



มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล ปัญญาของแผ่นดิน  
Mahidol University *Wisdom of the Land*

# Embarking upon the reformation of mainstream education for children with special needs in Thailand

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## The significance of the study

- To explore attitudes towards education of children with special needs in Thailand
- To examine varying educational approaches regarding children with special needs
- To benefit future educational policy, teacher training, and improve instructional methods in schools

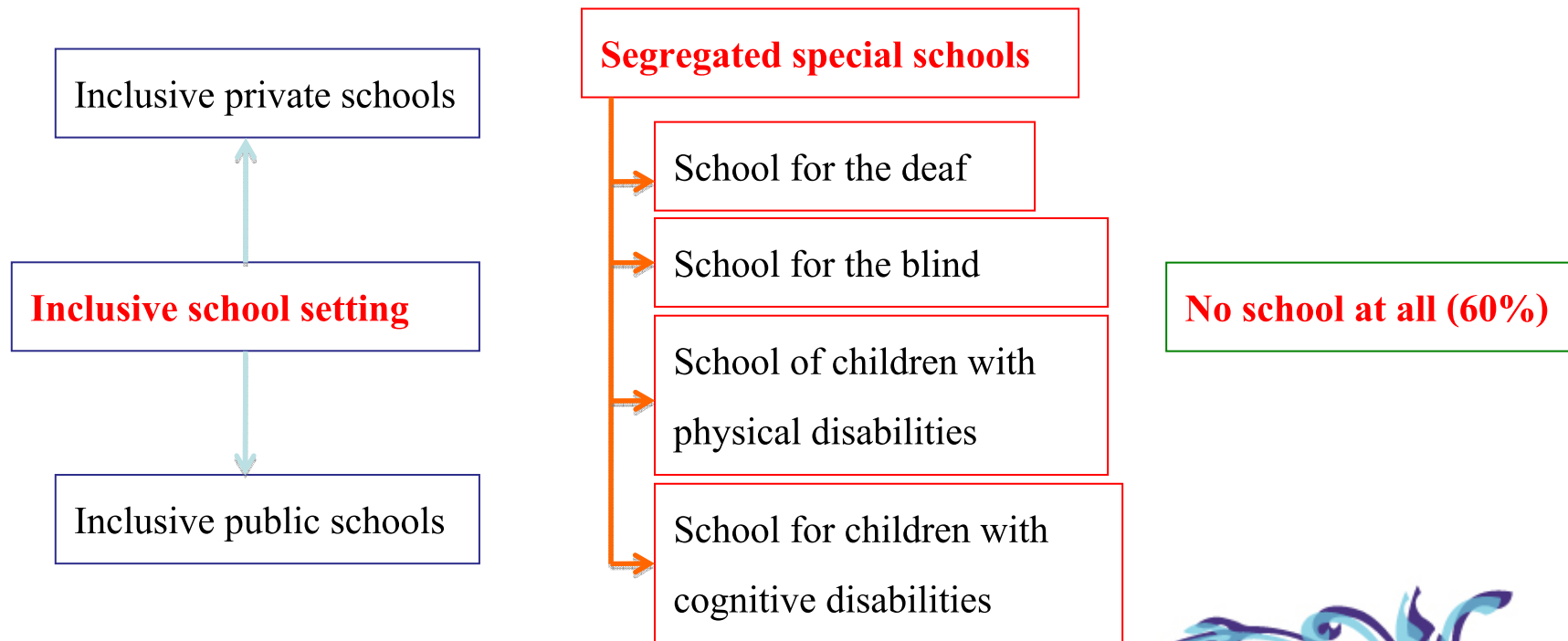


## Statement of the problem

- Inclusion is the world-wide movement as “Education For All” (UNESCO, 1990)
- A push of adapt inclusion into practice without examine the challenges and possibilities
- Attitudes and perspectives of people who involve with these students are not yet examine



# School options for children with special needs



## What happened in schools for children with special needs?

- the **challenges and opportunities** in implementing **educational policy** specific to children with special needs
- the **challenges and opportunities** in implementing common **educational practices** used for children with special needs



## The findings

### Segregated approach

-The disadvantages of segregated classrooms

1. Too many students
2. No good role modeled
3. Learning ability drops

-The unrealistic nature of school policies

1. Unrealistic school agenda
2. Teachers accepting methods
3. Students accepting methods
4. Other related work

-Unawareness about enforcing the national policies

1. Standardized score
2. Government funding
3. Less experienced schools

### Inclusive approach

-The disadvantages of inclusive classrooms

1. Diversity needs
2. Concerns in implementing the inclusive classrooms
3. Concerns about how inclusive classrooms can be more effective

-The unrealistic nature of school policies

1. Rights to be included in the classroom
2. Too many school activities
3. Policy about boarding school

- Unawareness about enforcing the national policies

## The findings

### Segregated approach

-The increasing awareness of students with disabilities

- 1.Special school concept
- 2.Lack of diversity in living and learning
- 3.Ease of maintaining the class
- 4.The availability of Assistive Technology

-The advantages of school policies

- 1.Outside school activities
- 2.IEP and standards set
- 3.Well-trained teachers
- 4.Selective student acceptance
- 5.Transferring students to inclusive schools
- 6.School facilities

-The awareness of government related to students with disabilities

- 1.Project 30 baht treatment of all disease
- 2.2007 EPDA

### Inclusive approach

-The increasing awareness of students with disabilities

- 1.Sharing responsibilities
- 2.The integration of the curriculum and instruction formats
- 3.Teachers and students' perspectives changed

-The advantage of school policies

- 1.Staff development
- 2.The involvement of principal and school board committee
- 3.Method of selecting students
- 4.Method of selecting teachers

-The awareness of government related to students with disabilities

1. 2007 EPDA

## The findings

### Segregated approach

-The disadvantages of teaching all students with disabilities in one classroom

1. Similarity of all students
2. Below average in learning developmental skills

-The disadvantages of the common practices used for educating students with disabilities in a segregated school

1. Lack of staff training
2. Limitations of providing education individually
3. Unhealthy environment
4. Method of accepting students
5. Misunderstandings of parents
6. Funding unavailability

### Inclusive approach

-The disadvantages of teaching students with and without disabilities in one classroom

1. Socialization in the class
2. Skills developmentally inappropriate
3. Concerns related to partial or full inclusion
4. The effectiveness of teaching

-The disadvantages of common practices used for educating students with disabilities in an inclusive school

1. High tuition fees
2. Others barriers to implement inclusive approach
3. Inclusive school: for who? By whom?



## The findings

### Segregated approach

-The advantages of teaching all students with disabilities in one classroom

- 1.Classroom preparation and method of teaching
- 2.Eliminating bad attitudes from outside
- 3.Concept of a “place for us”

-The advantages of common practices used in segregated school

- 1.Reasonable tuition fees
- 2.Easy to maintain and organize students
- 3.Well-trained teachers and professionals

### Inclusive approach

-The advantages of teaching students with and without disabilities in one classroom

- 1.Collaboration: When students learn together
- 2.Instructional modification
- 3.Adaptive curriculum and lesson formats
- 4.Adaptive materials
- 5.Modified classroom environment

-The advantages of common practices used in inclusive schools

- 1.Parental involvement
- 2.Friendly environment
- 3.Peer-relationship and diversity among friends
- 4.Modification for student success
- 5.Role model as a pioneer for inclusive schools

## Analysis

The challenges in common practices

- Most of them were concerned about the **learning and social skills** that developed inappropriately. Some of them were concerned about the effectiveness of teaching **too many students** with disabilities in the classroom.
- Common practices that were perceived as obstacles to educating students with disabilities were the **methods for accepting students**.

## Analysis

The opportunities in common practices

- Teachers and school administrators identified several curriculum and instruction strategies that involved with the **integration of curriculum and adaptation of learning materials** support educating students with disabilities in their schools
- Field notes verified successful **cooperative teaching and adaptive learning materials.**

## Implications & Recommendations

- Special education teacher preparation programs
- Desired special education system in Thailand



## Implications & Recommendations

### Special education teacher preparation programs

- Student teachers should have **more knowledge** about students with disabilities
- **Curriculum** in university should change
- General education teacher preparation program should lead to **certification in specific disabilities knowledge**
- The program should providing **models of successful students** with and without disabilities who study together

## Implications & Recommendations

### Desired special education system in Thailand

- Making changes in **teacher training programs** especially making continuing education a mandatory qualification for all teachers
- **Reforming and rebuilding the special education system** with a group of people who have thorough knowledge about education and students with disabilities



## Implications & Recommendations

Desired special education system in Thailand

- Offering **public participation** in every province of the country
- Providing appropriate **teacher training programs** for both general education and special education teachers
- Providing **resource allocation** for educating children with disabilities specifically starting with a quality elementary education, with special centers that help increase child development

## Fruit for thought

- 1) Transforming process to include students with disabilities into regular schools
  - Transforming process, where is the equilibrium point?
  - What changes should have been made prior to the legislation being launched into practice? And how can new concepts be implemented with success?
  - Should Thailand still have different methods of teaching offered for these students?



## Fruit for thought

- 2) Ideals of successful learning for students with special needs
  - What practices are similar or different when teachers hold different beliefs about the learning ability of these students?



## Fruit for thought

Under the umbrella of globalization, how to fashion an individual with the conception of “**think globally; act locally**” would become another burning question simmering over people’s minds. The concept of inclusion is highly **context-dependent and the socio-cultural difference** should be a principal point being considered in people’s minds when adapting a universal approach towards inclusion without completely giving up the idea of segregation.



## Conclusion

Three main issues seemed to be at the heart of study for **parents** of children with special needs

- Factors related to teachers and teaching instruction
- Proportion of students with disabilities in one classroom and the effect on learning abilities in general
- Funding and tuition fee issues



## Conclusion

Three main issues seemed to be at the heart of study for **teachers** of children with special needs

- Attitudes of parents towards other students with disabilities in a classroom
- Adaptations and modifications in methods of teaching, curriculum, and learning materials
- The national legislation



## Conclusion

Three main issues seemed to be at the heart of study for **school administrators**

- Attitudes of parents and teachers towards learning abilities of students with special needs
- Who can and should be included in the classrooms
- The unrealistic legislation offered by the government



## Questions & Comments

