity and inclusive practices.
4. Identify which of the domains of the interprofessional identity significantly influence inclusive practices.

METHODOLOGY

Method Used

In this study, a quantitative research approach was employed, specifically utilizing a descriptive correlational design. Quantitative research involves gathering numerical data and subjecting it to statistical analysis to identify patterns, relationships, and trends (Bhandari, 2022). This method is particularly suited to studies aiming to measure and analyze the association between two or more variables. Descriptive correlational research, as defined by Creswell and Creswell (2017), seeks to describe the characteristics of variables while also determining the degree and direction of their relationship. In this context, the study aims to examine the relationship between interprofessional identity measured through interprofessional belonging, interprofessional commitment, and interprofessional beliefs and inclusive practices measured through personalized instructional strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, and collaboration and assessment strategies within the educational setting.

Descriptive research is characterized by its non-intrusive nature, where the researcher observes and records data without influencing or manipulating the study environment (Korrapati, 2019). Its primary objective is to present a clear and factual account of the variables under investigation. Meanwhile, correlational research focuses on determining whether changes in one variable correspond with changes in another (Kabir, 2019). This approach does not establish causation but provides valuable insights into the strength and direction of relationships between variables (Curtis et al., 2019). In the context of this study, it allows for the exploration of whether variations in teachers' interprofessional identity are associated with the extent to which they employ inclusive practices in their classrooms.

The use of a descriptive correlational design in this research is appropriate because it facilitates an in-depth examination of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables without interfering in the natural teaching and learning processes. This design supports a systematic investigation into how teachers' perceptions of their interprofessional identity may relate to the inclusivity of their instructional practices, particularly in the Division of Panabo City. By employing statistical tools such as Pearson's correlation coefficient, the study will be able to determine both the significance and strength of the relationships between these variables, providing meaningful implications for educators, administrators, and policy-makers.

Sources of Data

This study involved teachers from the Talaingod District, Division of Davao del Norte, with a total population of 211 senior high school teachers. To determine the appropriate number of respondents, Slovin's formula was applied. Using a margin of error of 0.05 for a 95 percent confidence level, the computation yielded a sample size of approximately 116 senior high school teachers. This sample size was deemed adequate to ensure statistical reliability and representativeness of the population, thereby allowing generalization of the findings within the study context.

The selection of respondents followed specific inclusion criteria to ensure the relevance and quality of the data collected. Only teachers who were currently handling senior high school learners and had at least three years of teaching experience were included in the study. This criterion was established on the premise that teachers with sufficient teaching experience are more likely to have developed stable instructional practices and deeper professional understanding necessary for assessing interprofessional identity and inclusive practices (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Including teachers directly engaged in senior high school instruction also ensured that the responses accurately reflected current classroom practices and experiences.

Random sampling was employed in selecting the respondents from the identified population. This method ensured that each eligible teacher had an equal chance of being selected, thereby minimizing selection bias and increasing the representativeness of the sample. The use of random sampling strengthened the validity of the findings and enhanced the generalizability of the results within the Division of Davao del Norte. Through this approach, the study was able to capture a broad range of perspectives from teachers across different subject areas and school contexts, contributing to a more comprehensive analysis of the relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices.

Data Gathering Instrument

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed to measure both, interprofessional identity and inclusive practices. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions with Likert-scale items to quantify perceptions and experiences.

For data collection, this study utilized an adapted survey questionnaire. The questionnaire that was employed in this undertaking was divided into two sets. The first set focused on the extent of interprofessional identity. The second set focused on the extent of inclusive practices.

The interprofessional identity questionnaire was adapted from Reinders, et. al. (2020). The instrument consisted of 24 items. It had three indicators namely; interprofessional belonging (1-8), interprofessional commitment (1-8), and interprofessional beliefs (1-8).

For the interprofessional identity questionnaire, the instrument was subjected to pilot testing among a small group of teachers who were not part of the actual respondents of the study. The pilot test yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87, suggesting that the items have a relatively high internal consistency and are reliable in measuring the intended indicators, namely interprofessional belonging, interprofessional commitment, and interprofessional beliefs. This reliability level implies that the questionnaire can consistently capture the perceptions and experiences of teachers regarding their interprofessional identity, thereby ensuring the validity of the data to be gathered in the main study. Below was the grading scale of the extent of interprofessional identity.

Mean Interval	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20 - 5.00	Very Extensive	The interprofessional identity is always evident.
3.40 - 4.19	Extensive	The interprofessional identity is oftentimes evident.
2.60 - 3.39	Moderately Extensive	The interprofessional identity is occasionally evident.
1.80 - 2.59	Less Extensive	The interprofessional identity is seldom evident.
1.00 – 1.79	Not Extensive	The interprofessional identity is never evident.

The inclusive practices questionnaire was adapted from Sharma, et. al. (2021). The instrument consisted of 26 items. It had three indicators namely; personalized instructional strategies (1-8), communicative scaffolding strategies (1-10), and collaboration and assessment strategies (1-8).

For the inclusive practices questionnaire, pilot testing was also conducted with a similar group of non-participant teachers to assess its reliability. The test produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.93, indicating an excellent level of internal consistency for the items related to personalized instructional strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, and collaboration and assessment strategies. This high reliability suggests that the instrument is a dependable tool for evaluating the extent of inclusive practices implemented by teachers, ensuring that the responses in the main data collection will accurately reflect the constructs being measured. Below was the grading scale of the extent of inclusive practices.

Mean Interval	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20 - 5.00	Very Extensive	Inclusive practices is always evident.
3.40 - 4.19	Extensive	Inclusive practices is oftentimes evident.
2.60 - 3.39	Moderately Extensive	Inclusive practices is occasionally evident.
1.80 - 2.59	Less Extensive	Inclusive practices is seldom evident.
1.00 – 1.79	Not Extensive	Inclusive practices is never evident.

The instruments in this study were contextualized to achieve the purpose of this study. The researcher integrated all the comments and suggestions of the adviser, panel members and expert validators for the refinement of the tools and to achieve construct validity.

Sampling Technique

The study employed a simple random sampling technique, wherein respondents were selected from the target population through an equal and unbiased process of selection. The population consisted of two hundred eleven (211) senior high school teachers in Talaingod District, Division of Davao del Norte. Using Slovin's formula with a 0.05 margin of error, a sample size of one hundred sixteen (116) teachers was determined. Simple random sampling was appropriate for this study because it gave every eligible teacher an equal chance of being selected, thereby minimizing selection bias and increasing the representativeness of the sample (Etikan & Bala, 2017; Taherdoost, 2016).

This approach was particularly suitable for the present study because it ensured that the sample reflected the characteristics of the broader population of senior high school teachers, allowing for more reliable and generalizable findings regarding interprofessional identity and inclusive practices. By selecting respondents randomly, the study reduced the likelihood of systematic bias and strengthened the validity of the data gathered from teachers across the district.

The use of simple random sampling was further supported by the application of clear inclusion and exclusion criteria. Participants were required to be currently handling senior high school learners in Talaingod District, have at least three years of teaching experience, and voluntarily consent to participate in the study. Teachers who did not meet these criteria

were excluded to maintain the relevance and validity of the data collected. A master list of eligible teachers served as the sampling frame, from which respondents were randomly selected through an established selection procedure.

To highlight, the sampling technique ensured that the study captured representative and credible information, strengthening the reliability of the findings regarding the relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices among senior high school teachers.

Procedure of the Study

The data gathering procedure for this study follows a systematic and ethically guided process to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and integrity of the research results. The procedure includes securing the ethics compliance certificate, obtaining the endorsement letter from the dean, requesting the permit to conduct the study from the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS), sending letters to the school principals, and validating the research instruments prior to the administration of the questionnaires. The data collection is conducted among respondents in the Division of Davao del Norte.

Ethics Review. Prior to the conduct of the study, the researcher secures an Ethics Compliance Certificate on October 11, 2025. This process ensures that the study adheres to the ethical standards required for research involving human participants. The ethics review confirms that the rights, dignity, and welfare of the respondents are protected throughout the research process. Ethical principles such as voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality of responses, and proper handling of collected data are strictly observed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Privacy Act of 2012. The issuance of the certificate signifies that the study meets the required ethical guidelines and is permitted to proceed with the subsequent stages of the research.

Validation of the Instrument. Prior to the actual administration of the research instruments, the questionnaire undergoes expert validation on January 5-7, 2026. The researcher provides validation sheets to selected experts who evaluate the research instruments in terms of clarity, relevance, appropriateness of content, and alignment with the research variables. The experts record their comments and suggestions in the validation sheets, which are carefully reviewed by the researcher. Necessary revisions are incorporated to improve the quality of the questionnaire before the final administration to the respondents.

Endorsement from the Dean. After securing the ethics compliance certificate, the researcher requests an endorsement letter from the Dean of the Graduate School of Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. on November 22, 2025. The endorsement confirms that the research has undergone proper academic review and is aligned with the requirements of the graduate program. It also verifies that the study is legitimate, academically sound, and appropriate for implementation in the identified research setting. This endorsement serves as an official institutional support that allows the researcher to formally request permission from the Schools Division Office to conduct the study.

Permit to Conduct the Study. With the endorsement letter from the dean, the researcher submits a formal request for a Permit to Conduct the Study addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) of Davao del Norte on December 22, 2025. The request includes the research title, objectives of the study, the target respondents, and the procedures for data collection. Supporting documents such as the endorsement letter, research instruments, and other required attachments are also submitted for review. Upon approval, the permit grants the researcher official authorization to conduct the study within the schools under the jurisdiction of the said division.

Letter to the Principals. After receiving the permit from the Schools Division Superintendent, the researcher prepares and sends letters to the school principals of the identified schools in Davao del Norte Division on January 26-29, 2026. The letter informs the school heads about the purpose of the research, the respondents involved, and the procedures for administering the research instruments. Coordination with the principals is conducted to schedule the appropriate time for the distribution and retrieval of the questionnaires while ensuring that the regular school activities will not be disrupted. Their cooperation is essential in facilitating smooth communication with the respondents and ensuring an organized data collection process.

Statistical Treatment

For a comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data, the following statistical tools were employed:

To answer Statement of the Problem No. 1 and 2, the weighted mean was used. The weighted mean determined the average level of responses for each indicator, providing a basis for describing the extent of interprofessional identity and inclusive practices among teachers. The weighted mean provided a summary of the participants' average responses, while the standard deviation indicated the degree of variability or consistency in their perceptions.

The standard deviation was used to determine the variability or dispersion of the responses from the mean. It indicated how closely the responses were clustered around the average value. A lower standard deviation signified that the responses were more consistent, while a higher standard deviation indicated greater variability among respondents' perceptions.

To address Statement of the Problem No. 3, which tested whether there was a significant relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r) was utilized.

For Statement of the Problem No. 4, which identified which domains of interprofessional identity significantly influenced inclusive practices, the multiple regression analysis was used.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical consideration section of this study addressed the essential principles safeguarding the rights, dignity, and well-being of teacher-respondents in the Division of Davao del Norte. This included strict adherence to national and institutional ethical guidelines, particularly in maintaining informed consent, privacy, voluntary participation, and equitable treatment. Given the study's focus on interprofessional identity and inclusive practices, the ethical framework ensured that the research was implemented with cultural sensitivity, professional respect, and transparency throughout its process.

Social Value. This study recognized the substantial social value of examining the relationship between teachers' interprofessional identity and their inclusive practices. Findings were expected to inform professional development programs and strengthen policies that fostered collaborative, inclusive, and culturally responsive teaching environments within Davao del Norte schools. By highlighting the link between interprofessional belonging, commitment, beliefs, and classroom inclusivity, the research addressed national educational priorities set forth in the Philippine Department of Education's inclusive education mandate. The results not only benefited teacher-respondents but also learners particularly those from marginalized backgrounds by promoting equitable learning environments and professional collaboration in schools. The potential to improve teacher training, instructional strategies, and community engagement underlined the study's strong contribution to both local and national educational development.

Informed Consent. Participation in this study was entirely voluntary, with informed consent obtained from all teacher-respondents before any data collection began. Each participant was provided with a consent form explaining the study's objectives, scope, potential risks, and expected benefits in clear, non-technical language. Respondents had ample opportunity to ask questions and were assured that they could withdraw at any point without penalty. In cases where school administrators or DepEd officials facilitated access to teacher-participants, institutional consent was also obtained to ensure administrative support while respecting individual autonomy. No data was collected until informed consent was formally given and documented.

Vulnerability of Research Respondents. While teachers were considered professionals capable of autonomous decision-making, some may have felt vulnerable due to hierarchical structures in the education system or fear of administrative judgment. To address this, the researcher ensured that participation was entirely voluntary and that responses were anonymous, minimizing any perceived risk to their employment or professional standing. Clear communication emphasized that data was not used for performance evaluation but solely for research purposes. Special care was taken to create an environment where respondents felt secure in expressing honest perspectives about their interprofessional identity and inclusive practices without apprehension of bias or repercussion.

Privacy and Confidentiiality. Strict compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173) was observed. All personal identifiers were removed from data sets and replaced with codes known only to the researcher. Raw data was stored on encrypted devices, with access limited to the researcher and authorized research assistants bound by confidentiality agreements. Reports and publications presented findings in aggregate form to prevent any identification of individual respondents or specific schools. Teacher-participants were informed about data storage, handling, and destruction procedures to ensure complete transparency regarding their privacy rights.

Risk, Benefits and Safety. The potential risks in this study were minimal, mainly involving possible discomfort when reflecting on personal teaching practices or professional beliefs. These were mitigated through sensitive questionnaire design and the option for respondents to skip any question they were uncomfortable answering. The benefits included increased professional self-awareness for teachers, the opportunity for schools to identify areas for improving inclusivity, and valuable input for DepEd's teacher training initiatives. Safety was maintained by conducting survey administration in neutral, non-intrusive environments either online through secure platforms or in school facilities designated for research activities.

Justice. The principle of justice was upheld by ensuring fair and equitable participation across public schools in the Division of Davao del Norte. Teacher-participants were selected using inclusion criteria that avoided bias based on gender, years of teaching experience, subject specialization, or school location. The benefits of the research particularly access to the study's findings were shared equally among participating schools, regardless of their size or resources. This ensured that all who contributed to the study could potentially benefit from its outcomes.

Transparency. Transparency was maintained by providing all respondents and stakeholders with clear and accessible information about the study's purpose, methods, potential risks, and benefits. Regular updates on the study's progress were given to participating schools, and final results were disseminated in a summary report to DepEd Davao del Norte and interested teacher-respondents. This open sharing of research processes and outcomes fostered trust and ensured accountability in how the study was conducted and utilized.

Qualification of the Researcher. The researcher possessed relevant academic preparation in educational research and professional experience in both quantitative methods and inclusive education. Furthermore, guidance was sought from the Rizal Memorial Colleges research committee to ensure adherence to institutional ethical standards. This combination of expertise and oversight ensured that the study was conducted rigorously and responsibly, maintaining methodological integrity and ethical compliance throughout the process.

Conflict of Interest. The researcher declared no personal or financial interest that could unduly influence the study's results. For example, while the researcher collaborated with schools in the Division of Davao del Norte for academic outreach programs, these engagements were separate from the current research activities. Any potential conflicts such as professional relationships with certain schools were openly disclosed to stakeholders, and data collection was managed to ensure impartiality.

Adequacy of Facilities. The research utilized facilities such as secure school meeting rooms for in-person data collection, as well as encrypted digital platforms for online survey administration. Statistical analysis was conducted using licensed software such as SPSS, and data was stored on password-protected devices. These facilities met both technical and ethical requirements for secure, accurate, and respectful data handling.

Community involvement. Community involvement was emphasized through early coordination with DepEd Davao del Norte and consultation with school heads to ensure that the study aligned with local educational priorities. Teachers' voices were central in shaping the interpretation of the findings, and results were shared with the community through accessible formats such as school-based presentations or summary briefs. This participatory approach ensured that the study was grounded in the realities of the local teaching community and that its outcomes directly contributed to practical improvements in inclusive education practices.

RESULTS

The study revealed that teachers in the Division of Davao del Norte demonstrated an extensive level of interprofessional identity across the domains of interprofessional belonging (M=4.02), interprofessional commitment (M=4.00), and interprofessional beliefs (M=4.01), with an overall mean of 4.01. Teachers strongly agreed that collaboration with professionals from different disciplines is important, beneficial, and essential in educational practice. They expressed positive attitudes toward teamwork, shared decision-making, and collaborative problem-solving, while also demonstrating a strong sense of respect, attachment, and commitment to interprofessional teams. These findings indicate that teachers view collaboration not merely as a professional requirement but as an integral part of their professional identity, fostering stronger cooperation and engagement within school communities.

The results further showed that inclusive practices among teachers were implemented at an extensive level across personalized instructional strategies (M=4.02), communicative scaffolding strategies (M=4.00), and collaboration and assessment strategies (M=3.99), with an overall mean of 4.00. Teachers frequently modified instruction to meet diverse learner needs, used varied teaching strategies, connected lessons to students' personal experiences, and adapted learning materials to support inclusive participation. They also consistently facilitated classroom interaction through questioning, collaboration, feedback, and supportive communication practices. In addition, teachers demonstrated effective collaboration with colleagues and families, utilized varied assessment methods, and implemented proactive classroom management strategies. These findings suggest that teachers consistently apply inclusive and learner-centered approaches that enhance student engagement, equitable participation, and meaningful learning experiences in the classroom.

Correlation analysis established a significant positive relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices (r=.826, p=.001), indicating that higher levels of interprofessional identity correspond to stronger implementation of inclusive practices among teachers. All domains of interprofessional identity significantly correlated with all dimensions of inclusive practices. Interprofessional belonging showed strong relationships with personalized instructional strategies (r=.856), communicative scaffolding strategies (r=.817), and collaboration and assessment strategies (r=.812). Similarly, interprofessional commitment and interprofessional beliefs demonstrated consistently significant relationships across all inclusive practice domains, with interprofessional beliefs showing the strongest overall associations. These findings imply that teachers who value collaboration, shared responsibility, and professional teamwork are more likely to adopt inclusive teaching practices that address diverse learner needs effectively.

Regression analysis further confirmed that interprofessional identity significantly predicts inclusive practices ($R=.881$, $R^2=.776$, $p<.001$), explaining 77.6% of the variance in teachers' inclusive practices. Among the domains, interprofessional beliefs ($\beta=.698$, $p=.000$) emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by interprofessional belonging ($\beta=.300$, $p=.005$) and interprofessional commitment ($\beta=.111$, $p=.009$). The findings indicate that teachers who strongly believe in collaboration, shared decision-making, and collective responsibility are more likely to implement inclusive strategies effectively. Overall, the study highlights that interprofessional identity serves as a critical foundation for inclusive education, strengthening teachers' capacity to foster collaborative, equitable, and learner-centered classroom environments that support diverse learners and improve educational outcomes.

Summary

The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices of teachers. The study was conducted among selected senior high school teachers in the Division of Davao del Norte. There were one hundred sixteen teachers who participated in this study. A quantitative approach was employed using a descriptive correlational research design. The study utilized adapted research instruments that were validated by a panel of experts and subjected to pilot testing prior to administration to ensure reliability and consistency. Statistical tools such as weighted mean, standard deviation, pearson product moment correlation, and multiple regression analysis were used in analyzing the data. The hypotheses in this study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

1. The major findings of the study revealed that the extent of interprofessional identity of teachers is extensive, indicating that it is oftentimes evident in their professional practice. All its domains, namely interprofessional belonging, interprofessional commitment, and interprofessional beliefs, were found to be at an extensive level, reflecting a strong sense of collaboration, shared responsibility, and professional connection among teachers.
2. Similarly, the extent of inclusive practices of teachers is also extensive, suggesting that inclusive strategies such as personalized instructional strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, and collaboration and assessment strategies are consistently implemented in the classroom. The relatively low standard deviation values in both variables indicate that teachers' responses were closely clustered, demonstrating consistency in their perceptions and practices.
3. Further, it was found that there is a significant relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices of teachers. This implies that teachers who exhibit a stronger sense of interprofessional identity are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of inclusive teaching practices. The findings highlight that collaboration, shared professional values, and a sense of belonging within interprofessional teams contribute significantly to the effective implementation of inclusive education.
4. Moreover, the regression analysis revealed that the domains of interprofessional identity significantly influence inclusive practices, indicating that these components are strong predictors of inclusive teaching behaviors.

Consequently, the hypotheses stating that there is no significant relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices of teachers and that none of the domains of interprofessional identity significantly influence inclusive practices were both rejected. The results underscore the importance of fostering interprofessional identity among teachers as a means of strengthening inclusive practices, ultimately contributing to more responsive, collaborative, and learner centered educational environment.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn in response to the stated problems.

1. The extent of interprofessional identity of senior high school teachers in the Division of Davao del Norte was found to be extensive across all domains, namely interprofessional belonging, interprofessional commitment, and interprofessional beliefs. This indicates that teachers consistently demonstrated a strong sense of connection, professional dedication, and shared values in working collaboratively with other professionals. Such a result suggests that teachers were able to integrate their individual professional roles with a broader collaborative identity, reinforcing teamwork and shared responsibility within the school setting.
2. The extent of inclusive practices of teachers was likewise found to be extensive in terms of personalized instructional strategies, communicative scaffolding strategies, and collaboration and assessment strategies. This implies that teachers were able to consistently adapt instruction, facilitate meaningful classroom communication, and employ collaborative approaches in assessing student learning. These findings indicate that inclusive practices were not only recognized but were also implemented in daily teaching. This demonstrates that teachers were responsive to diverse learner needs and were capable of creating supportive and equitable classroom environments that promoted active participation and engagement among students.
3. The study established that there was a significant relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices. This implies that teachers who demonstrated stronger interprofessional identity were more likely to implement inclusive teaching strategies effectively. The result highlights that collaboration, shared understanding, and professional connectedness were essential in enhancing inclusive practices. Teachers who valued teamwork and interprofessional engagement were more inclined to design responsive instruction, apply varied strategies, and work collaboratively to

support diverse learners. This finding confirms that interprofessional identity serves as a critical factor in strengthening inclusive education practices within the classroom.

4. The regression analysis confirmed that the domains of interprofessional identity significantly influenced inclusive practices, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggests that interprofessional belonging, commitment, and beliefs functioned as strong predictors of teachers' inclusive practices. Among these, relational and cognitive components of identity played a crucial role in shaping how teachers implemented inclusive strategies. The findings indicate that teachers who possessed a strong sense of belonging to professional teams, a clear commitment to collaboration, and positive beliefs about teamwork were more capable of sustaining inclusive teaching behaviors. This underscores the importance of fostering these domains to enhance the consistency and effectiveness of inclusive practices in schools.

The study further concludes that interprofessional identity plays a vital role in shaping inclusive teaching practices among teachers. Strengthening teachers' collaborative identity, professional commitment, and shared beliefs can significantly enhance their capacity to implement inclusive strategies that address diverse learner needs. This reinforces the importance of developing school environments that promote collaboration, shared accountability, and professional engagement to achieve inclusive and equitable education outcomes.

The results of the study conform to the theory of social constructivism, which posits that learning occurs through social interaction, collaboration, and shared meaning-making (Vygotsky, 1978; Chen & Yang, 2019). In this study, the strong presence of interprofessional identity among teachers reflected active engagement in collaborative practices, which in turn supported the consistent implementation of inclusive strategies. Teachers who engaged in dialogue, shared planning, and collaborative problem solving were able to construct more responsive instructional approaches, thereby enhancing inclusivity in the classroom. This demonstrates that inclusive practices are strengthened when educators participate in socially mediated professional interactions.

Moreover, the findings resonate with transformative learning theory, which emphasizes that meaningful learning occurs when individuals critically reflect on their beliefs and transform their perspectives through experience (Mezirow, 1997; Kitchenham, 2021). The significant influence of interprofessional identity on inclusive practices suggests that teachers were able to internalize collaborative values and translate them into practice. Through continuous engagement with colleagues and exposure to diverse perspectives, teachers developed deeper awareness and understanding of inclusive education, enabling them to refine their teaching strategies. This transformation of professional perspectives supports sustained implementation of inclusive practices.

In addition, the findings align with Wenger's communities of practice theory, which highlights that professional learning is developed through participation in collaborative groups where knowledge is shared and constructed collectively (Wenger, 1998; Li et al., 2020). The strong relationship between interprofessional identity and inclusive practices indicates that teachers benefited from engaging in collaborative professional communities. Through shared experiences, mutual support, and collective problem solving, teachers were able to strengthen both their professional identity and their inclusive teaching practices. This reinforces the idea that inclusive education is best achieved through sustained collaboration and collective professional engagement.

Recommendations

In the light of the foregoing findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

It is highly recommended that higher officials in the Department of Education design and implement sustained professional development programs that explicitly strengthen interprofessional identity among teachers, particularly in areas that showed relatively lower outcomes such as interprofessional commitment and specific belief components like teamwork skills being essential. Programs should emphasize deepening teachers' understanding of interprofessional collaboration and strengthening their commitment to collaborative roles in their professional lives. Structured training on interdisciplinary collaboration, joint planning sessions, and inter-school collaboration initiatives should be intensified. Capacity building programs should also focus on enhancing teachers' competencies in collaboration with colleagues and improving consistency in applying varied assessment strategies, which were identified as comparatively lower areas.

It is recommended that school principals establish structured systems within schools that promote stronger collaboration among teachers, particularly addressing lower indicators such as collaboration with colleagues and sharing of best practices. School heads may institutionalize regular interdisciplinary meetings, peer coaching sessions, and collaborative lesson planning activities to strengthen teachers' interprofessional commitment and teamwork. Focused monitoring and instructional supervision should be directed toward improving communicative scaffolding practices, particularly in providing peer interaction opportunities and maintaining consistent student engagement. School leaders should also strengthen family engagement initiatives, ensuring that communication with parents is systematic and sustained.

It is recommended that teachers enhance their professional practice by focusing on areas with relatively lower implementation, such as collaborating with colleagues, sharing instructional strategies, and maximizing peer interaction

opportunities in the classroom. Teachers may engage more actively in professional learning communities and collaborative teaching practices to strengthen interprofessional commitment. Greater attention should be given to refining instructional planning that addresses student strengths and interests, as well as improving consistency in feedback delivery and classroom interaction strategies. Teachers are also encouraged to further develop their assessment practices by using varied and innovative methods to monitor student progress effectively.

It is recommended that future researchers investigate specific interventions aimed at improving areas identified with relatively lower performance, such as interprofessional commitment, collaboration among teachers, and communicative scaffolding practices. Studies may focus on experimental or action research designs that test the effectiveness of collaborative professional development programs in enhancing inclusive practices. Further research may also examine contextual factors such as school leadership, organizational culture, and teacher workload that may influence the development of interprofessional identity and inclusive teaching. Expanding the scope of the study to include other divisions and educational levels is also recommended to validate and generalize the findings.

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