

Teachers' Knowledge and Attitude towards Inclusive Education: Basis for an Enhanced Professional Development Program

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Abstract

The success of inclusion or organised placement of children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms largely depends on teachers' attitudes towards students with special educational needs (SEN) and their knowledge on how to properly educate them. In quite a number of studies, the attitude of teachers towards educating students with SEN has been put forward as a decisive factor in making schools more inclusive. If mainstream teachers do not accept the education of these students as an integral part of their job, they will try to ensure that someone else (often the special educational needs teacher) takes responsibility for these students and will organise covert segregation in the school (e.g. the special class). This study uses descriptive survey method to investigate international school teachers' knowledge and attitude towards inclusive education of SEN students in the Eastern Seaboard region of Thailand in the school year 2013-2014. Fifty-two male and female general education and special educational needs teachers who work full time in four international schools in the region completed the Modified Opinions Relative to the Integration of Children with Disabilities (MORID) survey. The respondents had moderate knowledge on inclusive education and revealed neutral attitude towards inclusion. There is a need for schools to provide more special educational needs training, sufficient learning support providers and educational resources as well as in-depth specialisation courses that provide specialised practices for implementing the SEN strategies in their classrooms as well as offering teaching strategies on how to bridge theory and practice. Learning Support Programmes and the actual delivery of these programmes should be developed in terms of individual education plan (IEP) provision, curriculum modifications and classroom adaptations that are appropriate for students with special educational needs.

Keywords: *knowledge, attitudes, inclusive education, inclusion, special educational needs students*

1. Introduction

If the right to education for all is to become a reality, we must ensure that all learners have access to quality education that meets basic learning needs and enriches lives. Still, today, millions of children, youth and adults continue to experience exclusion within and from education around the world. The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (2008) and other international human rights treaties prohibit any exclusion from or limitation to educational opportunities on the bases of socially ascribed or perceived differences, such as sex, ethnic origin, language, religion, nationality, social origin, economic condition, ability, etc. Education is not simply about making schools available for those who are already able to

access them. It is about being proactive in identifying the barriers and obstacles learners encounter in attempting to access opportunities for quality education, as well as in removing those barriers and obstacles that lead to exclusion (United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 2013).

Inclusion, or organised placement of children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms, has certainly been one of the major topics in education for the last two decades. However, it was not until quite recently that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with special educational needs (SENs) became the focus of extensive research (Dapudong, 2013).

The major reason for this change in research interest could perhaps be traced to more contemporary approaches to education, which claim that in order to gain valuable insight into the practice as well as the dynamics of the inclusive classroom, there is perhaps no better method than to evaluate the attitudes of those who form an important part of that dynamic system; namely, the teachers (Dapudong, 2013; Rose, 2001). Indeed, teachers' attitudes have been found to affect the process and the outcome of inclusion to a great extent.

In this study, four international schools situated in the Eastern Seaboard Region of Thailand were included. These schools are following either the UK National Curriculum or the American Curriculum. Each of these schools have an established Learning Support Department which provides learning support services for SEN students through hired international Special Educational Needs teachers and paraprofessionals. Obviously, the extent to which the degree of success of the special educational needs services offered in these international schools can vary greatly due to differences on how each school conceptualise and promote inclusive education.

Inclusion largely depends on teachers' attitudes towards pupils with special needs and on the resources available to them. In quite a number of studies, the attitude of teachers towards educating pupils with special needs has been put forward as a decisive factor in making schools more inclusive. If mainstream teachers do not accept the education of these pupils as an integral part of their job, they will try to ensure that someone else (often the special education teacher) takes responsibility for these pupils and will organize covert segregation in the school (e.g. the special class) (Mutasa, Goronga, & Tafangombe, 2013).

In the past, a great deal of scholarly research focused on the attitudes of teachers regarding educating students with disabilities. These studies suggest that special education teachers have conflicting opinions regarding educating students with special needs. However, it has been unknown whether the differences in teachers' opinions were significant. Are the concerns of general education teachers significantly different from those of special education teachers? Alternatively, do teachers' opinions simply differ regardless of their training and experience? According to Al Abuljabber (2006) as cited in Dapudong (2013) cross-national studies are important as they might reveal differences, which perhaps will in turn motivate and challenge researchers to re-examine the entrenched practices and theories that prevail in their own countries.

Hence, the researcher was prompted to conduct a similar study in the locality where he is currently working in after sensing the need to further investigate the special educational needs services and practices of these international schools.

This study may provide international schools' administrators with a better understanding of the resources available in schools to help guide students with disabilities towards academic and

social excellence, because the study provides a thorough review of international schools educational endeavors for students with disabilities. Teachers' knowledge and attitudes are of great value to the system because these professionals can address any gaps between formally designed education programs and the actual delivery of these programs, in terms of the curriculum modifications and adaptations that are appropriate for students with special educational needs.

Furthermore, this inquiry provides the Thai Ministry of Education and international school leaders with preliminary data regarding the teachers' level of support or resistance to the learning support programme to include students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Specifically, this is significant to the international school teachers because the findings will help school administrators improve the teachers' knowledge through developing special educational needs programmes and resources to support the professional needs and growth of the teachers. Moreover, this is beneficial for all students who have special educational needs because they will be best served in the inclusive classroom with teachers' improved knowledge and attitudes towards educating them.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study attempts to investigate international school teachers' knowledge and attitude towards inclusion of students who have special educational needs into mainstream classrooms in Eastern Seaboard Region of Thailand. This specific study sought to answer the following questions:

1. *What is the profile of international school teachers in terms of: gender, age, nationality, degree held, area of specialization, years of teaching experience, training in special education, and experience in teaching students with disabilities in the classroom?*
2. *Do international school teachers conceptualize inclusive education as: a system of education for all, an integration of special educational needs, and a way of reducing social discrimination?*
3. *What is the level of attitude of international school teachers towards inclusive education of children with special needs in terms of their: beliefs (core perspectives), feelings (expected outcomes of inclusion), and actions (classroom practices)?*
4. *Are there significant differences in attitudes of international school teachers when grouped according to: gender, age, nationality, degree held, area of specialization, years of teaching experience, training in special education, and experience in teaching students with disabilities in the classroom?*
5. *What feasible intervention program can be designed to improve the knowledge and attitude of international school teachers towards inclusive education of children with special educational needs?*

2. Research Method

The researcher used the descriptive-survey method in the baseline data, which is to see the general picture of the population and the nature of its existing condition. The descriptive method is basically a technique of qualitative as well as quantitative description of general characteristics of the group. Moreover, it is equivalent to survey because it gathers data regarding the current conditions of identifying normal typical practices with accepted norms and models (Good, 1987). In addition, quantitative research, according to Creswell (2008), is

defined as investigation process that can be used for exploring the trends and explaining the relationship among different variables. A quantitative research approach depends on quantitative data such as survey questionnaires or focuses on testing a hypothesis confirmation (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). Here, the focus of the quantitative research is determining teachers' knowledge and attitude towards inclusive education of children with special needs in the mainstream classroom.

2.1 Population and Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in four international schools, namely: The Regents School, St. Andrews International School, The International School of Eastern Seaboard and Garden International School, Rayong which are all located in the Eastern Seaboard region of Thailand in Southeast Asia. The Eastern Seaboard region is an emerging economic region and plays a key role in Thailand's economy. Its importance lies in the fact that it is Thailand's center for export oriented industries. High value goods, such as Japanese branded automobiles, which are manufactured there and shipped to other ports, are among the many exports. The region comprises four provinces namely: Chonburi, Chachoengsao, Samut Prakan and Rayong.

The respondents were full time teachers employed in all four international schools in the Eastern Seaboard region, Thailand during the school year 2013-2014. The stratified sampling method was used to include male and female general and special education teachers. The sampling fraction for each school has been taken in the same proportion as the school has in the population. Respondents whose names fall on the inclusive odd numbers on the list of teachers in every school issued by the schools' admission officers are selected from the total population of 203 teachers. In order to determine the sample size needed to conduct the current study, Slovin's formula was used to provide the number of respondents using 0.12 confidence level. Thus, 52 respondents were selected from the whole population of 203 through a stratified random sampling wherein respondents whose names fall on the inclusive odd numbers on the list of teachers in every school issued by the admission officer had been included.

2.2 Data Gathering Tool

The questionnaire was adapted from the Modified Opinion Relative to Integration of Students with Disabilities or MORID by Dapudong (2013). The scale is a modified version of the Opinion Relative to Integration or ORI constructed by Larrivee and Cook in 1979.

For this study, the researcher modified the MORID survey questionnaire to fit with the current study. In the original MORID instrument, Part 1 which is demographics has been reduced from having 13 sections to eight sections which correspond to the independent variables of the current investigation. Part 2 of the MORID questionnaire which became Part 3 of the researcher's instrument is retained, covering the statements regarding teachers' perspectives towards inclusion of students with special needs. However, slight modification in the directions was made to make it pleasant to the participants. Part 3 of the MORID instrument about the teachers' knowledge on the benefits of inclusion was removed and Part 2 of the MORID was placed. As a result of the modifications, the researcher came up with the

new research tool which is divided into three parts, namely: Part 1: Demographic information, Part 2: Knowledge on the concepts of inclusive education and Part 3: Teachers' Attitude Scale towards inclusion of students with special needs in regular classrooms. To wrap up, this instrument was with a cover page.

The researcher's research tool was validated and given a very satisfactory rating by four English language experts with knowledge and experience in teaching students with special educational needs. The validators' suggestions were incorporated to come up with the final questionnaire. Moreover, the survey questionnaire used in this study was tried among ten international school teachers whom were exempted from the actual investigation. The results were collected and submitted to the statistician for reliability testing. The questionnaire obtained a Cronbach's alpha of .738 which means that the questionnaire has a range of good internal consistency.

Part 1 of the questionnaire determines the profile of the respondents. It covers the sex, age, nationality, degree held, years of teaching experience, specialization, training in special education and experience in teaching students with disabilities in classroom. Part 2 determines the knowledge of the international school teachers on inclusive education concept. It comprises 14 questions relative to the international definition and concept of inclusive education.

Part 3 addresses the degree of attitude towards integration as well as teachers' knowledge on the placement of students with special needs by utilizing a survey that includes 30 items constructed in statement format. The 30 items are categorized into: (1) beliefs (core perspectives towards inclusion), (2) feelings or expected outcomes of inclusion and (3) actions or classroom practices.

A five-point Likert-type scale allows teachers to select their degree of agreement with the statements, with 5 as Strongly Agree (SA) and 1 as Strongly Disagree (SD). Questions probe the willingness, particularly of teachers, to work with students with special educational needs and ask for the respondents' beliefs about appropriate educational placements for SEN students. The sum of responses to the scale ranges from 30 to 150, with a higher score indicating a more favorable attitude. This method of summation is adapted from Antonak, et.al (1995) where both positively and negatively stated statements are summed up to determine the degree of the opinion towards the entire indicators.

2.3 Data Gathering Procedure

Due to the unique culture and policies of each school, teachers are often reluctant to share their perceptions. However, in this study, the school principals and SEN coordinators were notified. While this provided a safer climate for teachers to participate, it also provided a strong incentive for teachers to participate to answer the survey, knowing that the Learning Support Department had supported it.

The researcher sought the help of Special Educational Needs Coordinator in each school to acquire the correct information regarding the number of teachers and ask for their help to conduct the survey in their respective school. These SENCOS were met and oriented with the contents of the survey questionnaire as well as the correct process of administering it. Moreover, the researcher advised these assistants to retrieve the survey-questionnaire

immediately to ensure a 100 percent retrieval. The completed questionnaires were collected by the researcher from each school on the scheduled date. The collected data were hand scored by the researcher to avoid prejudice. After the tabulation, the results had been forwarded to the statistician for treatment and analysis.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The table below shows the demographic profile of the international school teachers in terms of gender, age, nationality, degree held, area of specialization, years of teaching experience, experience in teaching students with disabilities in classroom and training in special education.

Table 1. Profile Distribution of International School Teachers (N=52)

Profile	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	17	32.7
Female	35	67.3
Age		
< 30	15	28.8
31-40	21	40.4
41-50	10	19.2
51+	6	11.5
Nationality		
British	25	48.1
American	8	15.4
Canadian	5	9.6
Australian	5	9.6
Others	9	17.3
Degree Held		
Bachelor's Degree	29	55.8
Graduate Degrees	21	40.4
Others	2	3.8
Area of Specialization		
Special Education	6	11.5
General Education	33	63.5
Others	13	25.0
Years of Teaching Experience		
Less than 1 year	1	1.9
1-5 years	15	28.8
6-10 years	23	44.2
More than 10 years	13	25.0
Training in Special Education		
Yes	34	65.4
No	18	34.6
Experience in Teaching Students with Disabilities		
Yes	44	84.6
No	8	15.4

As shown, female respondents (35 or 67.3%) outnumber the male respondents (17 or 32.7%). Fifteen teachers are under 30 years of age; 21 teachers are between 31 and 40; 10 teachers are between 41 and 50 years old, and six teachers are 51 and older. Participants are mostly British teachers with bachelor's degrees, followed by teachers with master's degree.

Of the 52 respondents, 48.1 percent of teachers are British, 15.4 percent are American teachers, an equal 9.6 percent of teachers are Canadian and Australian and 17.3 percent of the teacher respondents are from the other countries. 29 teachers have bachelor's degrees (55.8%), 21 have master's degrees (40.4%), and only 2 teachers (3.8%) held a doctor's degree. This correlates with the overall population of international school teachers in Thailand, in which more people have bachelor's than graduate degrees.

In this study, the returned surveys reveal that most teachers in international schools are general educators. There are 33 teachers from general education (63.5%) while 13 teachers are not in the field of education per se, but in arts and sciences areas related to education (25%). The remaining 11.5% is from the field of special education. Moreover, most respondents have significant teaching experience between six and 10 years (44.2%), and are followed by a group with a moderate teaching experience between one and five years (28.8%). Thirteen participants have a very significant teaching experience of more than ten years (25%), which differs significantly from the least category that reported 1.9% of less than one year teaching experience.

In terms of experience in teaching students with disabilities in classroom, 44 teachers (84.6%) reported that they have experienced teaching students with disabilities in their classroom and only 8 teachers (15.4%) indicated they have not experienced teaching SEN students at all. In addition, of the 52 participants, 34 teachers (65.4%) report training program in special education after meeting their teacher training requirements, whereas 18 teachers (34.6%) indicate they have none. The researcher sought a high number of participants knowing that their demographic information and unique school culture are vital in this study, especially when asked to reveal their attitudes.

Discussion

A study of Carter (2006) asserts that the existence of special education services within Thailand has been evident for several years but is still expanding and attempting to train qualified individuals to provide educational services. The statistics shows that Thailand lacks teachers who are specialized in special education but special education training is not provided adequately and still inaccessible to all general education teachers. Furthermore, he found out that over the past ten years, the educational policy within Thailand has addressed issues regarding children with disabilities. The educational policy in Thailand appears to have rather quickly moved to a more inclusive practice toward individuals with disabilities. The rather rapid pace at which these policies have been implemented appear to have resulted in some difficulties associated with the provision of qualified teachers or teachers who are specialized in the field. It is argued that when teachers gain extensive professional knowledge needed to implement inclusive programmes they may succumb to it (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000 as cited in Dapudong, 2013).

Similarly, Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) reports that teachers with experience in teaching students, particularly those with special needs, intensify their confidence to teach them. This is likely to grow which invariably alters their negative attitudes. International school teachers perceive that their professional knowledge and skills were inadequate to effectively teach students with disabilities in regular schools. Their inability to meet the needs of those special needs students may contribute fear and concern towards a reduction in the academic success of

their schools. Children who are considered difficult to teach and those who find learning difficult are at increased risk for exclusion when schools operate in a competitive educational marketplace.

3.2 International School Teachers' Knowledge on Inclusive Education Concepts

3.2.1 Inclusive Education as a System of Education for All

The international school teachers in the Eastern Seaboard region of Thailand have a partial knowledge on inclusive education as a system of education for all that has been internationally recognized, promoted and supported to a great extent. With reference to recent international and national legislations that have cast increasing spotlights on the philosophies of inclusion and inclusive schooling, the respondents are partially aware of: the National Education Act or NEA, 1999 which mandates the Thai government to provide special education to the underprivileged and those individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities as well as special education that has to be provided in an appropriate form according to individual needs; the Salamanca statement (UNESCO, 1994, Article 3) which states that inclusive education is described as a framework for action that would accommodate all children "regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions"; and the government of many countries maintains that Education for All (EFA) is a policy which is implemented as part of a global campaign. It is also recognised that this policy is essential to develop a prosperous and progressive nation; there is a need to educate everyone irrespective of race, creed, gender, and socio-economic status. Inclusive education is one of the concepts included in this policy as a strategy for achieving EFA.

Interestingly, the international school teachers believe that education is the right of all children, and inclusive education aims to ensure that all children have access to an appropriate, relevant, affordable and effective education within their community as stipulated in the Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994).

Research indicates that inclusive education is a broad concept and is conceptualised by the teachers as an integration of students with special educational needs (SEN) or extra learning support needs. In this study, the teacher-respondents from four international schools were surveyed in terms of their knowledge on the concept of inclusive education as a means of integrating SEN students in regular classrooms.

3.2.2 Inclusive Education as Integration of Special Educational Needs

The teachers have a moderate knowledge on inclusive education as an integration of SEN students. The teachers have shown awareness on these categories: inclusive education is a placement of all students including children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms with the necessary support given within these classrooms and inclusive education is when an "educational environment is given the same level of scrutiny as the child in order to assess the adaptations needed to achieve a more effective match between the child's educational needs and the instruction offered". On a positive note, the teachers are fully aware of the categories with state inclusive education is an approach which aims to develop a child-focus within schools by acknowledging that all children are individuals with different learning needs and speeds and inclusive education is considered to be a means of providing educational opportunities for all children, including children with disabilities. This means placing children

with physical disabilities, behavioural or academic difficulties or social concerns together with regular children in mainstream classrooms.

3.2.3 Inclusive Education as a Way of Reducing Social Discrimination

The results of the survey also reveal that the international school teachers in Eastern Seaboard region, Thailand have a moderate level of knowledge on inclusive education as a way of reducing social discrimination, which means that they are aware of this concept. The international school teachers scored high in their awareness of “Inclusive education works as a catalyst for change because it not only enhances education within schools, but also represents an increased awareness of human rights and leads to a reduction in social discrimination”; “inclusive education enhances social interaction and inclusion among students and reduces negative stereotypes towards special needs children” and “inclusive education is seen as a system which caters for the needs of a diverse range of learners and supports diversity, effectively eliminating all forms of discrimination”. The teachers are also aware but scored least on “inclusion has the potential to be a very effective starting point for addressing the Rights of the Child in a range of cultures and contexts”.

Discussion

The data results reveal that teachers have moderate knowledge on inclusive education as a way of reducing social discrimination and as integration of Special Educational Needs students in mainstream classrooms while exhibited partial knowledge on inclusive education as a system of education for all where there is a need to educate everyone irrespective of race, creed, gender, and socio-economic status. Over all, the international school teachers exhibited moderate knowledge on the concept of inclusive education at an international level.

Inclusive education was first introduced from an international perspective at the Salamanca World Conference in 1994 in Spain which included international papers on special needs children (Ainscow & Cesar, 2006). In some countries, inclusive education is thought of as an approach to serve special educational needs children within general education settings. Internationally, however, inclusive education is seen as a system which caters for the needs of a diverse range of learners and supports diversity, effectively eliminating all forms of discrimination (UNESCO, 2008). Alur and Bach (2010) define inclusive education as the placement of all students including children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms with the necessary support given within these classrooms. According to Moore, Anderson, Timperley, Glynn, Macfarlane, Brown, and Thomson (1999), inclusive education is when an “educational environment is given the same level of scrutiny as the child in order to assess the adaptations needed to achieve a more effective match between the child’s educational needs and the instruction offered” (p.6). It can be considered to be an extension of the comprehensive ideal of education (Thomas & Loxley, 2007). Boer, Pijl and Minnaert (2011) considered inclusive education as a development keeping children with disabilities in mainstream education settings rather than referring them to special schools.

Over the years the terms “inclusive education” and “integrated education” have been used interchangeably in some countries (e.g. the United Kingdom), and the term “mainstreaming” has been used in the United States of America (Hossain, 2004; Long, Wood, Littleton, Passenger, & Sheehy, 2011). In the United States, inclusive education is defined as the education of children with disabilities with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. Some other countries use the term “integration” but the term “inclusive education” is broader than integration (Long et. al., 2011). “Integrated education” generally refers to an

approach in which children with disabilities and learning difficulties are placed in a mainstream setting and given help to fit in, but in an inclusive education system school and school practices were developed to support a diverse range of learners in mainstream settings which made schools more flexible and child-centred (Long et. al., 2011). In recent years, the concept of inclusive education has expanded to allow all manner of disadvantaged children to be educated such as working children (Mitchell, 2010).

Education is the right of all children, and inclusive education aims to ensure that all children have access to an appropriate, relevant, affordable and effective education within their community. This education starts in the home with the family, and includes formal, non-formal and all types of community-based education initiatives.

Inclusive education is an approach which aims to develop a child-focus within schools by acknowledging that all children are individuals with different learning needs and speeds (National Disabled Forum of Bangladesh, 2009). It works as a catalyst for change because it not only enhances education within schools, but also represents an increased awareness of human rights and leads to a reduction in social discrimination between poor and rich. Inclusion has the potential to be a very effective starting point for addressing the Rights of the Child in a range of cultures and contexts.

3.3 International School Teachers' Attitudes Regarding Inclusive Education of Children with Special Educational Needs in terms of their Beliefs, Feelings and Actions

The third problem posted in this study is to answer the question about the attitudes of international school teachers in terms of: a) beliefs or the core perspectives; b) feelings or the expected outcomes of inclusion; and c) actions or the classroom practices. Summary of each finding is arranged specifically with headings: Attitudes Regarding Inclusive Education of Children with Special Educational Needs in terms of their Beliefs; Attitudes Regarding Inclusive Education of Children with Special Educational Needs in terms of their Feelings and Attitudes Regarding Inclusive Education of Children with Special Educational Needs in terms of their Actions.

3.3.1 Level of Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Education of Children with Special Needs in terms of their Beliefs or Core Perspectives

Results indicate that most respondents strongly believe that students with special educational needs should have equal opportunities to participate in all school sponsored age-appropriate activities (e.g., sports, field trips, clubs, school plays, community service activities, etc.) and general education, special education, paraprofessionals, parents and related service providers have to plan and work collaboratively for the achievement of learning goals set for the child with special educational needs. In addition, the data show that the statements in which the respondents expressed agreement are as follows: regular classroom teachers must have the abilities necessary to work with students with special educational needs; regular classroom teachers must have sufficient training to teach students with special educational needs; integration of students with special educational needs necessitates extensive retraining of regular classroom teachers; and integration of students with special educational needs requires significant change in regular classroom procedures.

On the other hand, the main areas in which participants show uncertainty are as follows: whether students whose academic achievement is 2 or more years below the other students in the grade level should be in regular classes; whether students who cannot control their behaviour and disrupt activities should be in regular classes; whether the extra attention SEN

students require is detrimental to other students and whether it is likely that students with special educational needs will monopolize the regular classroom teacher's time. Overall, the result suggests that the international school teachers in Eastern Seaboard region of Thailand had a favourable attitude towards inclusion of children with SEN in terms of their belief.

Discussion

The respondents have a favorable attitude towards inclusive education of children with learning disabilities in terms of their beliefs. According to the Cognitive Module of Attitudes, Beliefs, whether good or bad, appropriate or not, reflect the cognitive component of attitudes. The cognitive module suggesting it bears categories of stimuli and the characteristics and opinions associated with each classification (Hannah & Pliner, 1983; Dapudong, 2013).

The result is supported by many other studies (Bones & Lambe, 2007; Kuyini, 2004; Leatherman & Niemeyer 2005) which have reported that training in special /inclusive education have positive impact on attitudes. In addition, such positive attitudes support the potential for more successful inclusive programs or experiences for students (Kuyini & Desai, 2008). Over a decade ago, Gary (1997) argued--on the basis of a literature review--that many regular education teachers who feel unprepared and fearful to teach students with disabilities in regular classes displayed frustration, anger and negative attitude toward inclusive education.

3.3.2 Level of Attitude of International School Teachers in terms of their Feelings or Expected Outcomes of Inclusion

This section illustrates the level of attitudes of international school teachers towards inclusion of children with SEN in terms of their feelings or expected outcomes of inclusion. The results reveal that the statements in which the participants expressed the most agreement are as follows: integration offers mixed group interaction that fosters understanding and acceptance of differences among students; the student with special educational needs develops academic skills more rapidly in a regular classroom than in special classrooms; the integration of students with special educational needs can be beneficial for students without disabilities; integration of students with special educational needs promotes his or her social independence; and SEN students can best be served in regular classrooms. These are the outcomes of inclusion. Expectedly, the respondents show disagreement on three negative statements regarding the outcomes of inclusion. The responses reveal that the participants disagree that integration will likely have a negative effect on the emotional development of the students with learning disabilities; the presence of students with learning disabilities will not promote acceptance of differences on the part of students without disabilities; and the behavior of students with learning disabilities will set a bad example for students without disabilities.

Overall, the participants have a neutral level of attitude towards including children with SEN in the regular classroom in terms of their feelings or the expected outcomes of inclusion.

Discussion

The level of the respondents' attitude towards inclusion of SEN children in regular classrooms in terms of their feelings or expected outcomes of inclusion is neutral. According to the **module of affective attitudes**, teachers may express their attitudes toward students with special needs by saying they neither like nor dislike providing services to this group of students. Based on the results, the respondents agreed with the following statements: integration offers mixed group interaction that will foster understanding and acceptance of

differences among students, students with learning disabilities can best be served in regular classrooms, the challenge of being in a regular classrooms will promote the academic growth of students with learning disabilities; the students with a learning disability will probably develop academic skills more rapidly in a regular classroom than in special classrooms; the integration of students with learning disabilities can be beneficial for students without disabilities, and integration of students with learning disabilities will promote his or her social independence.

The respondents' agreement on the benefits of inclusion is supported by a study which states that the inclusion of special educational needs students in the general classroom is viewed by many researchers as advantageous since they believe SEN students or students with disabilities in this setting can develop better social development, better social interaction, enhanced skill acquisition and generalization, better health, more independence, greater success in meeting the objectives of their IEPs, and more normalized functioning (Suk-Hyang, L., Wehmeyer, M. L., Soukup, J. H. & Palmer, 2010).

The third data on the level of attitudes of international school teachers is in the terms of their actions towards inclusive education of SEN children.

3.3.3 Level of Attitude of International School Teachers in terms of their Actions or Classroom Practices

The level of attitudes of international school teachers towards inclusive education of SEN children in terms of their actions or classroom practices is neutral. The result shows that majority of the teachers strongly agree in order to improve the SEN student learning, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that reflects individual educational needs, including academic and functional (e.g., behavioural, social, communication, life skills, etc.) skills needed to access the general education curriculum should be provided. In addition, the respondents also agreed that students with special educational needs should be welcome in regular classes and students with special educational needs are given every opportunity to function in regular classrooms when possible.

On the other hand, the main areas in which participants of the study expressed disagreement are as follows: assignments should not be modified for students with special educational needs; and modification of coursework for students with special educational needs would be difficult to justify to other students.

However, the same participants have expressed their uncertainties on: whether isolation in a special classroom has a beneficial effect on the social and emotional development of the students with special educational needs; whether there is more difficulty to maintain order in a regular classroom that has special educational needs students than in one that does not have students with special educational needs and whether isolation in a special classroom has a beneficial effect on the social and emotional development of the students with special educational needs.

Discussion

Overall, the data presented that the respondents had a neutral level of attitude in terms of their actions or classroom practices towards inclusive education of LD children. In a positive note, international school teachers have a favorable attitude towards welcoming and willingness to work with students with learning disabilities in their classroom and providing an IEP to best

support life skills development and curriculum access. This claim is based on the **Contrived/Behavioral Module of Attitudes**. Many scholars have stated that since attitudes are complex and related to covert behavior, attitudes have an “action tendency.” This is due to being able and ready to behave in a specific way associated with a particular feeling, yet at the same time, it does not cover the actual behavior itself.

Current literature suggests that teachers’ willingness to teach or work with students with special needs is a significant factor in education. Self-confidence, ability, and/or willingness to work with students with special needs are presumably key factors affecting classroom teachers’ attitudes. Subban and Sharma (2005) investigated teachers’ attitudes about integrating students with special needs into classrooms. More specifically, they analyzed the way teachers mentally accept this form of education for students with physical or emotional needs and learning disabilities. Subban’s findings suggest primary school teachers were more willing to integrate students with special needs into their classrooms than those teaching grades seven and eight. Zigmond (2005) reported that there are three significant variables related to teachers’ willingness to accept students with disabilities: (a) teachers’ levels of confidence in their abilities to teach children with disabilities; (b) a belief that children with exceptionalities are capable of becoming useful members of society; (c) and a belief that schools should educate children with exceptionalities. Prinsloo (2006) continues by saying that the willingness of classroom teachers to accommodate children with special needs in their classes has limitations, which are clearly listed in the literature. Teachers’ levels of self-confidence seem to be an essential factor in accepting students with learning disabilities, be they physical, emotional or intellectual.

However, this is argued by two authors, Good and Brophy (2007) who express those teachers’ attitudes toward including students with special needs into the classroom context are not clear-cut; there have always been gray areas. This could be because classroom teachers have viewed the integration of children with special needs in a number of ways. Some teachers see inclusion as a practice that should be implemented in every school because of its advantages such as enhancing the self-esteem of students with disabilities as well as helping them improve their cognitive skills and helping them learn how to socialize while others see inclusion as a problematic program to implement because of the confusions that are associated with the practice.

At the heart of this investigation is a desire to know whether the Thailand international school teachers’ attitudes are more similar to the first or the second issue.

An educator with negative attitudes toward a student’s ability to learn is very likely to influence how that student is going to feel about his or her learning experience. Negative attitudes can also influence the way the teacher is going to treat his or her students in other contexts. Current literature states that whether teachers do so intentionally or unintentionally, they provide a substandard level of instruction when they doubt a student’s ability to learn (Lake, 2008). Likewise, research has stressed that special education instructors often have a bias toward students if they feel a student with special need lacks a particular ability or has issues which prohibit him or her from learning in a standard way. Furthermore, the research also states that there are significant and well-known reasons why teachers may look down on students with special learning needs, including frequent behavior problems in the classroom environment. This might lead teachers to believe teaching and disciplining children with special needs is difficult.

3.4 The Differences in Attitudes of International School Teachers When Grouped According to Eight Variables

The tables presented below show the results of testing the hypothesis regarding differences in attitudes among international school teachers when grouped according to eight variables. Each table clearly displays the results of the study's fourth problem.

Table 2. Significant Differences in Attitudes of International School Teachers when Grouped According to Gender

Attitudes	t-value	p-value	Remarks	Decision Ho
Beliefs	.275	.786	Not Significant	Accept
Feelings	-.064	.949	Not Significant	Accept
Actions	2.144	.037	Significant	Reject

**p-value at 0.05*

There is no significant difference in attitude of international school teachers when grouped according to gender in terms of beliefs and feelings as denoted by the computed p-values of .786 and .949, respectively which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted on these variables. This signifies that both male and female teachers have obtained low and high attitude towards inclusive education of children with special need in terms of core perspectives and expected outcomes of inclusion.

However, there is a significant difference in attitude of the respondents when grouped according to gender in terms of actions as indicated by the computed p-value of .037 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that male (3.23) teachers have significantly higher attitude than females (3.07) in classroom practices.

Gender is a significant factor in attitude towards inclusion of SEN students in terms of teachers' classroom practices because both male and female have different attitude towards learning disabilities of their students. Unlike previous research findings where male teachers have recorded less tolerance for implementing inclusion (Ellins & Porter, 2005) and lower levels of sympathy (Carroll et al., 2003) the male teachers in Hong Kong initially reported significantly more positive attitudes and sentiments towards inclusion with higher levels of self-efficacy than did the female teachers.

However, this study finding is in contrast with the study of Dapudong (2013) concerning Thai teachers' attitude towards educating SEN children. Culturally speaking, the Thai people, male or female, believe that taking care of disabled children will bring good luck and spiritual merits in Buddhism. Thus, Thai people are very generous to extend financial help and volunteer work to orphanages, rehabilitation centres and foundations for disabled children.

Table 3. Significant Differences in Attitudes of International School Teachers when Grouped According to Age

Attitudes	f-value	p-value	Remarks	Decision Ho
Beliefs	2.292	.090	Not Significant	Accept
Feeling	1.665	.187	Not Significant	Accept
Actions	1.202	.319	Not Significant	Accept

**p-value at 0.05*

There is no significant difference in the attitudes of International School teachers when grouped according to age as denoted by the computed p-values of .090, .187 and .319 which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance in terms of beliefs, feelings and actions, respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that young and old teachers have various levels of attitude towards inclusive education of children with special need.

International and local teachers in Thailand vary with their attitude in terms of their age. Dapudong (2013) found out that there was a significant difference in attitude of Thai primary school teachers when grouped according to age. Those teachers aged 41-50 have satisfactory attitude compared to other teachers of different age bracket. Moreover, age is also a significant factor in the study of Forlin and Sin, (2010) entitled “Developing support for inclusion: a professional learning approach for teachers in Hong Kong”. They found out that the younger teachers were more concerned about providing inclusive instructions for special needs students, with all teachers reporting only slightly positive efficacy in this regard.

Table 4. Significant Differences in Attitudes of International School Teachers when Grouped According to Nationality

Attitudes	F-value	Sig.	Remarks	Decision Ho
Beliefs	.166	.955	Not Significant	Accept
Feelings	.882	.482	Not Significant	Accept
Actions	1.402	.248	Not Significant	Accept

**p-value at 0.05*

There is no significant difference in the attitudes of International School teachers when grouped according to nationality as denoted by the computed p-values of .955, .482 and .248 which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance in terms of beliefs, feelings and actions, respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that nationality is not a factor that makes them different in their attitude towards inclusive education of children with special needs. The teacher-respondents of this present study are from the United States, England, Middle East and Asia who have the same attitude towards inclusion regardless of their cultural and educational backgrounds. It can be concluded that teachers respond to their teaching duties based on their school philosophy, existing learning support policies and culture.

Table 5. Significant Differences in Attitudes of International School Teachers when Grouped According to Degree held

Attitudes	F-value	Sig.	Remarks	Decision Ho
Beliefs	.081	.922	Not Significant	Accept
Feelings	1.662	.200	Not Significant	Accept
Actions	.642	.531	Not Significant	Accept

**p-value at 0.05*

There is no significant difference in the attitudes of International School teachers when grouped according to degree held as manifested by the computed p-values of .922, .200 and .531 which are all greater than the 0.05 level of significance in terms of beliefs, feelings and actions, respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that any educational attainment can obtain negative and positive attitude towards inclusive education of children with special educational needs.

The study revealed that those teachers who held bachelor's and graduate degree have the same level of attitude. However, the study of Loreman, T., Forlin, C., & Sharma, U. (2007) on comparing teachers' attitudes towards inclusion revealed that those teachers who held either doctoral or master's degree showed more positive attitude than those with bachelor's degree and associate diploma. The reason behind is that, the ones with higher level of education have acquired wider insights and gained more knowledge than those with lower level of education.

Table 6. Significant Differences in Attitudes of International School Teachers when Grouped According to Area of Specialization

Attitudes	F-value	Sig.	Remarks	Decision Ho
Beliefs	1.812	.174	Not Significant	Accept
Feelings	.628	.538	Not Significant	Accept
Actions	2.553	.088	Not Significant	Accept

**p-value at 0.05*

There is no significant difference in the attitudes of International School teachers when grouped according to Education Area as indicated by the computed p-values of .174, .538 and .088 which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance in terms of beliefs, feelings and actions, respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that either teachers in Special or General Education can obtain unfavourable and favourable attitude towards inclusive education of children with special educational needs. This result is in contrast to the previous study in Thailand conducted by Dapudong (2013) with the Thai teachers which revealed that special education teachers held more positive attitude than general education teachers and teachers who have other field of specialization.

Additionally, Forlin (2008) points out the relevance of the teaching field in special education programs. In her study, "Education Reform for Inclusion in Asia: What about Teacher Education?", teachers clearly resented what they perceived to be imposed policy. The teachers showed resistance to educational reform specifically in the idea of inclusion because of their lack of knowledge background and expertise in the field of special education. According to the teachers, "Those who are advocating for inclusive education in this country sit in their offices and force the policy on us; they are deliberately ignoring the facts of the problem." Teachers overwhelmingly believe that inclusive education is impossible without addressing their needs for specialist resources. Overall belief is that without sufficient resources and support, inclusive education is not possible and doomed. The respondents of this previous study resented by saying "You cannot work on your farm without a farming tool and different farming activities require different tools and appropriate expertise. It is better our schools do not start inclusion because these officers will push you and leave you to fall."

Table 7. Significant Differences in Attitudes of International School Teachers when Grouped According to Teaching Experiences

Attitudes	F-value	Sig.	Remarks	Decision Ho
Beliefs	.574	.635	Not Significant	Accept
Feelings	.091	.965	Not Significant	Accept
Actions	1.152	.338	Not Significant	Accept

**p-value at 0.05*

There is no significant difference in the attitudes of International School teachers when grouped according to teaching experience as indicated by the computed p-values of .635, .965 and .338 which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance in terms of beliefs, feelings and actions, respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that teachers with either shorter or longer period of teaching experience can obtain either extensively unfavorable or favorable attitude towards inclusive education of children with special educational needs.

However, in the case of Thai teachers, the previous study revealed that those Thai teachers who have 6-10 years teaching experience have more favorable attitude than those teachers with below six years of teaching experience. In another similar study, the finding was that teachers held overall negative attitudes towards inclusion caused by minimal years of teaching experience. This is particularly true in Serbia special needs training which was just introduced in universities (Save the Children Report, 2009). It is likely that teachers with a few years of teaching experience did not have the chance to benefit from proper training, which could make them more resistant to inclusive practices (Dapudong, 2013).

Table 8. Significant Differences in Attendance to any training program or workshop in Special Education

Attitudes	t-value	Sig.	Remarks	Decision Ho
Beliefs	1.663	.103	Not Significant	Accept
Feelings	.944	.351	Not Significant	Accept
Actions	-1.095	.279	Not Significant	Accept

**p-value at 0.05*

There is no significant difference in the attitudes of International School teachers when grouped according to training in special education as denoted by the computed p-values of .103, .351 and .279 which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance in terms of beliefs, feelings and actions, respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that those teachers with and without attendance to any training program or workshop in special education have various levels of attitude towards inclusive education of children with special educational needs.

Dapudong (2013) and Stewart (2001) pointed out that teachers' attitude towards inclusive education reveals their abilities to meet the individual needs of students with disability. They accentuate that teachers who are knowledgeable and have training and background in handling children with special needs drew positive attitudes.

Table 9. Significant Differences in Experience in teaching students with disabilities in classroom

Attitudes	t-value	Sig.	Remarks	Decision Ho
Beliefs	.998	.343	Not Significant	Accept
Feelings	.804	.447	Not Significant	Accept
Actions	-.634	.543	Not Significant	Accept

**p-value at 0.05*

There is no significant difference in the attitudes of International School teachers when grouped according to experience in teaching students with disabilities in the classroom as denoted by the computed p-values of .343, .447 and .543 which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance in terms of beliefs, feelings and actions, respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that those teachers with and without any experience in

teaching students with disabilities can obtain negative, neutral and positive attitude towards inclusive education of children with special educational needs.

In contrast to an international study of four countries by Loreman, Forlin and Sharma (2007) which indicates that factors such as close contact with a person with a disability, teaching experience, knowledge of policy and law, and confidence levels had significant impact on teachers' attitudes. They have reported that experience in teaching or relating to students with disabilities has positive impact on attitudes. In addition, such positive attitudes support the potential for more successful inclusive programs or experiences for students with special needs.

In addition, teachers without experience in teaching children with SEN were more negative in their beliefs regarding core perspectives of inclusion possibly because they lacked knowledge and specific skills in instructional and management skills than teachers with relevant experience (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007).

T-test and ANOVA results show that all variables except the gender type are not significant factors that have an effect on the attitudes of the respondents toward inclusion of students with special educational needs. Following the course, the only significant difference was found in their actions or classroom practices in being able to better manage student behavior and academic increases.

3.5 Professional Development Program

This section answers the final question “what feasible intervention programme can be designed to improve the level of knowledge and attitude of international school teachers?” posted in the statement of the problem. Based on the results of the survey, the International School teachers have moderate knowledge on the inclusive education concepts while they exhibited neutral attitude towards inclusion of children with Special Educational Needs. The researcher believes that an enhancement, not an intervention program would be suited to increase the level of their knowledge and attitude towards inclusive education.

In their study “The influence of teaching experience and professional development on Greek teachers' attitudes towards inclusion”, Avramidis and Kalyva (2007) present some reasons teachers believed as necessary to make their responses to inclusion more positive. Sixty per cent of the 135 participants said that more knowledge of different disabling conditions and different strategies would affect their feelings about inclusion in a positive way. One third said that they would need more training on how to manage challenging behavior and academic difficulties. In addition, Prinsloo (2006) stresses that training has also been identified as a key factor in the success or otherwise of inclusion policies and have a positive impact on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. Thus, a structure called *Professional Development Program (PDP)* is designed and channeled through the establishment of Special Education Network in Eastern Seaboard (SENEST).

3.5.1 Proposed Professional Development Training Design Matrix

Data-based Findings	Objectives	Topics for Lecture Sessions	Strategies/ Evaluation	Resource Persons
Partial Knowledge On The Legislation Of Thailand and Salamanca Statement	Discuss Thai and international legislations concerning inclusion	Thai Legislations, Circulars and International Updates on Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Forum • Opinion survey towards inclusion • Small group discussion • Power Point Presentation 	Mr. Richel Dapudong Mrs. Tricia Gray
Partial Knowledge on Inclusive Education concepts and SEN practices .	Be oriented with the types special educational needs and writing an IEP	Knowing and Identifying a Child with special needs with IEP formulation	Lecture on types of SEN Showing IEP samples Completing IEP forms Making an IEP through a make-up child IEP presentation	Mr. Richel Dapudong SEN Coordinators from International schools
	Increase knowledge and understanding of inclusion, educational placement and differentiation	How to Teach A Child with Math and Language Difficulties: Every Teacher Should Know Inclusion in the 21 st Century	Lecture through Power Point Presentation Small group discussion (sharing effective strategies) Developing SEN teaching strategies	Mrs. Laura Kerr (SEN Coordinator, St. Andrews international School)
Uncertain on their classroom practices whether teaching SEN students is better done by the special education teachers than by regular classroom teachers	Increase knowledge and attitude on educating children with special needs	Co-teaching Pull-out or Push in? Collaboration	Lecture through Power Point Presentation Group sharing	Mr. Richel Dapudong SEN Coordinators from International Schools
Uncertain on the behavior exhibited by students with SEN in regular classrooms.	Identify behavior exhibited in the classroom and formulate a BIP	Behavior and behavior Modification and BIP	Use of behavior checklist Behavior Modification strategies/techniques BIP formulation	Mr. Richel Dapudong

3.5.2 SENEST Termly Seminar for 2014-2015

Term 1	Topic	Resource Person
7:30 – 8:00	Registration	
8:00 – 9:00	Opening program with Keynote Speaker	Invited Speaker from MoE, Thailand
9:00 – 9:30	Break	
9:30 – 11:30	Thai legislations on Inclusive Education	Mr. Montri Sriraksa Director, Rayong Educational Center
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch Break	
12:30 - 2:30	Thai Ministry of Education: Special Education Programs	Mr. Suwit Moolkum
2:30 – 3:00	Break	
3:00 – 3:45	Open Forum on International Definition of Inclusive Education	Mr. Richel Dapudong Training Coordinator
Term 2		
7:30 – 8:00	Attendance	
8:00 – 8:30	RECAP and Briefing	Mr. Richel Dapudong
8:30 – 11:00	Part 1: Types of Special Needs and their Symptoms	Mr. Richel Dapudong Primary SEN Teacher Garden International School
11:00– 12:00	Lunch Break	
12:00 – 2:00	Part 2: Inclusion in the 21 st Century	Tricia Gray
2:00 – 2:30	Break	
2:30 – 3:30	How to Teach A Child with Math and Language Difficulties: Every Teacher Should Know	All Participants and Speakers
Term 3		
7:30-8:00	Registration and Coffee	All participants
8:00-9:30	How to Make Individualised Education Plan (IEP)	Mr. Richel Dapudong
9:30-11:30	Behavior Modification Techniques	Mr. Peter Baker
11:30-12:30	Lunch	
12:30- 2:00	How to Design a Behavior Intervention Plan	Mr. Nick Wilding
2:00-2:15	Break	
2:15-3:30	Policies and Administration of Special Education Programs in Schools	All SEN Coordinators

4. Conclusions

The international school teachers' profiles show that there are more female teachers than male and mostly are aged 31-50 years old. Most of the respondents are British teachers holding bachelor's and master's degrees with a relevant teaching experience of six years and more. In terms of area of specialization, nearly all teachers are general education and just a few are from the other field and special education. Two thirds of the respondents have experienced teaching

students with disabilities in classroom and majority of them have attended any training or workshop in special education.

The data results reveal that teachers have moderate knowledge on inclusive education as a way of reducing social discrimination and as integration of Special Educational Needs students in mainstream classrooms while exhibited partial knowledge on inclusive education as a system of education for all where there is a need to educate everyone irrespective of race, creed, gender, and socio-economic status. Over all, the international school teachers exhibited moderate knowledge on the concept of inclusive education at an international level.

The respondents have a favorable attitude towards inclusion of Special Educational Needs children in regular classrooms in terms of their beliefs or the core perspectives towards inclusion and neutral attitude towards inclusive education of SEN children in terms of their feelings or expected outcomes of inclusion and actions or classroom practices. In general, the results showed a neutral attitude towards inclusion which means that the international school teachers are uncertain whether to support the idea and practices of inclusive education in the setting where they are in.

The outcome of the present study presents the fact that there are no differences in attitudes among the international school teachers when grouped according to seven variables such as age, degree held, years of teaching experience, area of specialization, experience in teaching students with disabilities in the classroom, and training in special education. The results indicated that only gender have a significant effect on the attitude of the international school teachers. It can be concluded that it is vital to consider the demographics of the respondents when there is a need to determine the attitude towards the issue.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that: schools consider the profile of the teacher applicants during the hiring process and staffing. Teachers' training in special education, experience in teaching children with special educational needs in mainstream classrooms and teachers' willingness to work with SEN students in regular classes should be considered as requirement for employing teachers to work in an inclusive school.

To enhance the knowledge of teachers towards inclusive education, schools need to provide more special educational needs training, sufficient learning support providers and educational resources as well as in-depth specialization courses that provide specialized practices for implementing the special education strategies in their classrooms as well as offering teaching strategies on how to bridge theory and practice. Learning Support Programs and the actual delivery of these programs should be developed in terms of individualized education plan (IEP) provision, curriculum modifications and classroom adaptations that are appropriate for students with special educational needs.

In order to improve the attitude of teachers towards inclusion in terms of their beliefs (core perspectives), feelings (expected outcomes of inclusion) and actions (classroom practices), the school administrators may consider promoting learning support policies and programs by changing gradually the previous education system toward a system that now integrates children with exceptionality. They could provide teachers with scientific research and a model for change to help indicate the kind of educational change and/or program needed in order to work

with students with disabilities during in-service training (INSET) days or through an organised SEN workshop.

Furthermore, there is a need to establish or strengthen a Special Education Network in Eastern Seaboard region of Thailand where a group of professionals who are working with SEN students support one another through sharing of knowledge, expertise, resources and other support services in organized workshops or conferences, termly meetings and unified advocacy program in the region. The workshops can be designed for special educational needs teachers, regular education teachers, teaching assistants and parents of differently-able children.

Finally, in order to better support student learning, further study on the emerging factors affecting collaboration between school teachers and between schools and families among international schools should be conducted.

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