Effective Teacher Development Model for Classroom Management in Special Education Centres

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Abstract
This research aims to develop an effective model for enhancing teacher development in classroom management within special education centres. The study begins by reviewing existing concepts, principles, theories, and previous research to inform the creation of a comprehensive model. A panel of nine experts evaluated the model's accuracy and appropriateness to ensure its alignment with current educational standards and best practices in special education. Subsequently, the model was implemented among 30 special education teachers, who were purposively selected. To evaluate the model's effectiveness, a pre-test & post-test design was applied to assess the teachers' knowledge before and after participation in the programme. In addition, satisfaction surveys were conducted to gather the teachers' perceptions regarding the model's usefulness. The findings revealed that the developed teacher development model, titled the "OA-POTS Model", when OA-POTS stands for 1) Organization of the Psychological Environment 2)Arrangement of the Physical Environment 3)Participation in Classroom Management 4)Organizing the Social Environment 5) Teacher Leadership and 6) Student-Focused Learning Management,consists of six components: (1) Principles, (2) Objectives, (3) Content, (4) Processes, (5) Measurement and Evaluation, and (6) Implementation Guidelines. The model received high ratings in both accuracy and appropriateness, reflecting its strong alignment with the needs and context of special education classrooms. Following implementation, significant improvements were observed in teacher development, particularly regarding classroom management skills. Additionally, the teachers reported a high level of satisfaction with the model. These findings underscore the effectiveness of the "OA-POTS Model" as a valuable tool for enhancing the practices and professional growth of special education teachers.
Keywords: Development Model, Teacher, Special Education, Classroom Management, Special Education Centre, Effectiveness

Introduction

Teacher development is a crucial factor in enhancing the quality of education. Ongoing training and professional development enable teachers to adapt effectively to changes in the education sector. Furthermore, teacher development promotes the acquisition of new skills essential for classroom management, the integration of educational technology, and the application of diverse instructional strategies. This study allows teachers to meet the varied needs of their students. Effective teacher development ensures the creation of suitable and efficient learning environments, especially in special education settings that require methods and strategies tailored for students with special needs. It also enables educators to adjust their teaching accordingly. Hence, teacher development encompasses not only

pedagogical proficiency but also skills in classroom management, technological application, student assessment, and emotional and social responsiveness to address student diversity (Vetsawat et al., 2024).

The development of teachers in managing special education classrooms is vital to promoting effective learning among students with special needs. Effective classroom management fosters an environment conducive to learning. Special education centres are instrumental in delivering education to children with learning, physical, or mental disabilities (Dathong et al., 2024). Accordingly, teacher development is essential in ensuring effective teaching and learning within these centres. Such development efforts include structured training programmes focused on diverse instructional methods. The use of educational technologies and the creation of learning environments that nurture student expression and growth. Teacher training in these contexts extends beyond instructional skills to include behaviour management, assessment practices, and an understanding of the various needs of learners with disabilities. This allows educators to adapt their approaches appropriately. Additionally, these programmes emphasise Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, which support the creation of inclusive instruction that effectively meets the range of student abilities and needs. Consequently, teacher development in special education must balance theoretical foundations with practical classroom management strategies.

Classroom management is a fundamental component that directly influences the quality of student learning. However, many educators lack formal skills in classroom management or conflict resolution, often relying instead on experiential knowledge or traditional practices. According to the Office of the Education Council, current efforts to develop teacher competencies in classroom management lack clarity and do not sufficiently address teachers' real-world needs. The Office of the Basic Education Commission has issued a competency assessment manual for annual teacher evaluations across subject areas. The manual fails to provide specific guidance on the methods and processes for applying performance indicators. As such, improving the development of special

education teachers is vital to enhancing the quality of education provided to students with special needs.

Well-trained teachers are equipped with the skills necessary for effective classroom management and instructional adaptation, both of which contribute to improving students' quality of life and learning opportunities (Kutthalaeng & Nuangchalerm, 2025). Ultimately, teacher development in special education serves as a cornerstone for overcoming classroom challenges and fostering inclusive and effective learning environments.

Review of Literature

First, teacher education programs are required to provide thorough preparation in classroom management and classroom management. The ability of special education teachers in these areas has been shown to contribute immensely to the effectiveness of inclusion practices to students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). The key aspects of special education teachers professional development, particularly in rural districts, are orientation to working with paraprofessionals and parents, addressing low-incidence disabilities, attending to emotional and behavioral disorders, cooperation-related skills, inclusive practices, and the curriculum content (Berry et al., 2011).

Close cooperation of general and special education teachers is also needed. Effective interventions that help them foster cooperation should be incorporated into teacher education programs to reduce obstacles and better outcomes of students with disabilities (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017).

Management in the classroom would be viewed as an essential aspect of educational psychology, an implication with respect to teacher training. Prevention, group-based management strategies allow an educator to successfully design and organize classroom instructional interventions, improving the quality of teaching and student outcome (Emmer & Stough, 2001).

Moreover, general education teachers must also be able to accommodate their teaching style to the needs of children with special needs and establish a proper level of communication and understanding in the classroom (Byrd & Alexander, 2020).

Including real life experiences, i.e., mixed-reality teaching simulation, may substantially enhance the perception of preservice special education teachers about their classroom management confidence and create a secure learning and practice space (Hudson et al., 2018).

Lastly, it has been found that a lot of teacher preparation programs are not adequate in preparing teachers to handle behavior issues. This discrepancy implies the necessity of programs that offer not only universal approaches to management but also specific abilities to address various behaviors in the classroom (Flower et al., 2016).

Methodology

This study set out to design, implement, and evaluate a model for improving teacher development in classroom management within special education. The model was built on an in-depth review of existing theories, principles, concepts, and previous research.

To ensure its quality and relevance, a panel of nine experts reviewed the model for both accuracy and suitability. For the implementation phase, 30 special education teachers were purposively selected to take part. The model's effectiveness was assessed through pre-test and post-test measures of teacher knowledge, along with satisfaction surveys. Descriptive statistics, including means and percentages, were used to analyse the data.

Research and Development (R&D) follows a systematic approach that emphasises investigation, innovation, and experimentation to generate new knowledge or refine existing practices. It bridges theoretical knowledge with practical applications, using scientific and empirical methods to address real-world challenges. R&D encourages iterative refinement to improve effectiveness and ensure that results meet defined goals. Once successful, findings are disseminated to foster knowledge transfer and ongoing improvement.

Stage	Process
1	The analysis of data, relevant concepts, theories, and research, along with information from in-depth interviews with experts and data from surveys on classroom management, was used as a framework for drafting a development model for classroom management for special education teachers.
2	The validation of the model for effective classroom management development in special education centres was conducted by a panel of experts in education, who possess knowledge and experience in both educational management and special education.
3	The implementation of the model for teacher development in classroom management for special education was carried out with teachers at special education centres.
4	The evaluation of the implementation of the teacher development model for classroom management in special education.

Figure 1 The OA-POTS Model for Classroom Management in Special Education

Results and Discussion

The OA-POTS Model underwent a comprehensive evaluation. It was assessed for Suitability (Propriety), Feasibility, Accuracy and Utility. All aspects received the highest rating. The model was found appropriate for educational settings, feasible for implementation, aligned with relevant content and principles, and capable of significantly enhancing special education teachers' classroom management skills.

Classroom management in special education is essential for improving learning quality, particularly in special education centres under the Special Education Administration Bureau in Thailand's North-eastern region. These centres play a vital role

in developing teachers' ability to manage the diverse learning and psychological needs of students with special needs. In this context, a special education teacher's role extends beyond subject instruction; it requires specialised skills in managing classrooms and addressing individual student needs. Multiple studies have identified six essential components for effective classroom management in special education:

- Social Environment – Building positive relationships between teachers and students and fostering healthier peer interaction contributes to a safe, supportive learning atmosphere.
- Learner-Centred Instruction – Customising teaching methods to suit individual learners ensures that instruction is relevant and accessible.
- Psychological Environment – Promoting student confidence and reducing anxiety enhances engagement and learning effectiveness.
- Physical Environment – Structuring the classroom with appropriate lighting, seating, and learning zones helps create a conducive space for learning.
- Student Participation – Encouraging students to contribute to decision-making and classroom activities promotes agency and a sense of ownership in their learning journey.
- Teacher Leadership – Strong leadership skills empower teachers to manage classrooms proactively and responsively.

Despite their importance, these components are often underdeveloped due to insufficient training. Many teachers rely on traditional methods or personal experience. Continuous professional development is therefore critical to enhance classroom management capacity and adapt to contemporary needs (Champarat & Nuangchalerm, 2025).

The model was implemented at a Special Education Centre in Chaiyaphum Province, supervised by the Office of Special Education Administration. Thirty teachers, including civil servants, government employees, and contractual staff-participated. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, with criteria including administrative support and demonstrable readiness for professional development.

The model was validated and endorsed by experts in special education, affirming its suitability, feasibility, and effectiveness. Emphasising the need for both process validation and outcome effectiveness. The model supports broader educational goals by improving teachers' skills and fostering adaptive, high-quality classroom practices. Moreover, the OA-POTS Model enhances teachers' ability to tailor instruction to meet individual student needs, which is central to effective special education. Its implementation demonstrates not only practical applicability but also the potential for wide spread adoption and sustainable improvement in teaching quality. Teachers can use this model to systematically address the diverse educational and emotional needs of their students, thus reinforcing the foundation of inclusive education.

Conclusion

The findings of this study on the development of a teacher development model for classroom management in special education centres indicate that the OA-POTS Model—comprising six key components: principles, objectives, content, processes, measurement and evaluation, and implementation guidelines—is appropriate and well-aligned with the specific context and needs of special education.

Expert evaluations rated the model highly in accuracy, feasibility, and utility. Moreover, the implementation of the model among 30 purposively selected special education teachers resulted in significant improvements in teachers' knowledge, practical abilities, and consistency in classroom management behaviours. The participants also reported high levels of satisfaction and demonstrated the ability to apply the model effectively in real educational settings.

These results confirm that the OA-POTS Model is a powerful and comprehensive tool for enhancing teacher competencies in special education contexts. It holds strong potential for broader application and adaptation across other educational settings. To ensure sustainable and long-term teacher development, it is recommended that the model be implemented in conjunction with ongoing supervision, monitoring, and continuous professional development processes.

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