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**SURVEY OF PREFERRED DELIVERY METHODS FOR TRAINING RELATED TO  
 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR TEACHER IN VIENTIANE CAPITAL LAO P.D.R**

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**ABSTRACT**

Investigation teachers' preferred delivery methods regarding inclusion of children with special needs in Vientiane capital Lao P.D.R. Teachers (n=152) from different levels of teaching (elementary school, junior-high school, high school and university) were included in this study. This survey was conducted by questionnaire, which developed from "Teacher Attitude towards Inclusive Education Questionnaire" by Evangeline Kern in 2006. The survey questionnaire was consisted of open-ended responses related to the type of training that should be the most benefit for them in effectively applying inclusive education. Participants responded on a seven points scale from 1 (most beneficial) to 7 (least beneficial). Ranking of preferred delivery methods for receiving training about inclusion were arranged and calculated. The study revealed that coursework at the college/university as the most beneficial for delivery method for them. District level in-service training and out of district training being were the following sequence, respectively. In addition, they also needed training regarding how to be accessible data toward inclusive education, how to applying and adapting equipment for teaching students with disabilities. Interesting enough, they preferred the consistence training twice per year to improve their performance in inclusive education teaching.

**Key words:** blind, visual impairment, special education, teaching

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Inclusion of student with disabilities (SWDs) in mainstream educational settings has been recognized and encouraged by law and politic for a number of years. This topic also inspired by the research results in several aspects (Alkhateeb, Hadidi, & Alkhateeb, 2016; Lindsay, 2007). Decades of exclusion of children with developmental disabilities from the idea of conventional/mainstream regular schools were applied. Nowadays, many developing countries have recently joined the global movement toward more inclusive education for these SWDs. The term "Inclusion" refers to the process through which education systems respond to different students in ways that enable participation, equal opportunities, respect for difference and social justice (Robinson, 2017). Inclusive education is aimed to provide the SWDs with special educational needs (SEN) equal opportunities for an effective education in regular schools (Mel Ainscow 2010; Robinson, 2017; Yuko Ikematsu, 2016). It has been proved that regular classroom with normal peers improved their



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academic learning activities better than another (Mira Aliza Rachmawati, 2016). The success of inclusive education depends on several factors, such as, time's ratio between classrooms and playgrounds, skills of educator at the school level, leadership of the educational administrator (Mitchell, 2008). The movement towards inclusive education has advantages not only for the child with special educational needs, but also for the child without disability (Ikematsu, Egawa, Endo, & Yokouchi, 2016). In the case of the child without a disability, inclusive education approach can lead to positive changes in student's attitude towards disability.

Teachers are playing the important role in the education of SWDs via the inclusive education process. The inclusive education is not only place the SWDs in the regular classroom, but also arranges these students into the general education curriculum. The key role is teacher commitment to excellent instruction for every student. Teacher must put the extra effort, required, and dedicated to find their reward in their student's achievement (Choate, 2004). According to (A. Driscoll|N.G. Nagel-Pearson Allyn Bacon Prentice Hall, 2010) the term inclusion it means places students with disabilities to the general school. They learn in the same class with student without disabilities full time or some time and the instruction for these students are launched by special education and general education teachers.

However, there are some limitations, such as, skill, performance or attitude, toward inclusive education. International declarations about the implementation of inclusion students with disabilities in general classes, it has challenges both developed and developing countries, such as gaps between policies and practices, need positive attitudes toward inclusion and lack sufficient funding (Charema, 2007, 2010; Hornby, 2010; Kibria, 2005). Especially, most studies highlight the different challenges for developing countries to manage inclusive education, like lack of relevant research information, insufficient support service, lack of appropriate accommodation and materials, lack of training programs and ineffective policies (Charema, 2007, 2010; Eleweke & Rodda, 2002). Many studies regarding inclusion suggested by the diverse researchers that developing countries also need some changes in their policies to manage inclusion. For example, debate that developing countries meet the same challenges in the implementation of inclusive education. It is recommended that they also need some support regarding the lack of teaching materials, negative attitudes and large class size (Kristensen, Omagor-Loican, & Onen, 2003). The studies in other countries, such as Costa-Rica, presented that the government needs to create some suitable educational policies to prevent against potential challenges, including lack of training teachers in the area of junior high school education (Stough, 2003).

There are several access arrangements related to inclusive education. These arrangements include extra time in examination, the use of word processors, a scribe, voice recognition software and a change of font for exam papers (International Bureau of Education, 2007). Access requirements for visual impairment students will therefore vary widely. The type of access required might vary according to the degree and nature of their impairment. Moreover, the successful



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inclusive education also consists of several categories such as associated with: student integration, the students with disabilities and their friends without disabilities, the teacher, the school, and the classroom management (Brunet & Doré, 1993). The results showed that students with visual impairment in the inclusive education benefit from support of special education teacher (Keil, 2003; Leonard, D'Allura, & Horowitz, 1999; Pura Díaz Veiga, 1997).

Lao People's Democratic Republic Inclusive Education Project was started in 1993. The purpose was to support the children to participate in school, which focusing on disabled students. The strategies for this project were involving educational system changing by introduction of child centered approaches to teaching and learning in 539 schools across the country (Grimes, Sayarath, Outhaithany, 2011). There are some reports presented that Lao government has adopted international and regional policies in addressing children with disabilities and promoting inclusive education policies. However, they still met some obstacles in continuously improving the education policies, such as, special or inclusive education school. The main barrier was present via Ministry of the Health was the insufficient staff in Ministry of Education and sports (MOES) who have training and a qualification relating to supporting those with disabilities (Heu, 2016).

Studies showed that teachers are often not trained to teach children with disabilities, which makes these children among the most diminished in terms of opportunity in education. An approximately 15% of the world's population has a disability. Globally, 93 million children are estimated to have moderate and severe disabilities, and many of these children are out of school (WHO and World Bank, 2011). Pace's (2003) suggested that directors and other administrators contemplating inclusive education program has done in the past need to consider teacher attitudes regarding inclusion. There are several studies presented that teacher training is crucial for improve them to teach students with disabilities. Moreover, the support from administrative or government might help them to teach student with disabilities (Cook, Semmel, & Gerber, 1999).

This study attempted to provide quantitative evidence on how teacher personally preferences of training on their teaching student with visual impairment related to inclusive education. Specifically, the goal of this study was to find out the preferred delivery methods of inclusive education.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This study investigated the preferred delivery methods for training regarding inclusion of children with visual impairment in Vientiane capital Lao P.D.R. These sections describe the research design utilized; the participants; the materials utilized; and the research procedures.

### **2.1. Research Design**

The descriptive study was used to investigate the teacher's attitudes on the topic of inclusive education for children with visual impairment in Vientiane capital Lao P.D.R. Data from teachers (n=152) were collected in one point in time. Quantitative data from participants were accumulated



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via the assessing teacher questionnaire, which was the dependent variable of this study. As presented earlier, the research question for this study was “What are the preferred delivery methods for training regarding inclusion of children with visual impairment?”

This study was composed of quantitative analysis using descriptive statistics. Quantitative analyses were conducted using the results of the quantitative data. Frequencies were examined. This study was appraised by “Teacher Attitude towards Inclusive Education Questionnaire” developed by Evangeline Kern in 2006 (with permission) (Kern, 2006). The operational definition of preferred delivery methods was the final score of the 7 delivery method lists (Kern, 2006).

## **2.2. Participants**

Participants were the teachers from Vientiane Capital Lao P.D.R. Four different teaching levels (elementary school, junior-high school, high school and university) were randomly selected (convenient sampling) as the population for this study (n=152). The populations were composed of four different stages, which composed of elementary school (n=38), junior-high (n=38), high schools (n=38) and university (n=38). In each group, the participants were divided into two sub-groups (experienced and non-experienced with visual impairment).

## **2.3. Instrument of Data Collection**

The questionnaire was permitted to translate from English to Lao language (14th October, 2016). The procedures of the development of the questionnaire were the following; first, the questionnaire was translated into Lao prior to the actual application since the researcher gets permission. Second, in terms of validity, the questionnaire was initially reviewed by a panel of experts to establish content validity. Recommendations from the panel were consistent in suggesting the changing of wording on specific items and the rationale for specific items. Third, in relation to reliability, reliability was determined by the following procedures: Lao version of the questionnaire was modified in terms of the context before disseminating it to 5 Lao native speakers, who had experience in educational system. Then, the back-translation into English was performed to assure that the questionnaire is valid.

## **3. RESULTS**

### **3.1 Ranking of preferred delivery method**

This part was the part of the survey associated with research question asked the participants about their beliefs about different methods of receiving information or training on inclusive education. Participants responded to the questionnaire via a seven points scale from 1 (most beneficial) to 7 (least beneficial). The seven points were condensed to three categories for more precise presentation. Responses of 1, 2 and 3 score were grouped as “Most beneficial,” the middle response of 4 score was labeled as “Neutral,” while responses 5, 6, and 7 score were grouped as “Least beneficial.” One hundred and fifty-two teachers responded to the question. The rankings of the delivery methods associated with the three categories were presented on table 1. Coursework at



college/university, District level in-service training, and Out of District training being third were highly ranked, respectively. The participants responded Time for consultation with school psychologist as least beneficial.

### 3.2 The list of other topic(s) that teacher would like to train

In addition to seven topics above survey 73 teachers (from 152 teachers) suggested the other topics of training that might fulfill their inclusive education performance. The training in regarding how to be access the data toward inclusive education training teachers who teach in inclusive education depend on the unit of special education persons with disabilities can. Teachers can swap their experience with consultant from special education twice per year, and last respondents would like to receive training how to applying and adapting equipment for teaching students with disabilities. For the three topics first one training regarding how to be access the data toward

**Table 1.** *Ranking of preferred delivery methods for receiving training about inclusive Education (N=152)*

Delivery method	Most beneficial (%)	Neutral (%)	Least beneficial (%)
Coursework at college/university	79.6		5.3
District level in-service training	73.1	14.5	12.5
Out of District training	58.6		24.3
Article(s) provided to you	31.5	36.2	32.5
School building level training	27		5.3



<b>Time for consultation with special education teachers</b>	19.1	5.3	75.7
<b>Time for consultation with school psychologist</b>	11.2		8.6

**Table 2.** Percent other topics need to receive training

Topics	Male		Female		Total
	N	Percent	N	Percent	Percent
Training regarding how to be accessible data toward inclusive education	10	6.57	20	13.15	19.73
Training how to applying and adapting equipment for teaching students with Disabilities	8	5.26	16	10.52	15.78
Training teachers who teach in inclusive schools twice per year	4	2.63	15	9.86	12.5

## 6. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the preferred delivery methods for training regarding inclusion of children with visual impairment in Vientiane capital Lao P.D.R. The opinion of preferred delivery methods that might benefit them the most in receiving knowledge about inclusive education was elucidated. The responds on a seven point scale from 1 (most beneficial) to



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7 (least beneficial) were converted into 3 groups. One hundred and fifty-two of the teachers responded to the question. Coursework at the college/university as the most beneficial, District level in-service training second and out of District training being third, they responded time for consultation with school psychologist as least beneficial. From our study, teachers need more training in inclusive education. In relation to inclusive education this means that both naive and experienced teachers need to learn about the concept of inclusive education (De Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011). It might be possible that teachers concerned their knowledge when met students with disabilities in the classes. For the inclusive practice during study was considerably less in Lao P.D.R. The number of teacher who graduated in special or inclusive education was low. This might be the reason of insufficiency in coursework related to special teacher teaching students with disabilities in Laos (Heu, 2016). They might believe that the training via coursework at the college/university will provide the direct experience from expert and also the knowledge of basic theories in inclusive education. The best in the pre-service coursework or receive training may sufficient teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education students with disabilities in general education. The research indicated that teachers who have received training in teaching students with disabilities showed more positive attitudes than teachers who have not trained for teaching students with special needs (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Brownell & Pajares, 1999; Stoler, 1992). It has been proposed that teachers need an opportunities to both observe and implement the theories in practice. The best way to implement is supporting from experienced colleagues or mentors. The way to be facilitated, reflected and practiced related to theory and how to turn theory to practice, is crucial for them. Practice-based teacher training should be appropriate to the culture and context of Lao (Allison, 2011; Biddle, 2006; Forlin & Chambers, 2011). The results in this study are support the professional development for general education teachers, which related to need analysis of teachers (Biddle, 2006).

In addition, they would like to receive training in other topics, which might help them to improve the teaching skill. First, train accessing data toward inclusive education. The way to use or access data to inform practice and policy, the availability, accuracy and relevance of the data are crucial. Moreover, the channel to access from the diversity of producers might be another reason to interrupt the accessibility of these information (Holland, Houghton, Armstrong, & Mashiter, 2017).

Inclusive education in Lao PDR especially Vientiane Capital some schools has not had internet. Teachers need to enhance their skills, the teachers lack of experience they can learn skills and successful in their new job (Glazerman et al., 2008). The information from internet can improve teachers skills and reduce their concern when face-to-face teaching (Barnett, Hoke, & Hopkins-Thompson, 2002). We can search good technique to improve our less plan from internet, according to (Bennett, Maton, & Kervin, 2008) present day learners have a unique learning style and possess significantly more technological knowledge and skills than previous generations.



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The second topic of training was related to the applying and adapting equipment for teaching students with disabilities. The use of assistive technology (AT) with students with visual impairments and blindness has the potential to improve many student outcomes related to academics and learning. (Bouck, Flanagan, Joshi, Sheikh, & Schleppebach, 2011) Together with the economic situation, the applying and adaption of some local equipment or tools might be suitable for Lao culture and context. Interesting enough, teachers who teach in inclusive education would like to have training twice per year.

In conclusion, the significant finding of this study suggested that teachers need the training for inclusive education via the coursework at the college/university. The topics related to inclusive education were the train accessing data toward inclusive education and apply or adaptive AT for students with visual impairment.

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