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What Do They Need in Inclusive Programs?
Comparing the Perceptions of Parents, Administrators and Teachers
In South Taiwan

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions and the needs of inclusive education of parents, school administrators, general education teachers, and special education teachers in South Taiwan. A quantitative design was used for the study. A total of 131 participants were recruited from 15 randomly selected elementary schools to fill out questionnaires developed by the researcher. Descriptive statistics and ANOVA were used to analyze data. Results showed that (a) all participants possessed a positive attitude toward and believe that the inclusive education was helpful to special needs children; (b) general education teachers thought that special needs children may experience labeling and had safety concerns in inclusive class than general education teachers; (c) the main essential elements toward a successful inclusive education were the training of teachers, the funding and facilities, and parents' education. Therefore, inclusive education could be a good way to facilitate special needs children once teachers and parents were well-trained, and the government had enough financial funding to the inclusive education.

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Several forces have recently affected the way in which students receiving special education services are assessed. One of these forces is the inclusive movement which primarily focuses on the students with disabilities who are being educated in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), which is the environment most like that provided for students without disabilities (Hargrove & Linda, 2000). For many students with disabilities, the LRE is the general education classroom, although many other placements must exist (Hargrove & Linda, 2000). The trend toward including students with disabilities in the general education classroom will continue because of factors such as litigation in favor of inclusion (Daane, et al., 2000).

The Taiwanese local government evaluates the placement suitability of special needs students every year. In addition, every local government needs to support bringing the inclusive policy into practice.

Taiwan's national special education survey for children with special needs in 1993 discovered that just 15.44% special needs children got special education services; however, most of the special needs children were placed in the general classes (84.44%). Although those children were in general classes, they did not get the special education service. Recently in Taiwan special schools for blind, deaf, physically handicapped, and mentally retarded students have emerged and are primarily run by the government and parallel the mainstream educational system, extending from preschool through senior vocational school. In 2002, there were 5,697

students in 23 such schools. In addition, 2,543 mainstream schools offered 3,971 classes for another 80,834 special students. The Resource Education Program has helped establish 767 resource classrooms, providing facilities for 16,826 students of special needs at the elementary and high school levels. Since the formulation of the Special Education Law in 1984, handicapped children or those with other health problems have been allowed to receive education at home. In 2002, home study services were provided to 922 special students (Department of Taiwan Education Government, 2002).

The resource classroom in Taiwan was set up to provide special education for special needs children who were placed in general classes. The special educational teachers design individualized education programs (IEP) for them and provide special educational service when the children are in the resource classrooms. Ideally, the resource classroom programs require cooperation of different parties, such as parents, administrators, and teachers. However, for the most part these educators work independently and others seldom cooperate to educate their special needs children.

Inclusive education in Taiwan is primarily in preschools. Recent research in Taiwan focuses on these topics: (1) the attitudes between teachers and parents in inclusive education, and (2) the effect of inclusive education policy. Most of them focus on the capital and cities. Few of them made the efforts in studying the inclusive perception in the country of which some of this country is mountainous and thus the transportation is not convenient. In the past, the majority of parents in the country kept their special needs children at home with rare contact with others and some have not ever sent their children to school. However, based on the Revised Special Education Laws (1997) and the creation of lots of resource classrooms, recent government's statistics show that the percentage of special needs children getting the special education service in the school

system are gradually increasing. Lie (1996) found that most parents preferred their children to be placed in resource classrooms than in special schools or special classes.

The purpose of this study was to compare the inclusive perceptions of four groups: parents whose children were attending resource classrooms, administrators whose schools provided resource classrooms, general education teachers whose students attended in resource classrooms, and the resource classrooms' special education teachers in south Taiwan. Given the quantitative design and questionnaires survey, the study focused on the following research questions; (1) did the priority concern differ among those four groups? And (2) what dimension of inclusive education was most prominent?

Review of Related Literature

Inclusive education emphasized the cooperation relationship. Collaboration was defined as a style of working together that reflected "cooperation among two or more people concerning a particular undertaking" (Dunst & Paget, 1991, p. 28). In a collaborative relationship, parents are viewed as the key decision makers for their children and these relationships are highly valued (Cornwell & Korteland, 1997; Zipper, Hinton, Weil, & Rounds, 1993).

As inclusion requires the collaboration between general and special education, researchers must analyze the phenomenon of classroom teachers' and building administrators' perceptions about including students with disabilities in general education settings. A gap exists between the recommended practices and the reality of early childhood inclusion in the schools (Brotherson et al., 2001) because of the differing perceptions among parents, administrators and teachers in inclusive programs. How to meet these three people's needs and integrate their opinion will be an important yet complicated topic of early childhood inclusion.

Parents' participation. The participation of parents in inclusive early education

environments is influenced by multiple interrelated factors (Erwin et al., 2001). Stoneman indicated the factors that influence parent attitudes toward preschool inclusion and toward young children with disabilities are family of origin, personal experience, culture and religion, spouse and significant others, and education (2001). There is a general belief that direct experience with classes of people reduces the negative attitudes and stereotypes held toward that group of people (Stoneman, 2001). Gottlieb, Corman, and Curci (1984) termed this the “contact hypothesis” which predicts that parents’ attitudes toward preschool inclusion are related to their previous experiences with people with disabilities (Stoneman, 2001).

However, Green and Stoneman emphasized that the most important variable that affects parent attitudes about inclusion seemed to be the quality, rather than quantity, of experience with people with disabilities and with inclusionary preschool environments (1989). Stoneman (1993) cautioned that poor-quality inclusion programs affect parents of typically developing children negatively making them less accepting of future inclusionary efforts. Unfortunately, many preschool programs that include children with disabilities are not of high quality (Stoneman, 2001). Once parents experience unsuccessful inclusion where they perceive a threat to their child’s emotional or developmental growth, they become a strong oppositional force (Stoneman, 2001).

The gap between recommended practices and reality. Though we now have a greater understanding of effective curriculum and instructional models for inclusion in early childhood education (ECE) programs (Odom et al., 1999; Peck, Odom, & Bricker, 1993), achieving widespread implementation of inclusive programs is largely an unmet goal after 25 years of policy (Gallagher, 1999; Peck, Furman, & Helmstetter, 1993). Translating the educational policy of inclusion or least restrictive environment (LRE) into actual practice may have more to do with

the ideological assumptions and organizational and community contexts than with the technical considerations of inclusive programming (Brotherson, Sheriff, Milburn & Schertz, 2001).

Administrators. School administrators are key players in this sociopolitical context and the efforts to implement educational change (Fullan, 1991; Peck, Hayden, Wandschneider, Peterson, & Richarz, 1989). They are integral players in the forming, interpreting, and sorting of school resources. However, most of the administrators did not tend to see themselves as part of the solution for early childhood education inclusion (Brotherson et al., 2001). Although inclusion has been a focus of educational reform, a significant number of educational administrators still feel uncomfortable with the concept or at least the practice of inclusive programs (Billingsley et al., 1996, p. 44).

Teachers. Research supports the fact that teacher expectations influence student achievement, behavior, and self-esteem (Brophy & Good, 1974; Conway, 1989; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Norris, 1994; Kornblau and Keogh, 1980). If a teacher's perceptions of students with disabilities are negative then including such students in general education classrooms may not result in a beneficial experience for the students (Daane et al., 2000). Therefore, it would be important to consider teachers' and building administrators' perceptions as they can impact greatly the results on the inclusion of students with disabilities (Daane et al., 2000).

Prior research has indicated that general education teachers do not always feel prepared to teach students who have special needs, and special and general education teachers often lack the skills in teaming and collaboration needed to teach students with disabilities in the general education classroom (Schuum, Vaughn, Gordon, & Rothlein, 1994). Further, many school systems are not offering continuing services to help teachers with these needs (Daane et al., 2000).

Bringing children with and without disabilities together for education is not new (Guralnick, 1990; Peck, Odom, et al., 1993). Since the initial passage of federal law (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 [IDEA]) advocates have strongly supported inclusion of children with disabilities with their age-appropriate peers (Odom & McEvoy, 1988; Stainback, Stainback, & Forest, 1989; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1978). All parents of typically and atypically developing children want what is best for their children. If early childhood education can succeed in creating a system of inclusive early childhood programs that meet the needs of all children, then parents of typically and atypically developing children will respond by becoming advocates for inclusive programs.

Method

The design of this study was developed to analyze quantitatively the attitudes and needs of parents, administrators, and teachers toward inclusive education in the elementary school in the southern Taiwan. A cross-sectional design with questionnaires was applied to conduct the research.

Participants

Participants in this study were recruited from parents whose children were attending resource rooms, administrators whose school had resource rooms, general education teachers whose students attended resource rooms, and special education teachers of the resource rooms in 15 elementary schools in the Kaohsiung County in Taiwan. Those general education teachers were also the guiding teachers of their general classes; that is, these teachers were responsible for the guardian of special needs children in their classes. And, the administrators were general education teachers who participated in administrative works. The 15 schools were randomly selected from 62 schools which provided special education in resource rooms in the Kaohsiung

County, Two to three administrators, resource room teachers, general education teachers, and parents were invited to fill out the questionnaires in each school. 139 questionnaires were sent out with 131 returned giving a percentage of 94.24%.

Instrument development

Questionnaires both for the parents and teachers were developed by the researcher based on the experiences of and from the literature review (Inzano, 1999; Tsai, 2002; Wang, 2001; Bennett, Deluca, & Bruns, 1997; Palmer, Duffy, Widaman, & Best, 1998).

The Parent Survey on Inclusion (PSI) consisted of two parts. The first page elicited background information on the respondent's gender; relationship to the child; child's age, gender, grade, disability, level of disability, and class attained. The second part was about the attitudes, needs, and social support toward inclusion education. Every item was counted by Likert's 5 point scale for participants' agreement. In addition, three open-ended questions regarding essential elements toward a successful inclusion education were asked at the end.

The Administrators/Teachers Survey on Inclusion (ATSI) also consisted of two parts. The first page elicited background information on the respondent's gender, age, years of position, current position, training and experience in special education, and school class number. The second section was identical to that of the PSI.

Validity analysis

The validity of the questionnaires was obtained by content validity and construct validity. The content validity of the questionnaires was first reviewed by 2 parents whose children were special needs and by 2 special education teachers. The questionnaires were then modified according to their comments. After the modification, 4 special education professors who were experts in the area were invited to review the questionnaires and modifications were made again

to make sure the questions were clear, correct, and complete.

Factor analysis was used to test the construct validity of the questionnaire. After doing the factor analysis, the questionnaire was categorized into 8 segments which contained 12, 7, 6, 5, 4, 2, 2, and 1 question. The total squared loading of the whole questionnaire was 68.356%. Because the last category contained only 1 question, this question was crossed out and the factor analysis was done again. As shown in the Table 1, seven components were grouped and the total squared loading was 66.297%.

Table 1 Factor analysis of the questionnaire

Item	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5	Factor6	Factor7
Parents' participation in the school's class activities	0.842						
Parents' awareness of the relevant professional service available for their children	0.773						
The risks of special needs children in general education classes	0.765						
Parents' participation in the school's PTA	0.755						
Providing relevant professional service in school	0.720						
Parents take part in devising the IEP for their children	0.681						
Having access to the various channels of complaints	0.623						
Involving the space and facilities for the handicapped in the community plans	0.592						
The receptive attitude of the parents of general education classes	0.590						
Parents' awareness and having a say on the educational rights of their special needs children	0.531						
Continue professional training in special education	0.493						
Flexible and multiple assessments for special needs children		0.807					

Teaching and counseling according to the IEPs for children with special needs	0.735	
The cooperation or team-teach of general and special education teachers	0.646	
The cooperation between the school faculty and special education professionals in the design and implementation of IEPs	0.642	
Adapt and tailor teaching materials to cater to the needs of special needs students	0.634	
The adapting of the relevant teaching resources	0.601	
Promoting a caring and receptive attitude towards students with special needs in the social community	0.516	
Providing relevant professional service in school	0.748	
Providing general education teachers with special education training	0.732	
Holding regular meetings to address and discuss issues concerning the education and counseling of students with disabilities	0.687	
Providing special education teachers with general education training	0.668	
Providing well-equipped with facilities for the handicapped in school	0.632	
Putting across the idea of inclusive education consistently in school	0.541	
Increasing understanding and tolerance for different needs children	0.782	
Improving special needs children's social skills	0.760	
Having a right to be educated in general education classrooms	0.731	
Adapting to special needs children's future work environment	0.645	
Improving special needs children's academic skills	0.615	
General education teachers' special education training		0.694
General education teachers have responsibility to counsel the students with special needs in their classes		0.680

Parents of normal students take part in the activities for students with special needs.	0.583						
Employ strategies (i.e., peer guidance and cooperative learning) in general classes for children with special needs	0.480						
Funding support						0.550	
Providing teaching facilities						0.475	
Risk in putting children with special needs in general education classes							0.834
Children with special needs would be labeled 'disabled' less often if they study in general education classes.							0.546
Chronbath's alpha	0.9250	0.9034	0.8546	0.7723	0.8234	0.8008	0.5384
Total Chronbath's alpha	0.9357						
Squared loading	37.106	8.051	6.557	4.690	3.720	3.374	2.799
Total squared loading	66.297						

*Factor 1:Needs of special education students; Factor2: Teaching and cooperation; Factor 3:School administration; Factor 4:Attitude toward inclusive education; Factor 5:Acceptance of special needs child; Factor 6: Facilities and funding; Factor 7: Safety and labeling

Reliability analysis

The reliability of the questionnaires was achieved by Inter-rater reliability (use Intra-Class Correlation Coefficient, ICC) for the questionnaires' objectivity and Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency. The results showed that both the ICC and Cronbach's alpha of each subscales of the questionnaire were 0.9250, 0.9034, 0.8546, 0.7723, 0.8234, 0.8008, and 0.5384, and was 0.9357 for the whole questionnaire (as Table 1).

Data collection

The researcher as well as 5 trained special education teachers collected the data. A meeting was held to explain the purpose and the method of the study and the questionnaire.

Questions about the questionnaire were pointed out and clarified. At the end of the meeting, survey packages for both teachers and parents were handed to these 5 data collectors. The survey package contained a cover letter, the questionnaires for teachers and parents, and a business reply envelope. The researcher and 5 data collectors gave the survey packages to general and special education teachers, administrators and parents whose children were in the resource rooms. After 1 week, phone calls were made to the data collectors to follow up on the completion of questionnaires and ask them to send back survey packages.

Data analysis

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze participants' demographic data. Besides, ANOVA was used to test the differences among groups. Scheff'e Post Hoc method was also used to compare the level of the needs among groups.

Responses to the open-ended questions were verbatim and separate content analyses were conducted for the PSI and ATSI. Responses that were similar in content were grouped together and given appropriate headings denoting the "themes" reflected in the statements.

Results

The purpose of the current study was to compare the perceptions of inclusive education in four groups: parents whose children were attending in resource rooms, administrators whose school provide resource rooms, general education teachers whose students attended in resource rooms, and special education teachers in resource rooms. The necessity of inclusive programs was understood. This research focus was investigated quantitatively by collecting data concerning the following specific research questions: (1) does the priority concern differ among those four groups? (2) what dimension of inclusive education are they most concerned with?

Demographic data of the participants

Participants could be divided into 2 major groups: teachers in schools and parents of special needs children. Parents’ demographic data was shown in table 2. Most parents were female (80.0%) and were mothers of special needs children (77.1%). Most children were male and studied in the second or third grade (54.3%). They were also varying kinds and levels of disability. Learning disability (21.2%), mental retardation (19.7%), language/speech disability (13.6%), and delay in development (12.1%) were the first 4 kinds of disabilities and most of the children were in mild (43.8%) to moderate (46.9%) disability.

Teachers’ demographic data was shown in table 3. The majority of them were female (81.7%), aged 31-50 (70.8%), and had experiences in general teaching (75.6%). The amounts of teachers who taught in general education (35.4%), special education (32.3%), and had worked related to administration (32.3%) were almost even. The majority of teachers had received special education program or training (91.9%). Most schools had more than 25 classes.

Table 2 *Demographic Data of Parents*

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	7	20.0
Female	28	80.0
Relationship to the child		
Father	6	17.1
Mother	27	77.1
Others	2	5.7
Child’s gender		
Male	33	65.7
Female	12	34.3
Child’s grade		
Preschool or kindergarten	0	0.0
First grade	4	11.4
Second grade	8	22.9
Third grade	11	31.4
Fourth grade	5	14.3
Fifth grade	4	11.4
Sixth grade	3	8.6
Child’s disability		
Learning disability	14	21.2
Mental retardation	13	19.7
Language/speech disability	9	13.6
Development delay	8	12.1
Autis m	6	9.1

Severe emotion disability	5	7.6
Limb handicap	4	6.1
Multiple disability	3	4.5
Visual impairments	2	3.0
Hearing impairments	1	1.5
Health weakness	1	1.5
Others significant disability	0	0.0
Level of disability		
Mild disability	14	43.8
Moderate disability	15	46.9
Severe disability	3	6.4
Strongly severe disability	0	0.0
Current placement		
General education	2	5.7
General education and resource classroom	32	91.4
Special class	1	2.9

Table 3 *Demographic Data of Teachers*

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	17	18.3
Female	76	81.7
Age		
30 or below	16	16.7
31~40	39	40.6
41~50	29	30.2
51~60	11	11.5
61 or above	1	1.0
Years in current position		
5 years or below	23	24.0
6~10 years	18	18.8
11~15 years	26	27.1
16 years or above	29	30.2
Current position:		
Teacher with administrative work	31	32.3
Principal	0	0.0
Director	12	12.5
Leader	19	19.8
General education teacher	34	35.4
Special education teacher	31	32.3
Training and experience in special education		
Bachelor in special education	18	20.9
Master or above in special education	3	3.5
Teacher with credits in special education	7	8.1
Teacher with 30 credits special education	11	12.8
Teacher with 3 credits or 54 hours special education	16	18.6
Teacher with less than 3 credits or 54 hours' special education	24	27.9
Never attained in any special education related training	7	8.1
Experience		
General education teacher	99	75.6
School's class number		
Less than 25 classes	29	31.5
25 classes or above	63	68.5

Table 4 Mean of factors among participants

factor	item numbers	total scale		parent		special education teacher		teacher general education tea	
		score range	mean±S.D.	score range	mean±S.D.	score range	mean±S.D.	score range	mean±
Needs of special education children	11	37-55	49.82±4.70 (4.53±0.47)	37-55	49.31±5.27 (4.48±0.48)	43-55	50.26±4.83 (4.57±0.44)	44-55	49.79± (3.43±
Teaching and cooperation	7	22-35	31.21±3.31 (4.46±0.47)	23-35	31.86±3.07 (4.55±0.44)	26-35	32.00±3.13 (4.57±0.45)	23-35	30.35± (4.34±
School administration	6	20-30	27.24±2.59 (4.54±0.43)	22-30	27.71±2.63 (4.62±0.44)	20-30	26.94±3.08 (4.49±0.51)	23-30	27.38± (4.56±
Attitude toward inclusive education	5	7-25	19.61±3.29 (3.92±0.66)	7-25	20.46±4.10 (4.09±0.82)	14-24	19.16±3.01 (3.83±0.60)	11-24	18.85± (3.77±
Acceptance of special needs child	4	9-20	17.49±2.21 (4.37±0.55)	12-20	17.51±2.37 (4.38±0.59)	9-20	17.94±2.46 (4.49±0.62)	10-20	17.21± (4.30±
Facilities and funding	2	6-10	9.18±1.05 (4.59±0.53)	6-10	9.17±1.07 (4.59±0.54)	6-10	9.27±1.05 (4.64±0.53)	7-10	8.97± (4.49±
Safety and labeling	2	2-10	6.25±1.74 (3.13±0.87)	2-10	6.40±1.83 (3.20±0.92)	3-9	6.90±1.75 (3.45±0.88)	3-8	5.41± (2.71±

*numbers shown in the parentheses represented the score a single item was.

Table 4 presented the mean score of 7 factors. It showed participants gave a high score to the 7 factors. Among those factors, factor 6(special needs child facilities and funding) had the highest score (4.59) and factor 7(safety and labeling) had the related lowest score (3.13) which meant a general agreement. In all 4 groups, factor 7 had lowest score (3.20, 3.45, 2.71, 3.20 respectively for the parent group, the special education teacher group, the general education teacher group, and the administrator group). In the parent group, the special education teacher group, the general education teacher group, and the administrator group, the highest scores were factor 3(teaching and cooperation) (4.62), factor 6(4.64), factor 3(4.56), and factor 6(4.66) respectively.

Statistic method ANOVA was used to test the differences of the mean score of the 4 groups. As in Table 5, only factor 7 showed a significant difference (p=0.005) among the mean score of the 4 groups. When using the Sheff'e test to compare all mean scores, it showed that only the group of special education teachers had a significantly higher score than the general education teachers.

Table 5 ANOVA of the four groups

Item	Mean ± SD	F value	P value	Scheff'e
Needs of special education children		0.231	0.875	
1.Parent	49.31±5.27			
2.Special education teacher	50.26±4.83			
3.General education teacher	49.79±4.30			
4.Administrator	49.97±4.50			
Teaching and cooperation		2.194	0.092	
1.Parent	31.86±3.07			
2.Special education teacher	32.00±3.13			
3.General education teacher	30.35±3.42			
4.Administrator	30.61±3.42			
School administration		0.772	0.512	
1.Parent	27.71±2.63			
2.Special education teacher	26.94±3.08			
3.General education teacher	27.38±2.28			
4.Administrator	26.87±2.36			
Attitude toward inclusive education		1.691	0.172	
1.Parent	20.46±4.10			
2.Special education teacher	19.16±3.01			
3.General education teacher	18.85±3.12			
4.Administrator	19.94±2.53			
Acceptance of special needs child		0.665	0.575	
1.Parent	17.51±2.37			
2.Special education teacher	17.94±2.46			
3.General education teacher	17.21±2.23			
4.Administrator	17.32±1.70			
Facilities and funding		0.712	0.547	
1.Parent	9.17±1.07			
2.Special education teacher	9.27±1.05			
3.General education teacher	8.97±1.09			
4.Administrator	9.32±0.98			
Safety and labeling		4.543	0.005**	2>3
1.Parent	6.40±1.83			
2.Special education teacher	6.90±1.75			
3.General education teacher	5.41±1.52			
4.Administrator	6.39±1.54			

Factors lead to a successful inclusive education

Answers to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire could be generalized into 7

themes: the funding and facilities for special education, the training of professional personnel, the parent education, the acceptance of special needs child to others, the administrative system of school, the support from government and society, and the cooperation of personnel in school. Among these themes, “the training of professional personnel” and “the funding and facilities for special education” were most frequently mentioned. “The parent education,” and “the acceptance of special needs child to others” were the upper third and fourth mentioned themes. “The administrative system of the school,” ‘the support from government and society’ were mentioned less frequently. The least mentioned theme was ‘the cooperation of personnel in school’. The themes and the frequency were listed in the Table 6. The themes “funding and facilities for special education” and “training of professional personnel” were dramatically more of a concern of participants than other themes.

When comparing these themes with factors listed above, it showed that some were very similar. The theme “funding and facilities for special education” was similar to factor “facilities and funding,” the theme “acceptance of special needs child to others” to the factor “attitude toward inclusive education,” the theme “administrative system of school” to the factor “school administration,” and the theme “cooperation of personnel in school” to the factor “teaching and cooperation.”

Table 6 *The themes and frequencies of participants*

theme	parents		special education teacher		general education teacher		administrator		total number
	number	ranking	number	ranking	number	ranking	number	ranking	
Funding and facilities for special education	28	1	15	2	31	1	28	1	102
Training of professional personnel	25	2	19	1	29	2	25	2	98
Parent-child dyad relation and teaching	11	3	12	3	21	3	17	3	61

Acceptance of special needs child to others	4	4	9	4	1	4	9	4	23
Administrative system of school	3	5	5	5	1	4	2	5	11
Support from government and society	0	6	5	5	1	4	2	5	8
Cooperation of personnel in school	0	6	4	7	0	7	0	7	4

Discussion

The results showed that all four groups have high agreement with the 7 factors (mean > 3.13). There were no differences in items of factor 1 which composed of the needs of special needs children in inclusive education among the four groups. The mean score for a single item ranged from 4.48 to 4.57. All four groups agreed that the following were the important items for the children attending inclusive education. Those factors were: parents' participation in the school's class activities, parents' awareness of the relevant professional service available for their children, the risks of special needs children in general education classes, parents' participation in the school's parent-teacher association (PTA), providing relevant professional service in school, parents' participation in devising the IEP for their children, having access to the various channels of complaints, involving the space and facilities for the handicapped in the community plans, the receptive attitude of the parents of general education classes, parents' awareness and having a say on the educational rights of their special needs children, and continuing professional training in special education.

Factor 2 was about teaching and cooperation. The result showed that there was no significant difference among four groups and the range of the mean score for a single item was 4.34 to 4.57. This high score displayed all four groups had high agreement to the items in factor 2. The items of factor 2 were: "flexible and multiple assessments for special needs children, teaching and counseling according to the IEPs for children with special needs, the cooperation or

team-teaching of general and special education teachers, the collaborating between the school faculty and special education professionals in designing and implementing special needs children's IEPs, adapting and tailoring teaching materials to cater for the needs of students with special needs, the adaptation of the relevant teaching resources, and promoting a caring and receptive attitude towards students with special needs in the social community.”

The items of factor 3 were about school administration. Results also showed no difference among those four groups and the range of mean score for each item was from 4.48 to 4.62. The very close and high means score showed that all participants agree that the following items for school administration were important issues in inclusive education. These items were: “providing relevant professional service in school, providing general education teachers with special education training, holding regular meetings to address and discuss issues concerning the education and counseling of students with disabilities, providing special education teachers with general education training, providing well-equipped with facilities for the handicapped in school, and putting across the idea of inclusive education consistently in school.”

Factor 4 was about attitude toward inclusive education. The range of mean score for each item was 3.77-4.09. The attitude of all participants tends to agree the following items, that were increasing understanding and tolerance for different needs children, improving special needs children's social skills, having the right to be educated in general education classrooms, adapting to special needs children's future work environment, and improving special needs children's academic skills.

Factor 5 positively affected children with special needs. Items included in factor 5 pointed to the acceptance of special needs child to others. The range of mean score for each item was 4.30-4.49. The score also showed four groups have the same high agreements in the following

items: the special education training for general education teachers, general education teachers have responsibility to counsel the students with special needs in their classes, the participation of the parents of normal students in the activities for students with special needs, employ strategies (i.e., peer guidance and cooperative learning) in general classes for special needs children.

Factor 6 was about facilities and funding. The range of mean score for each item was 4.49-4.66. The results showed that there were no difference among four groups and they also highly agreed that the funding support and facilities were necessary to the inclusive education.

Factor 7 was about safety and labeling, and the range of mean score for each item was 2.71-3.45. There was a significant difference between special education teachers and general education teachers. The special education teachers did not agree that there would be risks for putting special needs children in general classes while the general education teachers believed that there would be risks. The special education teachers believed children with disabilities in general education classes would be labeled “disabled” less often. On the contrary, general education teachers believed the labeling would be worse.

The 3 most essential elements concluded from the open-ended questions were professional training, facilities and funding, and parent education. Both general and special education teachers agreed that if their special education training was sufficient they will be more willing to teach special needs children in inclusive education. It would be helpful in inclusive education’s implementation if the facilities and funding supported by the government and school were applied promptly. Finally, the parent education was also a big issue in inclusive education. Both special education providers and the parents of special needs children all agree that the parent education will improve the quality of the inclusive education. Therefore, the inclusive education should focus more on the three important issues when carrying out the inclusive education.

Limited by time and funding, the study could only involve some schools in South Taiwan which limits the application of the result for the whole county. Future research might focus on the content of training of special education, the providing and application of facilities and funding, and the parent education.

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