

**Social and Educational Inclusion in Taiwan in relation to  
Elementary Schooling with reference to the UK,  
particularly Scotland**

**By**

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**Plants are fashioned by cultivation, man by education.**

(Rousseau)

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## ABSTRACT

Inclusive education, a relatively new education system, provides an environment for both non-disabled and disabled children to interact and to understand each other. The purpose of this study was to investigate relevant key stakeholders' voices and opinions by means of interviews, observations, focus groups and parental surveys. It started from providing a general background of Taiwan's history and education to the investigating of current implementation of social policies and primary inclusive education in Taiwan. In conducting the study, an investigation into inclusive education in Taiwan was undertaken, specifically the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools in Tainan region.

This study obtained a great deal of information from a wide range of stakeholders: perspectives on inclusive policies were obtained by means of interviews. Non-disabled and disabled children's daily school life and interactions among other children and teachers were recorded via observations and focus groups whilst data gathered through parental questionnaires provided parents' opinions, reactions and responses.

Starting from the pursuit of human rights in Western societies, the focus then shifted to the context of Taiwanese society. More and more attention on the issue of human rights and disadvantaged groups' rights are paid and in general, the notion of all human beings are equal is rooted and sprouted in Taiwanese culture.

The results showed that, in general, professionals believed that inclusive education was basically positive for both non-disabled and disabled children. Inclusive settings provide an environment for both non-disabled and disabled children to share their experiences so that when children grow up, they would have positive attitudes towards each other. However, some professionals were concerned about the consequences of locating disabled pupils, especially pupils with behavioural disorders, in mainstream schools. In most cases, pupils with physical impairments are more easily accepted than those with behavioural disorder ones. It is still not easy to break the barriers, such as people's inherent notions towards disadvantaged groups, the reality that some behavioural disorder pupils are aggressive and teachers' time might be spent more on special need pupils, in such a complicated social system.

With regard to learning in inclusive settings; both non-disabled and disabled pupils, in general, felt comfortable or did not feel too much difference in the inclusive classroom. The study highlighted that, in most inclusive classrooms, both non-disabled and disabled pupils could be accepted by each other; and in some cases, non-disabled and disabled pupils liked to be located in the inclusive classroom.

Parents, however, had more diverse opinions than in any other stakeholders. Inclusive

education, though less than half of total respondents had heard before, was deemed basically good to both non-disabled and disabled pupils and in general, it will become future mainstream. Still, some parents, especially those whose children had been located in an inclusive classroom and had bad experiences, were strongly anti-inclusion. Their primary concern was to protect their own children. Quality of education was also their concern because some parents deeply believed that teachers' time and attention are sometimes drawn to pupils with special educational needs.

In conclusion, key stakeholders viewed inclusive education as a means of providing an environment for both non-disabled and disabled pupils to study and to share their experiences. There may however, be a need to re-think the real role of inclusive classroom because many people merely think of locating both non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same environment as inclusion instead of thinking the moral issue or equality for all when they hear about the term inclusion. This study investigated what key stakeholders' opinions and responses were when discussing about inclusion. This study also concluded by suggesting and offering some of the main issues needing further consideration: issues related to the resources, shifting people's impression towards disadvantaged groups and the paramount aim of inclusion. All of which are considered to be important for future implementation of inclusive education.

The study concludes by a reflection on the findings in a broader context of Chinese thinking and addresses current Taiwanese education system with reference to Taiwanese culture.

**Keywords:** Inclusion, Human rights, Disadvantaged groups, Inclusive education, Primary education (Taiwan), Equality for All.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ASN	Additional Support Needs
DES	Department of Education and Science
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
HMIE	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education
LTS	Learning and Teaching Scotland
MoE (MOE)	Ministry of Education, Taiwan
RoN	Record of Needs
SED	Scottish Education Department
SEED	Scottish Executive Education Department
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SOED	The Scottish Office Education Department
SOEID	The Scottish Office Education and Industry Department

# **PART ONE      CONTEXT AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

## **CHAPTER ONE: PURPOSE, AIMS AND CONTEXT**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The main purpose of this study was to carry out an investigation into inclusive education in Taiwan, specifically the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools in Tainan region, a large geographic area in the south of the island. To a limited extent the study also has a comparative dimension in that it attempts to identify the key issues regarding inclusion in Taiwan with reference to inclusive education in the United Kingdom, particularly Scotland. The purpose of choosing Taiwan and Scotland lies mainly on the researcher's current location and personal background; and in this study, Tainan was the main place in which the primary data were gathered. Tainan is an old and the fourth biggest area in Taiwan and is deemed as the 'holy place' and the birth place of Taiwanese 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> president (2000-2004 and 2004-2008), Mr. Chen Shui-Bain, who was also the leader of the social democratic party, Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which has profound influence on Taiwan's political sovereign shift. The Scottish system has been influenced by both English and European systems whilst the Taiwanese system has been influenced by both the United States and China. In order to shed light on convergency/divergency and similarity/difference derived from the East and West backgrounds, Scotland and Taiwan were chosen.

The notion of inclusive education is relatively new in primary schooling in both Taiwan and Scotland, but *the idea of inclusive education is gaining ground in many parts of world* (Ainscow 1997: 3). The concept that all children have rights to education, and that educational provision should be mandatory and equal for all children have been taken for

granted in both Eastern<sup>1</sup> and Western<sup>2</sup> countries for a long time. Various demands for children's welfare and other related issues, such as parental rights towards children's educational provision, have also been evoked by this concept. Though the notion of "equal opportunities for all" has been applied in all kinds of educational institutions for some time, the term "inclusive education" emerged in the past twenty years. A great many people in Taiwan, including educational staff, are not yet familiar with this kind of integration whereby pupils with special educational needs are located in mainstream<sup>3</sup> classes. Though the notion of equality exists in people's minds, different responses to individual pupil's needs are still the issue between key stakeholders, such as lawmakers, teachers and parents.

It is accepted in both Taiwan and Scotland that educational services should accommodate and meet children's needs, for both non-disabled and disabled pupils however severe the condition; and no child should be denied access to any educational provision because of disability. In Taiwan, it is clearly stated in law that all pupils from age six to fifteen have the right to be educated; and one of the aims of Taiwanese education is to assure the developmental opportunities for disadvantaged groups in order to fulfill social equality and justice. (<http://law.moj.gov.tw/Scripts/Query4A.asp?FullDoc=all&Fcode=H0070001> and [http://www.edu.tw/EDU\\_WEB/EDU\\_MGT/SECRETARY/EDU8354001/2003/discuss/1101.htm](http://www.edu.tw/EDU_WEB/EDU_MGT/SECRETARY/EDU8354001/2003/discuss/1101.htm), Ministry of Education, access date: 09/09/2007). In Scotland, the purpose of

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<sup>1</sup> For example, in Taiwan, according to the Constitution Law, No. 159: *All citizens have the equal opportunity to education*; and No. 160: *Children from age six to twelve are obligated to fundamental education* (The Executive Yuan, <http://www.ey.gov.tw/public/Attachment/20051218180702187.doc> access date: 28/Sep/2007). According to the Act of Special Education (amended 2004), Article 1: *The Act of Special Education (hereafter referred to as the Act) is enacted to ensure the right to appropriate education for gifted/disabled R.O.C citizens and enable them to achieve full development of physical and mental potential, develop well-rounded personality, and enhance the ability of serving the society* (<http://law.moj.gov.tw/Eng/Fnews/FnewsContent.asp?msgid=1202&msgType=en&keyword=undefined> access date: 28/Sep/2007).

<sup>2</sup> As Gutek (1995) pointed out that *an historical general trend in the Western educational experience has been to make formal education, or schooling, inclusive of more persons and groups than in the past* (p.528) and *the welfare-state conception of modern liberalism and socialism asserted the state's obligation to protect the rights and opportunities of all individuals, especially members of oppressed groups* (p.533).

<sup>3</sup> In the traditional education system, the mainstream schools/classes were referred to a school/class contained only pupils without learning difficulties. Pupils with difficulties were located in special schools, for example, deaf pupils in Tainan were located in National Tainan School for the Hearing Impaired and pupils with severe learning difficulties were located in National Tainan Qi-Zhi (intellectual inspired) School, both schools still exist.

education focuses on *ensuring that everybody has access to learning opportunities that can help them achieve full potential – giving children and young people the best possible start in life as they move from school to university and college or into the workforce, providing employability and adaptability throughout life* (Scottish Government, <http://www.scottishexecutive.gov.uk/Topics/Education> access date: 09/09/2007).

According to Wu (1999), the history of Chinese primary education can probably be traced back to Sha Dynasty (2033 B.C.-1562 B.C.). However, before the Ming Dynasty (1368 A.D.-1644 A.D.), Taiwan was only an island located off the coast of Mainland China and deemed as a pirate heaven (Manthorpe, 2005). Cheng Cheng-Kong (also spelled as Zheng Cheng Gong), known as Koxinga<sup>1</sup>, who led his troops to a landing in Luerhman, in An-Ping Area, Tainan City, had great influence in agricultural and business development in Taiwan. Koxinga's dream was to defeat Chin (also spelled as Qing) Dynasty but this dream never came true. However, Koxinga's spirit is deemed as honour for his loyalty to the Ming Empire and Koxinga proved himself an able and far-sighted administrator by which made himself as a legacy and a god (Manthorpe 2005: 83). It was 1684 (Chin Dynasty), the first time Taiwan was formally included in the territory of Mainland China and the systems in Taiwan were similar to Mainland Chin Dynasty<sup>2</sup>. However, Taiwan was ceded to Japan after the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) in accordance with the Treaty of Shimonoseki. Ethnic Chinese and Taiwanese aborigines were classified as second- or third-class citizens<sup>3</sup>. From 1895 to 1945, Taiwan was under Japanese occupancy. After Kuomintang's (National Party) withdraw from Mainland China (1949), the primary education system, which started from Dr. Sun Yat-sen's establishment of the

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<sup>1</sup> Koxinga means the surname is given by the emperor. Cheng Cheng-Kong's father, Cheng Chih-Lung, was a pirate.

<sup>2</sup> Source: The Development History of Taiwan (Chang *et al.*, 1996, National Open University) and high school textbook.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Mini-Encyclopedia of Taiwan History (Wu and Winkler, 2005, Third Nature Publishing Co. Ltd.) and The Development History of Taiwan (Chang *et al.*, 1996, National Open University)

Republic of China<sup>1</sup>, applied in the Mainland was also brought to Taiwan. It was not until 1968 that compulsory education extended from six years to nine years—six years elementary education and three years junior high education. Since 1983, in order to promote national competition in the global era, the Ministry of Education has aimed to extend 9 years compulsory education into twelve years; and from 2007, 12-year compulsory education has been implemented gradually in order to accomplish full 12-year compulsory education in 2009 ([http://epaper.edu.tw/12edu/about01\\_origin.php](http://epaper.edu.tw/12edu/about01_origin.php), Ministry of Education, access date: 30/Oct/2007). The outline of the current school system is provided in Figure 1.1.

Information of the geography and population of Taiwan is provided in Chapter 1 Section 2. In 2006, the number of primary school pupils was 1,798,436 and the number of primary schools was 2,651 (Source: Ministry of Education, 2006, [http://www.edu.tw/EDU\\_WEB/EDU\\_MGT/STATISTICS/EDU7220001/ebooks/edu96/102.xls?open](http://www.edu.tw/EDU_WEB/EDU_MGT/STATISTICS/EDU7220001/ebooks/edu96/102.xls?open) access date: 30/Oct/2007). The Ministry of Education is under the supervision of the Executive Yuan. Underneath the Ministry of Education are Bureaus of Education in local governments (city and county—See Figure 1.2). In Tainan region, there were 47 primary schools in the City and 165 in the County. In 2005, the number of primary school pupils was 59,288 in the City and 79,842 in the County<sup>2</sup> (Ibid).

The administration of the primary school depends on the school size, that is, the number of classes; in other words, a school with classes between one to 12 is regarded as small, between 13 to 24 is middle and more than 24 is large. The size of the administration

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<sup>1</sup> According to Wang (1986), the primary education from 1911-1922 was named “Zen-Zhi learning system” which divided seven-year primary education into two stages, that is, lower primary from one to four and upper primary from one to three. The main aim of primary education was to *take care of children’s mental and physical developments, cultivate people’s moral and virtuous backgrounds and provide necessary life skills and knowledge* (p.298). In 1922, based on the American style, the Ministry of Education published the Zen-Shu System, also known as “New System” which changed primary education from seven years to six years (Ministry of Education, 1985).

<sup>2</sup> The information provided in Chapter 9 is different because it was the information between academic year 2005-2006 when the questionnaire was conducted.

depends on the school size, the bigger the school is, the more detailed administrative management/personnel is applied in the school (Wang 1999: 139-142).

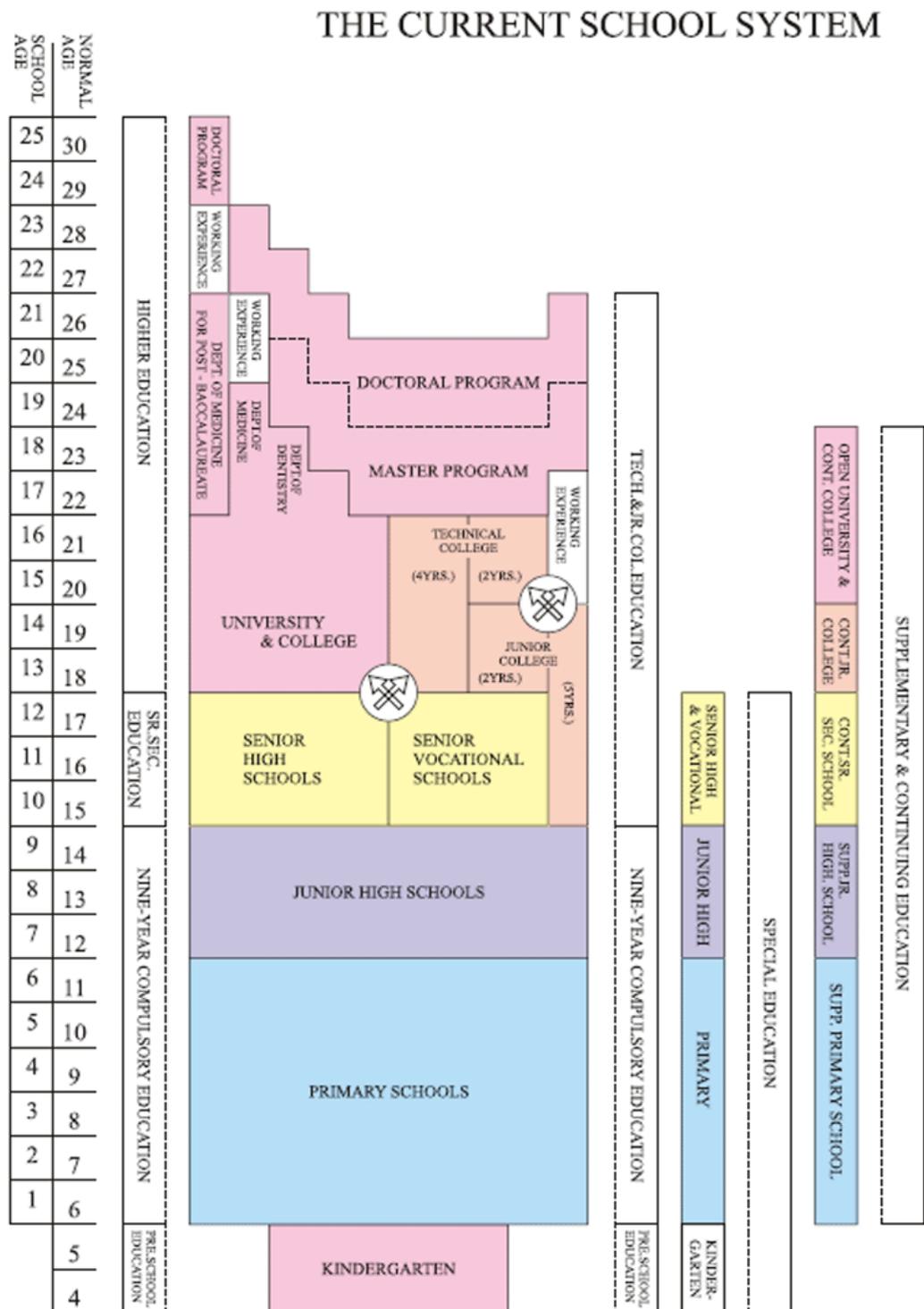
According to the Primary and Junior High School Organisational Byelaw of the Number of Class and Staff (modified on 21/March/2007), the maximum number of pupils in a primary school classroom is thirty-five and the number should decrease to twenty-nine in one class by 2015. The detailed administration of a primary school is as follows:

- A principal: A school has a full-time principal.
- Chief(s): Each office, such as academic and general affairs, has a chief from a school teacher; except the chief of consultation office should be assigned by a special education or relevant teacher.
- Leader(s): Each group, such as health and hygiene, has a leader from the school teacher; except administrative, financial and affair groups should have leaders from school employers or relevant personnel.
- Teacher(s): A class should have at least 1.5 teachers. Schools less than nine classes should have an extra one teacher. According to the school's needs, the school can transfer teachers into part-time teachers or teaching-support personnel without exceeding 5% of total school teachers.
- Consultant teacher(s): Less than twenty-four classes, a school should have one consultant teacher. Schools more than twenty-five classes, one consultant teacher added for every twenty-four classes.
- Manager(s), assistant manager(s) and clerk(s), employer(s) of each office, including libraries, equipment rooms, laboratories; but financial and personnel office are excluded: One to three for the schools less than 72 classes and three to five for schools more than 72 classes.
- Nurse(s) and Nutritionist(s): Based on School Hygiene Laws and Regulations.

- Student Dormitory Assistant(s): In rural or mountainous areas, residents more than twelve should have one dormitory assistant; more than fifty should have two. Less than twelve residents, a dormitory assistant should be assigned.
- Physical education coach(es): The number of coach(es) is based on Citizen Physical Education Laws and Regulations.
- Personnel and financial affairs: The number of personnel and financial employer is based on the Personnel Employer Quota Standards and Financial Employer Quota Standards.

(Source: Ministry of Education, Database of laws and regulations, <http://law.moj.gov.tw/Scripts/Query4A.asp?FullDoc=all&Fcode=H0070006>, access date: 30/Oct/2007)

**Figure 1.1: The current school system in Taiwan** (Resource: MOE, 2006 Edition, [http://www.edu.tw/EDU\\_WEB/EDU\\_MGT/STATISTICS/EDU7220001/ebooks/edu96/schoolsystem.pdf?open](http://www.edu.tw/EDU_WEB/EDU_MGT/STATISTICS/EDU7220001/ebooks/edu96/schoolsystem.pdf?open) access date: 30/Oct/2007)





*Education for All* (the Salamanca Statement, 1994). The major differences between Taiwan and Scotland are geographical<sup>1</sup> and demographic<sup>2</sup>; that is, Scotland is slightly more than twice larger in land mass but with only one fifth of Taiwan's population. Scotland adopts inclusive ideas mainly from England and Europe and adopts these ideas for practice to make a better future for all. In Taiwan, on the other hand, the major ideas have been drawn from the United States and these ideas have been modified in order to adjust to Taiwanese oriental philosophy that is based on the notion of the golden mean.

In both Taiwan and Scotland, inclusion is a critical issue, as Wearmouth and Glynn (2004) pointed out:

*From a human rights view, inclusion is based on a value system that welcomes and celebrates diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language or origin, social background level of achievement and disability...Inclusion is a question of rights and concerns a philosophy of acceptance and a framework within which individuals can be valued, respected and enabled to learn.*

(Wearmouth and Glynn 2004 : 7)

Inclusion and exclusion are social phenomena, and children who are excluded in whatever form have different reasons for being excluded. Taiwan and Scotland are both developed and industrial countries and the term 'social exclusion' is seen and heard in daily life. For people in both countries, social policies are highlighted because of concerns from people

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<sup>1</sup> The total land mass in Scotland is approximately 31,510 square miles (Source: <http://www.geo.ed.ac.uk/home/scotland/scotland.html>), which is about 78,767 square kilometres. The land mass of Taiwan is approximately 3.6 million hectares (Source: National Land Surveying and Mapping Center), which is 35,759 square kilometres.

<sup>2</sup> The total population of Scotland on Census day (2001) was 5,062,011 (Source: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/37428/0028867.pdf> access date:03/10/2007); and the estimated population of Scotland on 30 June 2006 was 5,116,900 (Source: <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/press/2007-news/scotlands-mid-year-population-estimates.html> access date: 03/10/2007). The total population of Taiwan in the year of 2006 was 22,876,527 (Source: <http://www.ris.gov.tw/ch4/static/st20-1.xls> Ministry of Interior, access date:03/10/2007).

and governments. Both Governments pay attention to the issues of social exclusion and excluded children because people who are excluded are often vulnerable and disadvantaged; and even worse, exclusion could continue existing from generation to generation (The Scottish Government, 1999, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/1999/11/3328630f-78ac-4e7e-824e-0e27038bb03> 1, and the Executive Yuan, 2005, <http://www.ey.gov.tw/public/Data/512611325071.pdf> access date:19/Nov/2007).

In order to provide clear images on both countries' education systems in relation to special education provision, five main strands have been selected on which to base this research study. The five main strands are: theme, structure, organisation, content and assessment. Brief introductions of both countries' systems are provided in the following:

### **Taiwan:**

**Theme:** First of all, it is important to point out that Taiwan is totally different from China<sup>1</sup>. The education system does not have any relation to the Chinese system in Mainland China; and it is the basic right for all children to attain primary education. Primary education is the main foundation of building a whole human society. Before, pupils with special educational needs were allocated to special schools. With the growing notion of equality, more and more people are concerned with disabled people's rights. In mainstream schools, pupils with difficulties have the same environment as ordinary pupils and are treated equally. From primary education, disabled pupils and their non-disabled peers can interact with each other and learn the differences, so the main theme in this step is to build understanding between non-disabled and disabled pupils such that basic skills are cultivated in all pupils.

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<sup>1</sup> Though Scotland is part of the United Kingdom, Scottish education system differs from English education system. Taiwan has its own government and administration; and education system differs from China, too.

**Structure:** The main aim of primary education is to establish the fundamental ability, such as reading, writing and calculating, of further education. Besides, it is also important to *set up the ability of self-understanding, respect other people and culture, basic skills and knowledge* (<http://www.sinica.edu.tw/info/edu-reform/farea2/>, 2005). For pupils with special educational needs, flexibility for pupils and their parents are the main issues. Every child has the right to be educated. When pupils with special educational needs are located in mainstream schools, they may be labelled by other children. How can the school structure on the one hand provide the proper protection to disabled children and on the other hand prevent exclusion becoming important issues. Pupils with disabilities are vulnerable and the responsible bodies (for example: local governments or related services) tend to be more careful when disabled children are settled in mainstream schools.

**Organisation:** In Taiwan, the Executive Yuan is the highest body of government. It consists of several departments. The Ministry of Education is one of these departments and is the main authority that takes the responsibility for the whole education system throughout the length and breadth of Taiwan. In every county and city, there are Education Bureaus. The character of the Education Bureau is similar to the local authority in Scotland. In each Education Bureau, there are five sections. Special and Pre-School Section takes responsibility for children who need extra help in local schools. For the private sector, there are other organisations, such as: teachers' unions, voluntary groups and non-profit institutions that provide information or help to pupils, parents, teachers and other related stakeholders.

**Content:** The curriculum in primary schools in Taiwan includes the following: Language: Mandarin (and from Grade 5 -- Primary 6 in Scottish term -- there is English Language), Mathematics, Society (Personal & Social development), Arts and Humanity (Expressive Arts and Moral Education), Nature and Life Technology (Environmental Studies),

Flexibility and Health & Physical Education (Curriculum Design, Ministry of Education). In primary stage, the main aim of special education provision is to provide equal opportunities to pupils with special educational needs. To get involved in human relationships in early education stage, pupils can understand and respect each other. Individual differences should be considered and extra provision can be provided to disabled pupils.

**Assessment:** Assessment in Taiwan is similar to the assessment system in Scotland. Since 1998, Taiwan has experienced major educational reform. The new curriculum is more flexible and more attention is now given to personal development in theory, at least instead of the preparation for the high school entrance exams (Ministry of Education, Taiwan, 1998). Multiple forms of education have taken the place of the original system which had been long criticised, for too much emphasis on examinations and tests. However, it can still be commonly seen that primary or junior high school pupils often attend so called 'after class' activities (in cram schools organised by the private sector), mainly for mathematics, English and science, in order to make preparation for junior or senior high schools. It is also important to emphasise that English language had been included in the curriculum through Grade 5 because English language is an international language and it is thought by the Government that it should be learned as early as possible. For disabled pupils, the assessment on academic subjects is less important than physical development and human relationships. The major assessment in the primary stage for SEN pupils focuses on human relationships and self-development.

### **In Summary**

Taiwanese traditional expectation of pupils with special educational needs focuses on the pupils' independence of living. Traditionally, pupils with special educational needs were educated in special schools where courses for such pupils were mainly based on the skills

of their daily living. The focus of traditional primary school teachers was on the students without learning difficulties or behaviour problems. Spontaneously, the consequence of this was the isolation of pupils with special educational needs. The traditional concept of primary education was competition oriented, because primary education was the foundation of the next stage of education, viz the junior high school (See Figure 1.1). So, pupils with special educational needs, except gifted or limb disadvantaged pupils, often fell behind their peers. Due to the natural born inequality, it is claimed that pupils with special educational needs should be protected and given more attention (Wu, 2004). The traditional expectations of pupils with special educational needs focused on individual independence, daily skills of living and peer relationship (Hsu, 2000). Now, the concept of inclusion had already been introduced into ordinary primary schools; however, some people maintain that *inclusion was nothing but a dream* (Wang<sup>1</sup>, 2004).

Similar to Scotland and other Western countries, it is recognised that pupils with special educational needs have the rights to be educated in mainstream schools as non-disabled peers; as The Act of Special Education, Article 13, ...*Placement of disabled students in appropriate schools shall be carried out with the premises of satisfying the students' learning requirements and placing students in the least restrictive environment...* (resource: <http://law.moj.gov.tw/Eng/Fnews/FnewsContent.asp?msgid=1202&msgType=en&keyword=undefined>). However, Huang (2006) pointed out that there are several issues of concern, namely: greater familiarity with dealing with learning difficulties taken than knowing about learning difficulties; lack of organisations linking to each factor (such as relationship between psychologists and parents); learning disability is a vague term<sup>2</sup> and there is more effort to be done for detailed categories (such as distinguish between learning difficulty

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Wang was chosen for the pilot study. He is the Chief of Personnel Affair and Administration of a rural primary school. Also seen in Chapter 2.2, 7.4 and 10.

<sup>2</sup> For example, teachers know how to deal with Autism pupils rather than knowing or understanding Autism. This is similar to McLaughlin *et al.*'s (2006) argument that *the classification of children and youth with disabilities is both controversial and complex* (p.1).

and low achievement); the resource is unbalance between urban and rural areas (p.13). Besides, according to the annual report published by the Ministry of Education, the focus of SEN pupils was not merely on fundamental school education, the emphasis was also on severe or intermediate learning difficulties, daily life knowledge and skills, social life with others and vocational training, and SEN pupils' educational fulfillment/successful learning were also taken into consideration (Ministry of Education, 2007).

### **Scotland:**

**Theme:** Scotland has a long and proud tradition of a distinctive system which differs from the term "British education".

*The important point is that while Scotland is part of Europe, it is not a part of England. The conflation of Scotland and England is frequently made by the foreigner when it comes to any consideration of what takes place in schools, colleges and universities in Scotland.*

(Bryce and Humes 1999: 4)

In Scotland at the present time, all children are entitled to 15 hours of free nursery school education per week from 3-18 years of age no matter how profoundly disabled. The Government also pays the cost of transportation and other expenses for disabled children if necessary. Before the 1980's, special educational provision mainly focused on the children with physical and sensory disabilities (Closs, 1997). During the period 1980 to 1990, children with social and emotional difficulties were also taken into consideration. Now, the term 'inclusion' is used to include all pupils, for example: mental or physical disabilities, social and emotional difficulties, pupils from poor families and pupils from non-native families. The main issue is "full participation".

**Structure:** One of the main purposes of Scottish primary education is the preparation for the next education stage. As SED pointed out in 1965, *by satisfying the needs of one stage she (the teacher) provides for development more efficiently than by trying to anticipate or prepare for the next* (SED 1965: 3) or *the Government wants to ensure that everybody has access to learning opportunities that can help them achieve their potential* (The Scottish Government Education & Training, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education> access date: 25/March/2009). Pupils, no matter what their difficulties are, have the rights to be educated. Special education can take place in mainstream primary schools, but the parents with children with of difficulties also have the rights to choose suitable locations in which they regard as the best environments for their children. The provision of special education should be flexible, clear and appropriate for all children with difficulties and the structure should be focused on the development of all children.

**Organisation:** In Scotland, there is one central government organisation which has responsibility for education. However, over time, the name and function of this body has evolved. For example, in the 1950s and 1960s, the name was the Scottish Education Department (SED). In the 1970s, it changed to the Scottish Office Education Department (SOED). In the 1990s, it became the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID). In the ten years since devolution in 1998, it was referred to the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED). However, as from 1<sup>st</sup> of October, 2007, SEED was renamed as the Scottish Government Education & Training. For special education provision, the Scottish Government remains the highest authority for the quality of special education provision, but local education authorities now have more responsibilities to provide proper and efficient special education.

**Content:** For primary education in Scotland, the current curriculum is based on the 5-14 National Guidelines which has six strands consisting of the following: *expressive Arts*,

*healthy and wellbeing, languages, mathematics, religious and moral education, sciences, social studies and technologies.* (LTScotland,

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/about5to14/curriculumforexcellence/learning.asp>

access date: 26/Sep/2007). The Scottish curriculum aims to accommodate all children's needs and in accordance with pupils' differences so that purposes of the curriculum are to enable all young people to become: successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens (LTScotland,

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/about5to14/curriculumforexcellence/introduction.asp>

access date: 26/Sep/2007). General and specific guidelines are also provided to teachers so that pupils' needs can be met. The new Scottish curriculum, also named *A Curriculum for Excellence*, aims to develop a streamlined curriculum for 3-18-year-olds; and will eventually replace the *5-14 National Guidelines* that focused on *Mathematics, English language, Religious & Moral Education, Environmental Studies, Expressive Arts and Personal & Social Development* (The Scottish Office 1994: 3).

**Assessment:** The 2000 Act in Scotland identified that Inclusion and Equality is one of the five national priorities in education. Similar to the SOED's 5-14 national guidelines for the assessment *...is appropriate for the needs of all children* (SOED, October 1991, p.3); and issues such as disability and special educational needs are encompassed for the commitment for the national priorities (LTScotland, <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/sharedglossary/nationalprioritiesineducation.asp> access date: 26/Sep/2007). According to the guidelines, assessment will improve the quality of teaching and learning if information gathered has a clear purpose, is collected systematically, and is used appropriately. Assessment is built upon each pupil's attainment, interests and aptitudes and it also provides a report to the parents.

## **In Brief**

In November 2005, the Scottish Executive published *Mainstreaming Pupils with Special Educational Needs: an evaluation*, which aimed to examine the response of education authorities throughout Scotland and assessed all involved stakeholders who support pupils with SEN. In the report, there is a general recognition amongst policy-makers that *all* children and young people may have additional support needs at some stage in their school careers (Pirrie *et al.*, 2005).

From Pirrie *et al.*'s findings, there was no evidence from the statistical analysis that the presence of pupils with SEN has an effect—positive or negative—upon pupils' attainment (Pirrie *et al.*, 2005). The evaluation report also highlighted that the inter-authority placement patterns underline the need for a coherent and transparent approach to workforce placement planning and the development of resourced provision in an era characterised by a changing profile of needs; and the Scottish Government, may need to fulfill a strategic planning role in order to ensure efficient and effective provision for all children and young people with SEN. The majority of local authorities (23 in 32) in Scotland, according to the report, had made efforts to move SEN children into mainstream schools, by which indicated that education authorities have embraced inclusion; and the re-organisation of local government was perceived to have been a significant catalyst for the development of inclusion strategies, so the local government re-organisation became a driver of change. The evidence from the report also suggested that the role and significance of parental choice in respect of placement requests for SEN pupils cannot be overstated and specialist services should be a commitment within inclusive model. The report addressed the extent to which the process of inclusion is considered successful depends on the subtle interplay of a variety of factors: school ethos, effective leadership, skill mix, etc.; and adequate staffing levels, the availability of suitably qualified specialist staff and the provision of appropriate staff development and training opportunities, were considered

vital to successful inclusion. Furthermore, the role of professional expertise, including communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; and sensory and/or physical needs, is vital in inclusive policy (Pirrie *et al.*, 2005).

### **1.3 Outline of the Structure of the Thesis**

The basis of the current research was to seek stakeholders' responses towards the provision of education for disabled children within mainstream primary schools in Tainan City and Tainan County. A range of method was used to explore the various stakeholders' attitudes towards such provision.

Part One of this thesis, that is Chapters 1 to 4, focuses on the contexts and theories of social exclusion/inclusion and inclusive education. From the political ideologies in both Western societies and Taiwan to Confucius' 'teaching without categories' to modern inclusion, the evolution of inclusion is discussed in Chapter 2; that is, from segregation to integration/mainstreaming and then inclusion. The interpretations of inclusion related to children's education generated a great number of issues in both countries, so the perspective of inclusion is discussed and the role of education in promoting greater social inclusion from both Taiwan and Scotland is raised in this chapter. In addition, the purpose of education in relation to inclusion, theories of inclusion and background of inclusive education are discussed; and general discussions of the shift in special education provision in both Taiwan and Scotland is also provided to illustrate the thinking-shift in both countries.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus mainly on social/educational inclusion and current policies/stakeholders towards inclusion and inclusive education. Starting with both governments' definitions of social exclusion; the focus then shifts to the role of education

in promoting greater social inclusion and the relations between education and inclusion. In chapter 4, after initial discussions towards the background of inclusion and inclusive education, the focus concentrates on the issues of inclusive education in Taiwan and the United Kingdom, particularly Scotland. Also, general guidelines on educational inclusion and the classification of disability/SEN in both Taiwan and Scotland are provided. Linking social exclusion with special education provision, a variety of stakeholders is involved in order to specify the inter-relationship between each stakeholder and inclusive education. In the final part of Chapter 4, conclusions are derived from social/economical, family/parental and school factors in both Taiwan and Scotland on the basis of which the research questions are derived.

Part Two (Chapters 5 and 6) of the thesis focuses on research paradigms/design and methods. Chapter 5 discusses the research approaches adopted in this study; such approaches are grounded in three major research paradigms; that is, symbolic interactionism, interpretivism and positivism/post-positivism. In each paradigm, discussion is provided showing how each paradigm has been adopted for the research; and based on these paradigms the research design was drawn. Chapter 6 contains the methods, both qualitative and quantitative, used in this research study. Governments' publications, including electronic sources, professionals' writings and books provided the background of literature review. Supplementary data, that is, interviews, observations, focus groups and questionnaires, were also taken into consideration in this study.

Part Three, that is, Chapters 7, 8 and 9, addresses the findings. Interviews, observations, focus groups and questionnaires were used to collect relevant data. Information and understanding of issues which are relevant to the general aims or specific research questions of the study were obtained in order to: identify the problems and difficulties caused by the implementation of inclusive setting; to clarify experts' opinions; to

investigate feedback towards inclusion and inclusive education; and to listen to voices from non-disabled, disabled pupils and parents.

Part 4 (Chapter 10 and 11) focuses on the responses to the research questions that provide a deeper and detailed understanding derived from the information/data collected. The justification of compulsory primary education is based on children's rights to receive education regardless abilities, no matter how severe disabilities they have. However, education for all becomes an endless issue because everyone stands and judges one thing from different angles. In the short concluding chapter, that is Chapter 11, conclusions are provided and final reflections put forward.

This research study attempts to accomplish several targets. First, both non-disabled and disabled children's rights are clarified and the term 'right' in inclusion theory is justified. Secondly, investigations on the ideology from stakeholders and the implementation from real situations provide a clear view so that further advantages and disadvantages can be clarified. Thirdly, education is for all; in other words, from the theory to practical work, how relevant stakeholders judge and see equality for all, so that promoting greater inclusion can be blueprinted. Fourthly, all children can, and should have the right to receive proper education, including the method, such as IEPs; the environment, in which all children's rights are not deprived; and the attitude, which is positive towards children, no matter whether non-disabled or disabled.

## CHAPTER TWO: IDEOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INCLUSION

### 2.1 Political Ideologies and Social Inclusion in Taiwan

With the emergence of modernity in Western societies in the seventeenth century (Eccleshall, 1994), liberalism was the first modern political ideology which had a strong influence on both the politics and education systems in Western and subsequently Eastern countries but to a lesser extent. The notion of liberalism was originally derived from anti-ecclesiastical hierarchies and focused on individual rights. The focus then shifted from individual rights to governmental affairs and individual decision-making. One of the basic ideas of liberalism was that the middle class should control the bureaucratic and ecclesiastical elites. However, as time elapsed, the focus of liberalism encompassed a broader perspective to include public provision of health-care and education. The interpretation of liberalism focuses on the pursuit of freedom for the individual. Liberalists define freedom as the right of individuals to eradicate inequalities, as Eccleshall (1994) pointed out liberty is diminished unless everyone is given access to the resources necessary for a decent life. The doctrine of liberalism stipulates that everyone should enjoy as much of society as possible, in other words, liberalists advocate all forms of public participation. The notion of liberalism is that society should be constructed in which no one depends upon the will of another. All people in society are, to a degree, independent and *enjoy the ample space within civil society to shape their lives in a responsible manner, respecting the liberties of others and using their rights as citizens to cooperate in ensuring the preservation of a fair and just polity* (Eccleshall 1994: 45). It claims that the poor of society should be treated as full citizens; and social and economic obstacles should be eliminated so that the poor can contribute to society. In short, the notion of liberalism is on freedom from arbitrary power in whatever form. As the notion of inclusion, one of the

main issues in current inclusive policies, either in political or educational contexts, is egalitarianism which states that everyone should enjoy as much of liberty as possible.

In Taiwan, the notion of liberalism had existed since the occupancy by the Netherlands from mid-seventeenth century. For two hundred years, the governing power and control of Taiwan shifted from the Dutch, Spanish, Chin Dynasty (Chinese), Japanese<sup>1</sup> and to Chiang Kai-Shiek (Leader of Kuomintang, also known as National Party, after the Second World War). The period of martial law (1949-1987) in Taiwan can be regarded as the prosperous era of conservatism. The main focus during this period was on the ideological conflict between Mainland China (under communism) and Taiwan (under capitalism). Since the withdrawal of Chiang Kai-Shek from Mainland China and the establishment of the Taiwan National Government in 1949, the advocates of conservatism strove to keep the power concentrated on certain groups, such as the people from Mainland China; also at that time, the Government started to pay attention to basic education rights which ranged from the age of six to twelve. The National Government made efforts to help people who were categorised as the non-elite. For example, in 1946, the place in which aboriginal people were educated was re-named 'school' instead of 'institute' ; and in 1948, it was prohibited to call aboriginal people as 'barbarians' and aboriginal people should be treated as no different from others. (National Changhua University of Education, [http://artgrad.ncue.edu.tw/ae\\_web/index.htm](http://artgrad.ncue.edu.tw/ae_web/index.htm) access date: 24/May/2007). In the 1970's, the Premier Chiang Ching-Kuo, son of Chiang, Kai-Shak and later the President in 1978, proposed the Ten Major Construction Projects due to the oil crisis in 1973 (The Academia Historica [http://www.drnh.gov.tw/www/page/B/page-B-02\\_a\\_03.htm](http://www.drnh.gov.tw/www/page/B/page-B-02_a_03.htm), access date: 30/Oct/2007). The Ten Major Construction Projects, the Fourteen Major Construction Projects and the Twelve New Development Projects launched by Chiang, Ching-Kuo

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<sup>1</sup> In 1912, the Republic of China (in Mainland China) was found by Dr. Sun Yet-Sen. But due to the Treaty of Shimonoseki (1895), Taiwan was ceded to Japan and then returned to the Republic of China after the Second World War (1945).

during the 1970's resulted in the *Taiwan miracle*, a prosperous growth in economics, and his accomplishments included accelerating the process of modernisation to give Taiwan a 13% growth rate, and the world's second largest foreign exchange reserves (Office of President, Republic of China, [http://www.president.gov.tw/1\\_roc\\_intro/xpresident/d\\_cha2.html](http://www.president.gov.tw/1_roc_intro/xpresident/d_cha2.html) and The Academia Historica [http://www.dnrh.gov.tw/www/page/B/page-B-02\\_a\\_03.htm](http://www.dnrh.gov.tw/www/page/B/page-B-02_a_03.htm), access date: 24/May/2007).

In 1987, Chiang Ching-Kuo ended martial law and gradually loosened political control over meetings and news publishing. This post-martial law period focused on people's participation in society and the devolution of power from arbitrary sovereign of only one party (Kuomintang/National party) to other parties. After 1987, Taiwan became a total democratic country and people started to pay attention to their own welfare. Even before 1987, people already put their focus on issues of equality and justice; and pupils of six year-old, no matter pupils' family conditions, backgrounds or disabilities, were obligated to enter elementary schools. (Amendment of Enforcement Entrance to Elementary Education, No.3 and No.15, Ministry of Education, 1984). As President Chen (2004) in his presidential candidate speech pointed out, people in Taiwan are proud of fighting for freedom and autonomy for more than two hundred years; and the notion of anti-authority has long existed in people's minds in Taiwan.

The modern ideas of democracy initiated in the seventeenth century and focused on *political authority ultimately in doctrines of human rights, the basic equality of man and the consent of the people* (Jay 1994: 134). Greater participation from marginalised social groups was the call during this period of time and democracy recognised that all human relations should be conducted on a basis of equality and protection against the abuse of power.

The notion of democracy provides people a new direction of thinking, which helps people to be their own masters. Democracy demands full participation within the organisations of a civil society: family, education, workplace, community and so on. The advocacy of greater participation accords with the notion of inclusion because all individuals should be treated equally and have equal opportunities. Inclusion, therefore, as Wilson (2000) maintained, is connected with the ideas of *equality, fraternity, human rights or even democracy* (p.297).

Taiwan's democratically elected Government pays considerable attention to the well-being of minority groups. Full participation is the primary target in modern Taiwan and every one in society is regarded as an individual in his/her own right and as such should be taken care of.

## **2.2 Interpretation of the Term 'Inclusion' in Relation to Children's Education**

More than two thousand years ago, Confucius'<sup>1</sup> saying "Yu Gio Wu Le"<sup>2</sup>, which can be translated as "Teaching without categories", has profoundly influenced the ideology of education in Taiwan. At that time, bureaucracy dominated the political environment and more than ninety percent of population in ancient Chinese society were peasants<sup>3</sup>. It was therefore impossible for Confucius to put his idea into practice. However, the notion of indifferentiation (no difference among people) had been rooted in Confucius' minds. Moreover, based on the observations of his apprentices' characteristics, abilities and interests, "En Zhai Ze Gio"<sup>4</sup>, which can be translated as "Teaching in accordance with

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<sup>1</sup> Confucius, 551-479 BC, was a thinker and philosopher; and his teachings and philosophies deeply influenced Chinese thought and life (Senior high school textbook of Chinese Culture History).

<sup>2</sup> Confucius' idea was on that education did not have the particular target. The target of education was on human beings, namely, students. When a student reached the proper age of being educated, regardless gender, wealth, background, normal or special, everyone was the target of education. So, Confucius was also the first person who innovate the education system which was equal opportunity in education for everyone. The origin resource was from The Analects of Confucius, one of the Four Books. Confucius said "Yu Gio Wu Le".

<sup>3</sup> Junior high school's textbook of "*Chinese History*".

<sup>4</sup> "En Zhai Ze Gio" was not seen from The Analects of Confucius, one of the Four Books. From Confucius' reactions and teaching to different individuals, Confucianists made this conclusion.

people's abilities/backgrounds", became Confucianists' motto. It is not to discriminate people's acceptance of educational provision, but on the contrary, teachers (or tutors) should provide/use different help/methods if students' (or people's) needs are different from each other. So, the proverb from Confucius' "Yu Gio Wu Le, En Zhai Ze Gio" can be seen as the first idea that "Education has no boundary, and it depends on the differences among people".

In education, "exclusion" and "inclusion" are relatively new terms in relation to children's schooling. From *education both reflects and modifies the attitude of society* (Petrie 1978: 1) and *schooling is the first level that children step out families* (Wu 1999: 3), it is apparent that education plays a crucial role in both society and an individual's future development. The notion of "special education provision" is not a new term either in Scotland or Taiwan, as Closs (1997) and Wang (2000) from both countries pointed out; the provision of special education can be traced to a hundred years ago. But special education provision, as some, for example Skrtic (1991), Ainscow (1999) and Clark *et al.* (1999) argued that, it is different from inclusive education. Special educational provision is for students who are mentally or physically disabled in schools; and inclusive education focuses on including students, no matter non-disabled or disabled, in the same environment so that both kinds of students can benefit from each other.

In modern times, more attention is paid to the issue of special education due to widespread acceptance of human rights, especially in democratic countries. Pupils with difficulties, irrespective of whether mentally or physically, have been the subject of attention and taken into consideration on their rights of education. Petrie (1978) pointed out that between 1950 and 1952 in Scotland, the "Seven Reports" recognised pupils with special educational needs could be educated in general schools due to the increase of medical knowledge and the improvement of general school conditions; so, ordinary educational system could

provide for the handicapped child the individual attention the he/she particularly needed (pp.5-6).

In Taiwan, as in many other countries in Asia, the notion of inclusion and exclusion in educational system originated in late 1970's partly because of the rapid development in new technology (for example, Information Communication Technology), and partly due to the concepts of inclusion and exclusion being widespread throughout the world. The educational system in Taiwan is basically based on the United States' framework. But, unfortunately, during the 1970's and 1980's, special education provision was ignored because it was only categorised in a small proportion of pupils who have special needs in education. Till the early 1990's (Mao, 1994), the notion of inclusion became more visible in response to concerns about human rights and social justice. In Taiwan, significant efforts have been made in the implementation of developing inclusion, particularly in changing people's attitudes and ideas and from the Government to ordinary people. However, to change people's attitudes needs time and resources, so Wang<sup>1</sup> (2003) believed that *the battle is still there and we are still fighting*.

The traditional segregated system meant that disabled children grew up without meeting other children who had or did not have disabilities. *Segregation resulted in many children not fulfilling their potential as expectations of their abilities were often lower* (Tassoni, 2003: 11). In the traditional education system, children with special educational needs were segregated from their peers because most people thought that a separate system was good for those who had special education needs and also good for those who were normal; because by doing so, children from both groups could have suitable educational provision and would not influence each other. But now, it is accepted that traditional segregation is

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Wang is researcher's friend (since junior high school), and he is currently the Chief of Personnel and Administration of a rural primary school. Also seen in Chapter 1.2, 7.4 and 10.

out-of-date and unsuitable for children; and in both Western and Eastern countries, the schooling system now is to allow all children to have fair and equal access to education.

In Scotland and Taiwan, from segregation to inclusion, special education also has its own background. Two examples, one from Scotland and the other from Taiwan, are as follows: in Scotland, the notion that every pupil should be given the same opportunities in education started in the 1950s-1960s. In Reid's *Description of an Urban Special School – The Mary Russell School, Glasgow*, she pointed out that pupils with disabilities (the term “handicapped” was used at that time) should be treated as normal pupils. According to Reid (1978), *we are all handicapped in some way or other* (p.26). Pupils, regardless any difficulty or disability, should be treated equally and pupils with disabilities are just like other children. Reid continued:

*Our pupils are just people, and our job is to do our best to help them to cope with life outside school, enabling them to function as members of the community and perhaps to make their own contribution.*

(Reid 1978: 28)

It follows from this that pupils should not be excluded from schools for whatever reason and schools should provide a welcoming environment for all pupils. So Reid believed schools should look at each individual child as a whole and build each individual's ability and minimize children's handicaps (Ibid).

In Taiwan, Lee (2000, in Wang's “*Special Education*”) wrote a story based on his case study in Taiwan about a male pupil called Chi-Ming (the name had been changed) who had Down's syndrome. Chi-Ming's parents were informed by the hospital doctors after he was born, and his parents were introduced to an organisation which was formed by parents of

children with Down's syndrome, related groups and other social workers and expertise. From the organisation, Chi-Ming's parents learnt a great deal of information about Down's syndrome. Chi-Ming attended special schools (from primary to vocational school); but with help from school teachers, the medical doctors and other organisations, Chi-Ming's parents always made him live a normal life and tried to help him to cope with normal children. In doing so, Chi-Ming could learn not only in schools, but also from the surrounding he engaged with. After graduating from the vocational school, Chi-Ming found a job in a factory and he was also a volunteer in the local hospital. Lee (2000) pointed out that *the aim of special education is to offer a suitable education, for example: IEPs, to the special children...make them (special children) part of our life and society* (p.760). The issue here is that with proper and adequate provision, to get rid of traditional "isolated" special education which often means that children stay in special schools and homes, and with the help of others, pupils with special educational needs can still grow up equipped with skills which he/she needs for future life. As Lee concluded that *with suitable education, like IEPs, and the help of other related agencies, pupils with SEN will learn the skills they need for the future and even better contribute to others or society* (Ibid). So, Lee believed that schools should be open-minded and accept all kinds of children; and from the activities in schools, pupils with disabilities and their peers can obtain better information about the differences among them. Through school life, it is better for pupils, both non-disabled and disabled, to interact and learn with each other.

In recent years, there has been a growing urgency towards the requirement to address the principles of inclusion and participation in education (Scottish Executive, 2002 and Ministry of Education, Taiwan, 2001). The reflection of this growing urgency is on the emphasis of human rights. The failure of addressing barriers to learning and participation has been consistently highlighted. The main concept is to stress the right of every child to access and participate in their local (Scotland) and regional (Taiwan) schools. Through the

researches conducted in many countries and organisations in the world, from the United States, the United Kingdom to the United Nations; the traditional schooling: exclusion (or segregation) impoverishes the educational system. Discrimination and marginalisation, viewed as exclusion, affect all learners, both non-disabled or disabled students; and even worse, those of planning and provision. Children with special educational needs are deemed as disadvantaged and different from their peers; and this traditional special education provision resulted in misunderstanding and prejudice. So, Topping and Maloney (2005) indicated that *the rights and entitlements of children (in particular) have received increasing attention in recent years* (p.3).

The principle of ‘education for all’ is the milestone in the education system; however, it does not have a long history. ‘Education for all’ has become the main trend in the past two decades. Children’s rights, especially those with disadvantages or disabilities, have been neglected for a long time. The traditional special education provision, such as special schools and segregated classes, was based on *normal* or *ordinary* people’s points of view which were seen as “paying more attention to disabled people and bringing benefits to them”. But despite the expansion of benefits to help disadvantaged people, normal people use their ways of thinking to implement the ideas. As a consequence, disadvantaged people remain neglected and excluded. Inclusion, especially inclusive education, *emphasises on schools and settings to adapt and to be flexible enough to accommodate each and every child* (Tassoni 2003: 11). Therefore, Briggs writes:

*When all pupils are included and respected in groups within lessons, the achievement of all improves. Inclusion is not about educating pupils with learning difficulties at the expense of others. It is about making schools more effective and responsive for all.*

(Briggs 2004: 35)

Schools are places for children to learn. With inclusive education, pupils, no matter non-disabled or disabled, advantaged or disadvantaged, can build future independence and have the chance to cultivate skills, such as human relationship and communicative skills which they need in their future life into adulthood. Schools are also places in which pupils can share their information and interact with others; and through the interaction, children develop their abilities in understanding and respect among different people. However, Hayden (1997) and Milbourne (2002) argued that schools operate in the form of market because of the competition between schools; competition and accountability have been major parts of schooling. Also, Barton and Slee (1999) pointed out *what are schools for?* and *who is valued within schools, why and with what consequences?* are two fundamental questions in schooling. From Hayden, Milbourne, Barton and Slee's views, competition and accountability may result in exclusion. However, Hayden (1997) argued that as long as a teacher transforms the competition to encouragement (lower attainment pupils can have a more 'real' object—higher attainment pupils—to catch up), then all pupils can get improved; and Barton and Slee (1999) believed that schools experience contradictory expectations and demands; and inclusive education can be deemed as the pursuit of community, solidarity and difference. From these arguments, it can be argued that segregation makes pupils, both non-disabled and disabled, grow up without meeting other children whose needs are different from each other. Segregation, argued as morally wrong and educationally inefficient (Rouse and Florian, 1997), results in misunderstanding and prejudice between non-disabled and disabled pupils. Furthermore, children with any disability or impairment will be deemed as problems of difficulties and lose their chances to fulfill their potential. By contrast, inclusive education is a new education initiative which allows all children to have fair and equal access to education, and as such, inclusion demolishes inequalities.

In schooling, inclusive education can be regarded as a journey which takes a long time to reach the destination; and the most important is in that every school, as Armstrong (1999) and Carrington and Robinson (2006) maintained, inclusive procedures are different. Though inclusive procedures are different, in accordance with the Alliance for Inclusive Education (2000), three basic ideas about inclusive education should be kept in mind;

*Inclusive education enables all students to participate fully in any mainstream early years provision, school, college or university. Inclusive education provision has training and resources aimed at fostering every student's equality and participation in all aspects of the life of the learning community. Inclusive education aims to equip all people with the skills needed to build inclusive communities.*

(Alliance for Inclusive Education, 2000,  
<http://www.allfie.org.uk/pages06/about/index.html#principles> access date: 21/11/2004 )

Moreover, the Alliance maintains inclusive education should be based on nine principles:

- a person's worth is independent of their abilities or achievement.
- every human being is able to feel and think.
- every human being has a right to communicate and be heard.
- all human beings need each other.
- real education can only happen in the context of real relationships.
- all people need support and friendship from people of their own age.
- progress for all learners is achieved by building on things people can do rather than what they cannot.
- diversity brings strength to all living systems.
- collaboration is more important than competition.

(Alliance for Inclusive Education, 2000,  
<http://www.allfie.org.uk/pages06/about/index.html#principles>  
access date: 21/11/2004 )

### **2.3 The Purpose of Education in Relation to Inclusion**

When focusing on education for children with special educational needs, it is appropriate to set such provision in relation to the overall purposes of education. Bartlett *et al.* argued that:

*...education is normally thought to be about acquiring and being able to use knowledge, and developing skills and understanding - cognitive capabilities....as humans, we are identified by our capacity to learn, communicate and reason. We are involved in these things throughout our lives and in all situations.*

(Bartlett *et al.* 2001: 3)

The focus on the function of education is the benefit that education brings to the whole of a given society. So, Bartlett *et al.* (2001) concluded that *education is seen alongside other social institutions as working to create and maintain a stable society* (p.4). Through education systems, basic academic skills such as reading, writing and communication, which are also deemed as social skills and seen as important and vital for human life, can be cultivated and developed. Besides, human beings are socialised creatures, and education is a process of socialisation which is an induction into society's culture, norms and values (Ibid). Socialisation is a process throughout life and in this process schooling plays a crucial role (Bartlett *et al.*, 2001 and Wu, 1999). Social control (Lloyd, 2000) and maintaining social order are also important for the function of schooling. In social life, the rule of law and certain expected ways of behaviour are also involved in the provision of

education. Education provides the knowledge of norms, the norms of being well behaved and respecting the law. The provision of education can also be deemed as the preparation for future work. Abilities and capabilities are developed through school life, so, it can be seen that education is the resource and initiative for the preparation of adult skills (Wilson, 2004, Frostad and Pijl, 2007).

Selection, from the functionalist perspective, is argued as one of the major functions of education. Timmons (1988) indicated that in the early nineteenth century, selection had a close link with education because of industrialisation. The early ideology of selection focused on the development of the economy so education was used to flourish the country and the market force, as Ahier *et al.* (1996) pointed out the traditional A Level in English system focused on the impact of the labour market and training for specialisation. The trend of selection continued till the early twentieth century. In the post-war industrial countries, Turner (1958, in Blackledge and Hunt, 1985) pointed out that social mobility was very important in the 1950s and 60s. The argument from Turner focused on the social structure. From Turner's idea, Blackledge and Hunt (1985) believed that *society was a stratified institution contained with all kinds of people and at each level there were differences in the amount of income, prestige and power (p.77)*. Society is a stratified and mobile entity, so:

*People who wish to promote mobility have often thought that education could be used to engineer a more just and efficient society.*

(Blackledge and Hunt 1985: 77-78)

A system based on segregation can be deemed as a selection, a selection of difference between elite and non-elite individuals. However, society has a fundamental problem, as Hopper and Osborn (1975) argued:

*This (the fundamental problem) involves finding and training them (society members) early in the life cycle, recruiting them eventually into specific segments of the labour market, and regulating their values and normative expectations at various phases of this process.*

(Hopper and Osborn 1975: 17)

With different educational provision, pupils are cultivated in different styles and may result in different norms or values, by which Turner argued as *the most conspicuous control problem of ensuring loyalty in the disadvantaged classes* (Turner 1971: 77). Besides, *educational inequalities are understood as a crucial variable in the reproduction of social inequalities...* (Ahier *et al.* 1996: 9). So, McLean (1996) pointed out that all students should acquire a basic knowledge appropriate to their age or grade. Furthermore, in Vlachou's (1997) *Struggles for Inclusive Education*, Barton argued that *disability is viewed as a form of oppression and the fundamental issue is not one of any individual's disabilities or limitations, but rather a hostile and unadaptive society* (Barton 1997: vi).

As Confucius asserted, education is the preparation for life. Whitehead (1962) also believed that *education is the acquisition of the art of the utilization of knowledge* (p.6). It can be argued that the traditional thinking about the aim of education focused on skills and knowledge. However, the trend of globalisation era focuses on cooperation (Ebersold, 2003) and appreciation of diversity (Kugelmass, 2001, Flem *et al.*, 2004 and Pijl, 2007); and therefore, education not only focuses on basic skills and knowledge, which can be seen as surface benefits of education, it also emphasises the inner virtues such as love and respect.

Baker and Gaden (1992) also indicated that four aims can be cited under the heading of education. Role preparation and moral socialisation are the first two aims. They believed:

*The aim of role preparation involves developing children's abilities to perform the various roles they will occupy in adult life, broadly those of citizen, parent, householder, and worker. The aim of moral socialization is to inculcate into children the dominant norms of society and of their particular class or grouping within it.*

(Baker and Gaden 1992: 15)

Another different aim from role preparation and moral socialisation is the development of rational knowledge and understanding. *Typically, it proceeds by way of systematic teaching and aims at some degree of intellectual sophistication and rational autonomy* (Baker and Gaden 1992: 16). The final aim is personal growth and self-realisation which is *to uncover and foster each individual's potential* (Ibid). From Baker and Gaden, a broad aim of education, by which inclusive education (or as Baker and Gaden's term "integration") also takes this aim as its idealism, can be derived; and this aim focuses on *seeking to develop real mutual respect and concern among all children, regardless of gender, race, social background or ability* (p.17). In one word, inclusive education aims at *all students* (Slee 2001: 68) and *all learners* (Ainscow *et al.*, 2004).

#### **2.4 Theories of Inclusion and Inclusive Education**

The move towards equal rights and opportunities for all can be seen as a long and difficult battle. Two centuries ago, Thomas Paine challenged the authority with his famous publication, *Rights of Man*; though not using inclusion as today, it can be deemed as the initiative of the concept and the root of inclusion. Two of Paine's main notions are based on the premises that: first, *men are born, and always continue, free and equal in respect of*

*their rights; and second, the end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance of oppression* (Paine, 1791. Reprinted in 1915) which are closely related to the notion of inclusion.

Human rights and entitlements are focused from Paine's masterpiece; and equality should be applied not only in politics but also all other human activities. Based on his reflections towards the French Revolution, Paine highly criticised the monarchy and the social institutions of the day. Paine provided different points of view which inspired people into the thinking about human rights. Another important concept from Paine focuses on the 'resistance of oppression'. Oppression can be seen as inequality from upper/dominant class, or from Paine's view, the sovereignty. The slogans of French Revolution, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, aimed to topple the hereditary monarchy, provoked the initiative of the enlightenment and influenced all over the Western world. Through Paine's Rights of Man, Thomas and Vaughan (2004) pointed out that:

*The law is an expression of the will of the community. All citizens have a right to concur, either personally or by their representatives, in its formation. It should be the same to all, whether it protects or punishes; and all being equal in its sight, are equally eligible to all honours, places, and employments, according to their different abilities, without any other distinction than that created by their virtues and talents.*

(Thomas and Vaughan 2004: 8)

Deeply influenced by Tawney, the United Kingdom accepts the 'differences' among people. As Tawney pointed out that *equality implies the deliberate acceptance of social restraints upon individual expansion* (Tawney, 1931. Reprinted in 1952, p.181). The

philosophical stance, derived from Paine and Tawney, celebrates individual differences. Paine and Tawney believed that inequality and social structure are closely related, and a civilised society such as the UK aimed to eliminate inequalities, because society was composed of different individuals; and individual differences should be viewed as the source of social energy.

From Tawney's (1931) ideas of valuation and celebration of individual differences, the issues on special education provision gradually shifted to equality and egalitarianism. Selection and segregation (Baker and Gaden, 1992), labeling (Stobart, 1992), marginalisation (Chung, 2004) and disfranchisement of abnormal pupils' rights (Wu, 2004) were deemed typical manifestations of inequality and privilege. Other more offensive terms, such as 'handicapped' and 'abnormal' or 'subnormal', had been used before SEN and inclusion emerged. Traditionally, people with learning difficulties were placed in segregation systems which lead them to being marginalised. Once a child was placed in a special school, he/she was labelled and it was difficult for him/her to return to a normal mainstream school. In the past, the special education system was based on segregation which was regarded as a kind of protection for people with learning difficulties. But, Topping and Maloney (2005) argued that *in fact; it is difficult to find convincing evidence that pupils do better in special schools* (p.2). Segregated education, prior to mainstreaming pupils with learning difficulties, disfranchised pupils' rights for being involved in their non-disabled peers' daily life and the right for being educated equally as non-disabled pupils. The idea of inclusion focuses on breaking down inequality and providing egalitarian ideals. As Baker and Gaden (1992) argued, egalitarians take a particular stance on the aims of education in general. Baker and Gaden kept on arguing that three major principles should be implied into the notion of equality:

*Perhaps the most fundamental principle of equality is respect for persons. A second principle of equality is the right to the satisfaction of basic needs. A third principle of equality falls under the heading of equal opportunity.*

(Baker and Gaden 1992: 13)

The principles mentioned by Baker and Gaden can also be deemed as the aims of education. From an egalitarian position, it is argued that each person should have a real opportunity to develop his/her particular capacities in a satisfying and fulfilling way. The issue then focuses on that each individual person should have equal opportunity to get the resources he/she needs for his/her development.

On the contrary, traditional special education provision for pupils with special needs was based on segregation. Such pupils were placed in separated institutions called special schools/units. The argument for segregation which was not suitable for both non-disabled and disabled pupils was on the incompatibility with the commitment to equality. Segregation resulted in marginalisation which isolated or set apart certain groups from the mainstream, no matter in educational systems or in other aspects. Integration or inclusion advocates, such as Baker and Gaden (1992), Wang (2000) and Wu (2004), argued that segregation betrayed a lack of respect for disabled people's common dignity and denied their equal rights of participation in the daily activities and opportunities offered to non-disabled people. Some arguments were also pointed out by Baker and Gaden (1992) and Evans and Lunt (2002) for the emergence of segregation because segregation allows resources for SEN pupils to be allocated in a more secure and efficient way; and children in separate schools commonly achieve a status and dignity to which they could hardly aspire in the mainstream schools without a large-scale revolution in the ethos of ordinary schools (Baker and Gaden 1992: 20); and exclusion and segregation are key elements in protecting an educational system which does not sufficiently recognise and cater for

individual differences (Evans and Lunt 2002: 12). However, the debates between integration and segregation, as Wu (2004), Wong *et al.* (2004), Ypinazar and Pagliano (2004) and an interviewee in this study indicated, do not merely focus on pupils' developments such as academic achievement and peer relationship. It was appreciation of difference and the value of respect. Segregation can hardly provide this characteristic because of the isolation from normal mainstream schools. That is why Baker and Gaden (1992) pointed out that *mutual respect and concern need to be cultivated in real relationships which are, as far as possible, institutionally unrestricted* (p.22). Furthermore, *one cannot participate with others without actually participating* (Ibid). After growing up in families, the first step for children to get contact with the reality is schools. The school is a place that provides opportunities for children to interact with each other. Segregation may have its unique characteristics for some people or groups, but it can also be deemed as a man-made harmony for disabled people or children.

In the Western world, a great deal of effort has been put into the development of special education provision. Educators and administrators try to find the best educational provision to children with special educational needs. From the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a separated system was provided because pupils with mental or physical impairments were regarded as abnormal. Gradually, the notion of segregation has been perceived as unacceptable. As Meijer *et al.* pointed out:

*The prevailing view is that they (pupils with special needs) should be educated together with their peers in regular education settings. The consequence is that regular and special education as separate systems disappear and are replaced by a single system that includes a wide range of pupils. In such an inclusive system, all pupils attend in principle the same school. The term 'inclusive*

*education' stands for an educational system that includes a large diversity of pupils and which differentiates education for the diversity.*

(Meijer *et al.* 1997: 1)

Segregation, as Söder (1997) pointed out, *is seen as violating basic values and rights. Segregation means denying people their right to lead normal lives and violates basic values of equality, freedom and choice and stands in direct contrast to idea of 'a society for all' and 'a school for all'* (p.16). From time to time, people have been thinking which provision is good for all pupils, special education or mainstream!! It seems difficult to choose and make the decision. But since the researchers have found out that to place pupils with special educational needs in normal mainstream schools can benefit both non-disabled and disabled pupils; and the most important of all, the future role and conception in society as pupils grow up, it seems that inclusive education is the ideal choice. Education should prepare pupils for future roles in society, because pupils inevitably will grow up and need to live within society. From the early stage schooling, pupils can be installed appropriate notions and ideas about equality. Segregation, as well as exclusion, results in the negative views of pupils' future performance in life, families, and societies because of lacking capacities of interaction and lacking acceptance by others. With the biased concepts generated by segregation or exclusion, pupils are influenced and the consequences may be, as Thomas (1997) and Söder (1997) argued, high social costs and troublesome, dishonesty and aggressive behaviours in the future.

In terms of the consequence of segregation or exclusion, educators and people who are concerned with education system have investigated and put a great deal of efforts to find a better way for education for both non-disabled and disabled pupils. A number of educators (for example: Ainscow, Dyson, Thomas, Skrtic, Vlachou) challenged traditional special

education for its deficit practices; and based on Salamanca Statement (1994), the notion of inclusion had gradually emerged.

From segregation to inclusion takes time (Wu, 2004) and the process has generated much debate and conflict. The process is not merely from segregation to inclusion. In the mid-80<sup>th</sup>, the term ‘integration’ was widely used. But the notion of integration focuses on the attempts to place special needs pupils in the regular mainstream education system. However, integration is seen as preparing children perceived as being special to fit into a school that remains largely unchanged (Ainscow, 1997). So, Meijer *et al.* (1997) argued that *integration should not be about where pupils are placed nor about providing access to pre-set norms of learning and behaviours; it is about fitting schools to meet the needs of all their pupils* (p.2). With this argument, the wider notion of integration gradually becomes close to inclusion, as Frederickson and Cline indicated that:

*...the needs of individual children are considered to be paramount. Where individual needs cannot currently be met in mainstream schools, the government has made a commitment to maintaining specialist provision as an integral part of overall provisions.... shift in emphasis from an exclusion focus on the needs of individual pupils to an approach which focuses centrally on the skills and resources available in mainstream schools in an important difference between the earlier concept of ‘integration’ and the more recent concept of ‘inclusion’.*

(Frederickson and Cline 2002: 65)

Traditionally, children with particular difficulties were put together with other children who had similar difficulties. This resulted in segregation or stigmatisation (Hsu, 2000); and also restricted the access to other educational opportunities. With segregation, children

with special educational needs were labelled and marked; and pupils with SEN were deemed as less-able or underachievers and may be teased by other pupils. The consequence is that, as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation pointed out, segregation may be instrumental in contributing to prejudice and bias (UNSECO, 1994). So the Salamanca Statement suggested that the notion on principles, policy, and practice in SEN focused on:

*Inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights. Within the field of education this is reflected in the development of strategies that seek to bring about a genuine equalization of opportunity.*

(UNSECO 1994: 11)

However, inclusion, an idea that both non-disabled and disabled pupils participate in the same environment, is not easy to achieve; the focus of how can schools achieve, or as Ainscow's (1999) *reach out*, integration or inclusion becomes an important issue to educators and administrators. Ainscow (1999) argued that integration just had a limited number of additional arrangements for individual pupils with particular difficulties in schools. Inclusion, on the other hand, is different. Frederickson and Cline (2002) indicated that:

*Inclusion implies the introduction of a more radical set of changes through which schools restructure themselves so as to be able to embrace all children. Integration involves the school in a process of assimilation where the onus is on the assimilating individual (whether a pupils with SEN or a pupil with different cultural and linguistic background) to make changes so that they can 'fit in'. By contrast, inclusion involves the school in a process of accommodation where the*

*onus is on the school to change, adapting curricula, methods, materials and procedures so that it becomes more responsive. Given an inclusive philosophy, those with SEN can be the stimulus to development of a much richer mainstream learning experience for all.*

(Frederickson and Cline 2002: 65)

In inclusive settings, pupils can access and participate fully in the classroom. Inclusive schools can respond to all children who have different needs with different strategies being used and equality of opportunity provided. As the Index for Inclusion emphasises, the process view of inclusion as:

*...a set of never ending processes. It (inclusion) involves the specification of the direction of change. It is relevant to any school however inclusive or exclusive its current cultures, policies and practices. It requires schools to engage in a critical examination of what can be done to increase the learning and participation of the diversity of students within the school and its locality.*

(Index for Inclusion, in Booth *et al.* 2000: 66)

Inclusion, therefore, can be deemed as an unending progressive trend for increasing responsibilities for those who have been excluded from mainstream, either society or schooling.

The notion of inclusion focuses on placing special educational needs pupils in ordinary classrooms; and by doing so, more interactions and understandings between disabled and non-disabled pupils can be bridged and acceptance can be established. By engaging with non-disabled peers, children with special educational needs also can be modelled in their behaviours. Some of the advantages of inclusion, as Stobart (1992) and Frederickson *et al.*

(2004) argued, are to allow members in an inclusive setting to get to know each other as individuals and to promote improvements in confidence and self-esteem. Every one has the right to interact with other people and of course all children have the right to participate in every social activity and education is no exception, as Fish Report (1985) indicated, all children, regardless of their disability, have the right to *a range of opportunities in education, training, leisure and community activities available to all.*

Education is the process for cultivating and fostering people with the accurate and fair notions and norms. The current educational focus is on the right of *all* children. From a sociologist's (for example: Davis, 1992 and Lin, 1996) point of view, human rights must extend to all human beings within societies and societies have always existed to protect the basic rights of all members so that the members of society can learn and share with each other. People with difficulties or pupils with learning disabilities are just as much individuals as other non-disabled people or pupils. So, Davis (1992) pointed out that:

*Without a right to life, the right to education can only be a peripheral concern, and yet it is of great importance because without an integrated education system in which the disabled and able bodies mix freely and learn from each other, the fear of handicap which perpetuates a eugenic outlook can never be overcome.*

(Davis 1992: 62)

Or as the report from the Ministry of Education (1995):

*The future of special education in Taiwan will focus on teaching without categories, teaching in accordance with people's abilities/backgrounds, fully participation and adaptive development.*

(MOE, 1995)

To divide pupils into non-disabled and disabled groups is to build a boundary and to create misunderstanding; and the influences of segregation affect both non-disabled and disabled pupils. Segregation, especially traditional special education schools, easily ignored minorities' needs and might accidentally ignore the existence of pupils with special educational needs. But in the true reality, society is composed by all kinds of people; and each individual is unique and different, and all deserve the same humanity.

Inclusion provides a well-established environment for each child to have equal opportunities for achieving greater potential. The inclusive environment is a place where pupils are valued and treated without difference. By doing so, pupils also learn to value diversity and not to treat others as abnormal or strange. The world and society are made up of people with a variety of abilities and disabilities. Inclusion provides a perspective that is based on forbearance of difference and diversity. The inclusive setting is a place for children, both non-disabled and disabled, to explore their own needs so that all children can learn and grow. The main focus of inclusion is on the widest range of pupils, both non-disabled and disabled. Segregation, deemed as the violation of a basic human right, is rejected by humanists. In a democratic era, each individual is accepted as a full member of society and should be treated as individual with respect and dignity and of course, equally. Traditional segregation education deprived people or pupils' rights for participating as a whole individual; and inclusive education *is based on the inherent rights of all children to have equal opportunities to attend their neighbourhood school* (Mittler 1992: 108) and *inclusive education starts from the assumption that all children have a right to attend their neighbourhood school* (Ainscow 1997: 5). Mittler and Ainscow's arguments emphasised the importance of ensuring that disabled children were given opportunities to learn and grow up alongside children with their non-disabled peers so that education can be deemed as a good preparation for children, both non-disabled and disabled, to live in an integrated society.

## 2.5 The Shift in Inclusive Education

The development of education involves multi-layers of factors, from politics to individual learners, from society to the family. The shift in thinking from exclusive education to inclusive education is a long process. Different people often have different views on inclusion; and these views are based on the background of their life experiences, as Rouse pointed out that:

*The aims of education are the same for all children, although the means may be different, as might the extent to which the aims are achieved.*

(Rouse 2000: 69)

Daniels and Garner (1999) also pointed out that *there is a complete shift from students as clients to students as participants in a learning organisation* (p.xvii). The role of students shifts from do to the principal doers in schooling.

*The primary function of schooling shifts from learning to the construction of collective knowledge in ‘problem-based learning’ and ‘project-based learning’.*

(Ibid)

One of the primary purposes of schooling is to construct an understanding of the world in learners; and if the schooling wants to be success, participation by all (people and organisations) plays an important role. Therefore:

*Inclusive education comprises a vibrant, global movement, which is located within a humanistic educational struggle. This effort is currently proceeding in*

*an international and national climate of economic accountability and individual rights.*

(Daniels and Garner 1999: xxiii)

Both Taiwan and Scotland, despite the geographical and demographic differences, are democratic counties. They are influenced by other countries' educational systems; Scotland, has been influenced by both Scandinavian (Clark, 1997) and English systems and has its own long history toward education. Taiwan, on the other hand, has been influenced by the American system and traditional Chinese thinking. The influence by other countries inspires both Scotland and Taiwan's development of democracy, as Daniels and Garner's (1999) definition of "increasing levels of participation in social and political life". The development of democracy needs other factors to implement, for example; the economical changes and social actions. For establishing inclusivity, many factors should be considered about and then the process of inclusion can be illustrated and exclusivity can be exposed.

Though influenced by both Scandinavian and English systems, Scottish education *is independent because of autonomy built into the Union between Scottish and English Parliaments in 1707* (Paterson 1997: 138-139). Scotland merged its parliament with that of England in 1707 (MacKenzie, 1999) but now has a devolved system of government which has its own powers over education and training. The establishment of the Scottish parliament in 1998 provided a unique opportunity to reflect on the nature of Scottish society and the place of education which has fundamental principles as freedom, rights, equality, justice and citizenship (Humes and Bryce 1999: 1005). In Taiwan, before Japanese occupancy, the education system was mainly based on the Chinese (the Chin Dynasty) system which focused on bureaucracy or the elites (Wu, 1999). During Japanese occupancy, primary education was still the privilege for the elites or Japanese descendants. However, in Mainland China 1920, the Ministry of Education followed the American

system and implemented a single-track system<sup>1</sup>. With the influence from Chinese, Japanese and American systems, Wu (1999) argued that there is no identity in Taiwanese education and proposed future educational reform should focus on Taiwan's identity.

In the special education system, Hung (2001) pointed out that in the United Kingdom, it was until 1940's that the British Government started to pay attention to students with special educational needs. Before 1940, the policy for special education provision had three characteristics: *First, disabilities only included physical and mental categories; secondly; some certain groups of special students were not suitable for normal education system; and thirdly, the tendency was exclusive education* (Hung 2001: 26). In Britain, the 1944 Educational Act (for England, Wales and North Ireland) and the 1945 Education (Scotland) Act can be seen as watersheds because special needs students could be educated in local community schools. The 1981 Education Act was also an important milestone for inclusive notion. Deeply influenced by the Warnock Committee (started from 1972), the Act stated that in England Local Education Authorities (LEAs) should have a duty to educate and locate special educational needs children alongside mainstream peers. The notion derived from the 1981 Education Act was that all pupils were equally valuable and had equal rights to general educational systems.

In Taiwan, on the other hand, it was 1998 that the notion of 'equal educational opportunities' (mainly influenced by American Public Law 94-142) was endorsed and implemented by the Ministry of Education. The Special Education Act (Ministry of Education, 1997) Article 1 clearly states *...special needs and gifted citizens have the rights to accept appropriate education that suits them,...*

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<sup>1</sup> Primary education starts from 6 to 12, secondary education starts from 12 to 18 and higher education starts after 18 (Source: Ministry of Education, 1985).

Comparing Taiwanese, English and Scottish systems, there is no huge or apparent difference in special education provision among these three countries. The only obvious difference in both special education systems lies on time, in other words; in the UK (1940's) and in Taiwan (1990's), it was the time which the right for pupils with special educational needs was paid attention to.

Inclusive education, which is now integrated into the mainstream educational system in Scotland and gradually becoming the trend in Taiwan, provides the idea of 'full membership' and 'full participation'. The National Centre on Inclusive Education and Restructuring gave the definition of inclusive education as providing to all students, including those with significant disabilities, equitable opportunities to receive effective educational services, with the needed supplemental aids and support services, in age-appropriate classes in their neighbourhood schools, in order to prepare students for productive lives as full members of society (NCERI, 1994). The primary perspective in inclusive education changes the traditional education perspective. The shift is from 'school-centred'/'ability-centred' to 'student-centred'. Inclusive education focuses not only on the students with disabilities but also on the typical students.

Minow (1990) gave a good example of the shift in the focus from individual to the social context, and pointed out:

*...involving classmates in the solutions affords a different stance toward the dilemma of difference: it no longer makes the trait of hearing impairment (in Minow's writing about a deaf girl named Amy) signify stigma or isolation but responds to the trait as an issue for the entire community.*

(Minow 1990: 84)

As Minow, Ballard (1997) also indicated that the concerns of inclusive education shifted from the pathology and adjustment in the 1950s-1960s, to parents as teachers and therapists in the 1970s-1980s, and to wider ecological context in the 1990s. The process of inclusion involves pupils with disabilities but the consequences involve all the students without disability. Also from the researches, it is believed that children with disabilities have the potential to make contributions towards other pupils' learning and growth, and people should cherish the advantages of this opportunity. In summary, as Lipsky and Gartner (1999) wrote:

*Inclusive education is not a reform of special education. It is the convergency of the need to restructure the public education system, to make the needs of a changing society, and the adaptation of the separate special education system, which have been shown to be unsuccessful for the greater number of students who are served by it. It is the development of a unitary system that has educational benefits for both typical students and students with special needs. It is a system that provides quality education for all children.*

(Lipsky and Gartner 1999: 15)

## **CHAPTER THREE: SOCIAL INCLUSION: CURRENT ISSUES**

### **3.1 Social Inclusion in Taiwan and the UK, particularly Scotland**

Inclusion and exclusion are closely related, as Booth *et al.* (1997) maintained *the processes of inclusion and exclusion are inextricably linked* (p.338). Kearney and Kane (2006) also indicated that *exclusion and inclusion are two sides of the same coin and to understand one, requires an understanding of the other* (p.205). As exclusion is often presented as the polar opposite of inclusion, it is appropriate to discuss exclusion in order to understand inclusion. From Lloyd's (2008) ideas towards the social inclusion agenda, which is *concerned with ensuring access to the mainstream of activity in society and with preventing alienation and dissatisfaction* (p.226), this chapter regards exclusion, particularly social exclusion, as the first priority, and then shifts the focus to educational inclusion.

#### **3.1.1 The Governments' Definitions of Social Exclusion**

The Governments of both Taiwan and Scotland not only play important roles in promoting equal opportunities for all citizens, but also have the responsibilities for preventing exclusion. But to understand the characteristics of social exclusion is both crucial and difficult, especially in a post-industrial society because exclusion must have a time component (Byrne, 2005). Social exclusion is a complex phenomenon which raises many questions such as *is there a way to integrate the micro level accounts of individual life trajectories with the macro level of categorical or phase shift transformations?* (Byrne 2005: 78). Byrne's argument provides a thought that integration into a wider society often has a multi-dimensional context; for example, bilingual issues in Scotland and disabled people's rights in Taiwan. The background of an individual or a group's exclusion has to be analysed before governments' move to addressing social inclusion. The following two paragraphs are the definitions of social exclusion that apply in both countries:

## **Taiwan**

In Taiwan, social exclusion refers to: (1) a person, who is voluntary (ex: natural born with disabilities or impairments) or involuntary (ex: children from poor family background or deprived environment), excluded by society, or (2) an individual or a group, who is (are) not accepted by others, with or without any particular reasons (Executive Yuan, 1998 in Wang's *General Ideas of Special Education*, 2000).

## **The United Kingdom (Scotland)**

In the United Kingdom, social exclusion has been defined as follows: an individual is socially excluded if (a) he or she is geographically resident in a society but (b) for reasons beyond his or her control, he or she cannot participate in the normal activities of citizens in that society, and (c) he or she would like to so participate (Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion, 1999).

Both Taiwanese and Scottish Governments have clear definitions about social exclusion, but the issue about social inclusion lies in how to break it down and promote a fairer society. In both Scotland and Taiwan, the definitions of social exclusion have many similarities. The differences lie only in the terms used and in their applications in laws and respective education systems. Taiwan has adopted its ideologies and practices from the United States, for example, Individual Educational Plans (IEPs); whilst Scotland is influenced by Europe and England, for example, Special Education Needs (SEN) which has evolved into Scottish Additional Support Needs (ASN).

### 3.1.2 Social Exclusion in Taiwan

In Taiwan, social exclusion has become an important issue in policy making because more and more people consider social welfare issues<sup>1</sup> to be increasingly important. People who are excluded can be categorised into one of two groups: people from rural areas, mountain areas and poor families (lower class families); and people with disabilities or impairments either physically or mentally. The main issue focuses on equality of opportunity and egalitarianism<sup>2</sup>.

In Taiwan, the term “exclusion” is now widely discussed in terms of several contexts, including social, economical and educational contexts. In 1999, the Government announced that *we need to keep one important thing in mind that exclusion is not just a simple notion of poverty* (Executive Yuan, 1999) and *include new blood<sup>3</sup>, to build a harmonic and multi-dimensional society together* (Executive Yuan, 2004, <http://www.ey.gov.tw//ct.asp?xItem=20598&ctNode=88&mp=1>, access date:19/Oct/2007).

Exclusion can be deemed as exploitation and domination because it is the oppression from the upper class to the lower class, and is a form of cultural hegemony. In Taiwan, people with difficulties are always vulnerable in society, and due to the Chinese tradition, people with difficulties always hide themselves at home or in institutions. It is similar to Erving Goffman’s *Asylum, ...places that separate their inhabitants from the outside world with locked doors and high walls, including mental hospitals, boarding schools and so on* (Goffman, 1961, in Thomas and Vaughan’s *Inclusive Education*, 2004, p.31). Taiwanese society is predominantly conservative. For example, in the past when a baby was born mentally retarded or physically impairment, the family would hide their child because

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<sup>1</sup> The Executive Yuan Premier’s speech about “pension system, NHS system, unemployment insurance and help, woman and children welfare” in the Legislator Yuan. (<http://www.ey.gov.tw//ct.asp?xItem=21315&ctNode=23&mp=1> access date: 19/Oct/2007).

<sup>2</sup> “*In order to help disadvantaged students and promote greater equality in education,...the Government raised the budget,...towards ...aboriginal people, disadvantaged students,...to accomplish social equality and social justice*” (Executive Yuan, Sep/2007, pp.6-7 <http://www.ey.gov.tw/public/Attachment/791311294971.doc>, access date: 19/Oct/2007).

<sup>3</sup> Children whose parents are not from Taiwan, mainly children whose mothers are foreigners.

Taiwanese thought that “Do not wash your dirty linen in public”. So, the child was protected by the family members. This kind of tradition is now getting less in cities but still can be seen in rural or mountain areas and in families where parents or grandparents are poorly educated. This tradition can be regarded as the same idea which derived from Lauglo’s (2000) cultural capital. According to Lauglo’s research, though focused on the immigrant youth, the idea could be applied into Taiwan’s situation, such as issues regarding aboriginal people and foreign wives. Lauglo pointed out that a mainstream view of the relation between education and social inequality is that social class advantage breeds education advantage, and poor performance and low attainment are mainly due to socially structured disadvantage (pp.143-144). Lauglo believed that powerful groups shape the school system to suit their own interests and as a consequence the subordinating groups are excluded (Ibid). Except the traditional Taiwanese thinking, the resources of economics, transportation and education are unbalanced between cities and counties, and this has become more severe recently<sup>1</sup>.

Social exclusion is on the one hand multi-dimensional, and includes the issues of psychology, values and social participation; and on the other hand, the dynamic facet which explores the process of how a person or a group becomes excluded in the life cycle. Social exclusion, as Milbourne (2002) identified, is isolation and alienation from normal economic, social, political and cultural life, including increasing isolation from even informal networks of support (p.327). The problem of exclusion is not merely the process of contrary or opposition among people but the process of accumulation. So, the consequences of social exclusion would be more apparent for people who lack social participation and economic opportunity. People from rural or mountain areas have fewer opportunities to access fair and equal chances in social and economical fields<sup>2</sup> and as a

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the bus companies reduce or even stop the routes and runs in remote areas.

<sup>2</sup> Several teachers (not interviewees, from both rural and urban areas) and one professor (an interviewee) believed that people in rural areas have less opportunity than urban areas.

consequence they end up being excluded from society. Using Lauglo's (2000) social capital as an example,

*One influential social reproduction argument concern the special importance of cultural capital is that the odds in school are stacked particularly heavily in favour of children and youth whose parents are the well-placed insiders in a society's educational and cultural institution, the cultural elite.*

(Lauglo 2000: 144)

Lauglo's idea about immigrant youth is similar to Taiwanese parents' general ideas, that is, both immigrant youths' parents and Taiwanese parents are *future-oriented and deem education as an investment for their children as individuals and also for the whole family* (Lauglo 2000: 160).

The other issue is marginality. Marginality may be conceived in more than one way. By far the most common practice is to define the 'marginal' as unjust exclusion from social norms:

*Social exclusion is about the inability of our society to keep all groups and individuals within reach of what we expect as a society. It is about the tendency to push vulnerable and difficult individuals into the least popular places, furthest away from our common aspirations.*

(Power and Wilson, <http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/cp/CASEpaper35.pdf>)

The above definition comes from the issues of economic and social policies and it also sums up marginality. Oppression and injustice are certainly not nullified, but would be

complemented by a more comprehensive view of history and the human condition (Liao, 2001).

People who are excluded from society can be regarded as in a vicious circle because exclusion often runs through one generation to the next generation. In preventing exclusion, it is everybody's responsibility to overcome the difficulties and contribute his/her own effort to create a better society. Starting from education is critical in the prevention of exclusion because education is the first step in getting involved in relations with others outside the family. Field (2003) clearly pointed out that the social capital's central thesis can be summed up in two words 'relationships matter' and:

*In general, then, it follows that the more people you know, and the more you share a common outlook with them, the richer you are in social capital.*

(Field 2003: 1)

### **3.1.3 Social Exclusion in the UK, particularly Scotland**

*Social exclusion has attracted much attention in recent years in Britain and elsewhere* (Burchardt, Grand and Piachaud 2002: 1). In the United Kingdom, social exclusion has a broader conception instead of focusing mainly on low poor; it focuses on polarization, differentiation and inequality, because social exclusion *is associated with a combination of problems such as poor skills, unemployment, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown* (Topping and Maloney 2005: 2). In Scotland, as well as in the whole United Kingdom, exclusion from society is a contemporary issue. The Scottish Office clearly indicated that *too many Scots are excluded, by virtue of unemployment, low skill levels, poverty, bad health, poor housing or other factors, from full participation in society* (Scottish Office, 1998, <http://www.scottishexecutive.gov.uk/library/documents1/socexcl.htm>, access date:

05/06/2006). In Scotland, unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environment, bad health and family breakdown are the problems (or the combinations of these problems) which result in individual/individuals or area/areas suffers from exclusion; and different terms, *multiple deprivation, social disadvantage or poverty*, are used to describe social exclusion. In broad terms, however, social exclusion is taken to mean more than material lack of income. The Scottish First Minister has described social exclusion as *broadly covering those people who do not have the means, material and otherwise, to participate in social, economic, political and cultural life* (Ibid).

A combination of factors with regard to social exclusion in Scotland is mainly based on poor housing, low income, lack of work experience in the family, low educational attainment, ill health, family stress and the impact of drugs misuse and crime. So, Munn (2000) indicated that the Scottish Government's approach to tackling social exclusion emphasises the need for coordination; and actions taken by various agencies across Scotland should 'fit together' to form a truly comprehensive and coherent programme to promote social inclusion (Munn 2000: 175). From the Scottish Executive paper, social exclusion must be understood in relation to the underlying processes of change at work on, and in, society (The Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, 2000). In Scotland, the allocations of resources and status with the exercise of the power are the processes of social exclusion and should be analysed. Recently in Scotland, Kane *et al.* (2004) has claimed that social exclusion *has replaced poverty in the discourse on inequality* because *social exclusion covers both the causes and effects of poverty, discrimination and disadvantage* (p.69).

### **3.1.4 Reflections from both Countries**

Markova and Jahoda (1992) used the terms 'idiot' and 'idios' to illustrate a person who had a lack of understanding and that such a person was set apart from others because

he/she is incapable to take part in communication (p.14). People with difficulties are different from normal people; however, Baron (1992) emphasised that strenuous efforts have been made in recent years to balance this deficit model (the individual with special needs) by stressing what the person can do and by emphasising the ‘rights’ of those with special needs (p118).

A great number of definitions and explanations are given to describe social exclusion; dis-connection, lack of opportunities and marginalisation are some of them. Social exclusion is a process that leads people to be isolated and marginalised from mainstream society. Social exclusion not only implies one person being excluded from society; it implies people, group/groups and community/communities. Based on Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam’s theories, social capital is *an idea that draws attention to the importance of social relationships and values such as trust in shaping broader attitudes and behaviours is clearly highly attractive* (Schuller, Baron and Field 2000: 1). Schuller, Baron and Field (2000) believed that Coleman’s idea toward social capital was *significant primarily as a way of understanding the relationship between educational achievement and social inequality* (p.5). To Schuller, Baron and Field, social capital is *networks, norms and trust—that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives* (p.9). So, in his further writing, Baron (2001) pointed out that:

*Social capital is defined as the network of social and community relations that underpin people’s ability to engage in education, training and work and to sustain a healthy civic community.*

(Baron 2001: 151)

Baron's view emphasised that people with learning difficulties were still members of society, and by increasing their skills people with learning difficulties could enable themselves to improve their economic and social position significantly.

Social exclusion has become part of the current debates in social policy in both the United Kingdom and Taiwan. The term "social exclusion" is a form of "social closure" which is the attempt of one group to secure for itself a privileged position at the expense of some other groups through a process of subordination (Burchardt, Grand and Piachaud 2002: 1). Social exclusion can be deemed as those who are excluded by society, government and state. Byrne (1999) argued that social exclusion is a necessary and inherent characteristic of an unequal post-industrial capitalism founded around a flexible labour market and with a systematic constraining of the organisational powers of workers as collective actors. Gradually, social exclusion has become and conceptualised as lack of recognition of basic right, lack of access to political and legal systems necessary to make those rights a reality.

In both Taiwan and Scotland, exclusion is a 'hot' issue. Potts (2000) believed that in both Western and Chinese contexts, cultures of exclusion seem to be more powerful than cultures of inclusion (p.312). So, both Governments recognise that education is a vital factor in tackling exclusion. Education is an important policy area for both countries and both Governments pay attention to, and put a great number of efforts into this issue because quality education systems and equal opportunities can provide individuals with the best possible achievement and reduce problems of disaffection from education and subsequent problems of social exclusion (Scottish Office, 1998 and Executive Yuan, 2002). People excluded from schools often result in exclusion in society. By providing quality education and equal opportunities, both countries hope to improve the status quo and try to establish a better future, as Forlin (2004) believed that *educational inclusion results in*

*improved psychological, social and cognitive outcomes for students both with and without disabilities* (p.186).

### **3.2 The Role of Education in Promoting Greater Social Inclusion**

Aristotle once said *the roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet*. Education provides knowledge, and knowledge is the means for human beings to make progress. In Mandarin, the English word ‘education’ is divided into two Mandarin characters; one is “to teach” and the other is “to raise/to foster”. Therefore, education can be regarded as ‘teaching’ and ‘learning’ which focuses on professions/skills as well as moral/mental/physical developments. In Chinese thinking, according to Wang (1986), the role of education is on teaching and learning knowledge/skills and proper conducts (p.3). Education can also be used as a means of changing people’s views and values, so Forlin (2004) maintained *education is widely seen as the driver of social change and justice* (p.186).

#### **From Integrated Education to Inclusive Programmes (Taiwan)**

In Taiwan, the Government plays an important role in promoting inclusion. For Taiwan, educational inclusion is a belief and is based on a premise that each student should have equal rights to education no matter what his/her background is (Ministry of Education, 1999). The policy of educational inclusion is based on two main points: first, everyone has the right to be educated; and secondly, equality of opportunity for the disabled people. By promoting the individual education programmes (IEPs), children can be provided with adequate opportunities to achieve the expectations and learning objectives. Wang (2000) argued that with inclusive education disabled students would finally grow up and live their lives integrated with other people and communities. There is no doubt that people are socialised animals and it is becoming increasingly accepted that people should not be divided into non-disabled and disabled. The environment of inclusive education can

provide both non-disabled and disabled students opportunities which they can contact, realise, understand and respect. Gradually, from school to society, people can understand and respect each other. Providing long term opportunities for both non-disabled and disabled people to understand each other, it is easier for people to break down bias and prejudice. From education, people can be cultivated in positive attitudes towards others.

### **Tackling Exclusion from Education (Scotland)**

Munn *et al.* (2004) indicated that:

*Exclusion from school has potentially serious consequences for young people....exclusion may adversely influence a young person's sense of belonging, self-esteem and general socialization into acceptable behaviour.*

(Munn *et al.* 2004: 68)

The Scottish Executive (1998) pointed out that a high quality education system is vital to securing the best possible levels of achievement for individual young people and to reducing the problems which can lead to disaffection from the education system and subsequent problems of social exclusion. The main focus in Scotland is on its prevention. For example, the Early Intervention Initiative from the Scottish Government provides funding to local authorities to strengthen the development of literacy skills in the early years of education, including pre-school, creating a ladder into future educational experiences and opportunities, and reducing the chances of subsequent emotional and behavioural difficulties. For those who do still cause trouble within school, the Alternatives to Exclusion grants scheme provides funding to a number of local authorities to pilot in-school alternatives to the exclusion of pupils from school. School attendance is also vital for educational achievement.

Truancy in Scottish schools is a serious issue which is less serious in Taiwan, so it is important to reduce absence which is condoned by parents. Non-attendance and underachievement at school can lead to other problems such as crime and drug abuse. Recently, the Scottish Government has set in train a number of policy initiatives to tackle truancy; good practice Guidance on Attendance was also published. The First Minister has asked the Cabinet Office Social Exclusion Unit to look as an early priority at truancy and school exclusion and the Scottish Government intends to keep in close touch with pupil truancy. The positive emphasis on maximising achievement at school will develop confidence in young people, and increase their preparedness for the labour market. The Scottish Government has launched a policy designed to emphasise the importance of Education for Work, and also announced a new programme on out of school hours learning activities as part of the social exclusion initiative.

In both Scotland and Taiwan, the Governments recognise that education is a positive way to prevent exclusion. Education can change people's minds and so from an early age at school, children are installed with the notion of equality of opportunity. By providing adequate opportunities, exclusion can be tackled and a fairer society can be established. From Confucius' ideology in chapter two, it is argued that no one is uneducable; and with good implementation of education, exclusion can be tackled.

Both Governments have provided a great number of efforts to promote more equal societies which correspond the notions derived from DfES (2001a) and Lindsay's work (2004) as *inclusive education is now firmly established as the main policy imperative with respect to children who have special educational needs or disabilities* (Department for Education and Skills, 2001) and *it (inclusion) is championed as a means to remove barriers, improve outcomes and remove discrimination* (Lindsay 2004: 265).

## **CHAPTER FOUR: EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION: CURRENT POLICIES AND PERSPECTIVES**

### **4.1 Background of Inclusive Education in Taiwan and the UK, particularly Scotland**

In the early 1970's, the notion of mainstreaming which included both non-disabled and disabled pupils within the same environment was pioneered in the United States of America. The concept of mainstreaming was on placing pupils with special educational needs into non-disabled pupils' mainstream classrooms. By giving the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers, pupils with special educational needs could be educated as non-disabled peers. The purpose of mainstreaming was to end the separation of pupils with special educational needs. Mainstreaming provided equal opportunities for special pupils to re-integrate into normal classes and to establish contact with their non-disabled peers. The aim of mainstreaming, according to Wu (2004), focused on the right of pupils with special educational needs so that SEN pupils could go back to their communities and had the same right to the communities' resources.

In the United Kingdom, public education has a long history. Before the Educational Act (1944) and the Education (Scotland) Act (1945), it was generally recognised that pupils with special educational needs should be segregated from their non-disabled peers. These two Education Acts can be deemed as a watershed. The 1944 Education Act indicated that all pupils with special educational needs had the right to be educated; and this can be deemed as the initiation of mainstreaming in the United Kingdom. Though not focusing on Scottish special education, the seminal Warnock Report (1978) can be regarded as the starting point for inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. It influenced the educational systems in Scotland, England and Wales. MacKay and McLarty pointed out that:

*The Report's ultimate title of Special Educational Needs showed that things had begun to change. UK educational systems moved from recognizing handicaps in 1954 and 1959, to rights in 1970 and 1974, and to 'special educational needs' in 1978.*

(MacKay and McLarty 1999: 795)

In Taiwan, the notion of being educated equally was not initiated until the mid 1980s (Wang, 2000 and Wu, 2004). The notion of inclusion through mainstreaming was mainly adopted from the US system. From the notion of normalisation to the anti-labelling movement, people, including disadvantaged groups, have paid more attention to civil rights. According to Wang (2000), deinstitutionalization and mainstreaming became the major demands from disadvantaged groups. 'Integration' was the first term used for this new development which was subsequently changed to 'inclusion'.

In 1989, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child agreed that primary education should be compulsory and available free to all (UNICEF, 1989). At the Conference of the United Nations, more than 150 Ministers from different governments agreed that education is the most single vital element in fighting against poverty, empowering women, promoting human rights, democracy and so on. The 1994 Salamanca conference also indicated that:

*...schools should accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups.*

In both Scotland and Taiwan, the focus of traditional special education was on the individual or physical/mental disorders pupils with special educational needs. The trend is now towards an approach “A school for all”. Special education experts and educators (Wu, 2004, Wang and Hus, 2000 and MacKay and McLarty, 2001) in both countries believed that most students have special educational needs and should be educated in ordinary mainstream schools. A school for all is the notion, as Rix *et al.* (2005) believed, about all students, both non-disabled and disabled (p.15).

From Rix *et al.*, the current issue of the aim for education not only focuses on the majority students but also on minority students. Bartlett *et al.* pointed out that:

*In its broadest sense education is normally thought to be about acquiring and being able to use knowledge, and developing skills and understanding.*

(Bartlett *et al.* 2001: 3)

Learning, according to Bartlett *et al.* (2001), is individualized and lifelong; so the student centredness becomes the ideology of education. Each pupil is deemed as different and has his/her own progress of learning. Since it is unfair to separate people into non-disabled and disabled groups, inclusive schooling provides equal opportunities for all students. Full participation and decentralization demolish the biased notion of differentiation, as Crowther *et al.* (2001) believed the language of special education was reconstructed to emphasize success, potential and achievement, rather than the traditional notions of failure, limited ability and underachievement (p.96). Each pupil is capable to know of knowing, understanding and doing; and education should ensure that all children achieve greater potential.

Traditional special education was based on individual differences which implied that some pupils could not cope not only with the curriculum or other pupils but also within ordinary education settings. Pupils with special educational needs were deemed as different or problem students. This traditional segregation system considered that disabled pupils should be protected from ordinary schools and so; pupils with difficulties were located in the isolated settings. Inclusive education, from a humanitarian viewpoint, is a better idea and method, so Vlachou (1997) maintained that *segregated education is a major cause of society's widespread prejudices against disabled people* (p.p 15-16). Under the notion of “all men are equal”, segregation was a violation of basic human rights. Care, love, share and protection are elements by which education should bring to and cultivate pupils; segregation disfranchised non-disabled and disabled pupils' rights from these notions.

### **Summary of Educational Inclusion from Both Taiwan and the UK, particularly Scotland**

In the United Kingdom, the reinforcement and legislation in laws on emphasising integrating pupils with special education needs can be traced back to the year of 1944. The Education Act 1944 stipulated children with less serious disabilities could be placed in the mainstream schools and so the Education Act 1944 could be deemed as the legal context for integration and inclusion.

However, it was in the 1960's when people considered human rights and equal opportunities, Erving Goffman's *Asylum* (1961) was a classic text of segregation (in Goffman's term: institutions). The idea of segregated institutions is to *present as the rational and human solution to people's difficulties, but in fact operated merely as society's 'storage dumps'* (in Thomas and Vaughan 2004: 31). In 1968, Dunn suggested that people must stop labelling and segregating children by placing them into special programmes. Dunn (1968) pointed out that much of our past and present practices

(segregation) are morally and educationally wrong. Dunn's argument for segregation focused on unjustifiable placement for children with special educational needs and segregation should be modified and changed.

Dunn's arguments on de-segregation and increasing integration became prominent during the 1970s and 1980s. The arguments during the 1970's and 1980's were on the examination of special education programmes and provision. Due to the rapid expansion of special education programmes before 1970's, little evidence showed that segregation was a good way for both non-disabled and disabled pupils. So, some educationists (Dunn, 1968, Christoplos and Renz, 1969) started to 're-evaluate' the purposes of all types of segregated classes. The argument during the 1970's-1980 was on that the goal of special education programmes should meet the needs of exceptional children whose needs could not be adequately met in regular programmes. But unfortunately, *the goal of the special education programmes could not be met* and the special education programmes *could not be explained on the basis of supporting evidence indicating progress toward such a goal* (Christoplos and Renz, 1969 in Thomas and Vaughan 2004: 39-40). Besides, they argued that exceptionality was defined by the nature of society, not by the nature of individuals; and with the expansion of segregation, maladaptive behaviours would increase. Another issue that Christoplos and Renz indicated was that without integration, the regular classes contributed to making the more able child even more able, whereas the special class has the reverse effect. The focus of Christoplos and Renz was on the emphasis of 'familiarization' and the idea of familiarization was integrated into the situation that should lead to medial manipulations of the environment before segregation was considered as an alternative.

During the decade of 1970's-1980, the rights of children with special education needs were given more attention. Not only were policies made to identify all pupils uniquely but also

education psychologists reconstructed educational psychology. In 1971, it was recognised that 100 per cent of school age children were entitled to an education and this was the first time in the UK history. On the other hand, due to little evidence about improvement in special education system, the education psychologists in the 1970's-1980 were unsatisfied with segregation. Leyden (1978), an education psychologist, pointed out that segregation could result in *a strong risk that the children may have a difficulty in integrating within the community and in adjusting to an adult role and job* (Leyden, 1978 in Thomas and Vaughan 2004: 55). It was the same time (1978) that the Warnock Committee published its Report which looked at special education in England, Scotland and Wales. Just two years earlier, in 1976, the Education Act 1976 stated that a clearly responsibility for local education authorities (LEAs) to integrate handicapped children, but it was never implemented because the Warnock Committee was still investigating special education and government ministers and officials were looking forward a new and far-reaching work done by the Warnock Committee. The Warnock Report discussed integration on a national agenda and pointed out the principles of special education were on educating handicapped and non-handicapped children together and handicapped people should share the opportunities for self-fulfillment enjoyed by other people. Most suggestions and ideas in Warnock Report were adopted in the 1981 Education Act which clearly identified the duty for local education authorities was to ensure children with special education needs were educated in ordinary schools. Another innovation from the Education Act 1981 was that parents' points of view from children with special education needs were taken into consideration. The main statement of the Education Act 1981 in special education was that the child should receive the special educational provision that he or she required.

On the other side of the Atlantic, six years before the 1981 Education Act in England, the United States' Public Law 94-142 (1975) was enacted. The PL 94-142 was a federal law that required states to provide a *free, appropriate public education for every child between*

*the age of 3 and 21...regardless of how, or how seriously, he may be handicapped* (PL 94-142, 1975). The Public Law 94-142 was sometimes seen as the first ever statutory endorsement of mainstreaming and inclusion. According to Thomas and Vaughan (2004), the PL 94-142 had several characteristics as follows:

- *PL 94-142 was the first law clearly to define the rights of disabled children to free appropriate public education.*
- *PL 94-142 required that students were placed in the least restrictive environment, which meant placing the student in the most ordinary, natural or non-special setting possible.*
- *PL 94-142 required school systems to include parents when meeting about children or making decisions about their children.*
- *Individualized education programme (IEP) for every disabled student was mandated in the PL 94-142. The IEP had to include short and long-term goals for the student, as well as to ensure that the necessary services were made available to the student.*

(Thomas and Vaughan 2004: 119)

In England and Wales, the Education Act (1993)<sup>1</sup> maintained the duties of the State to integrate disabled pupils and parents' views of their disabled children were strengthened. At the same time, the Alternative White Paper, a document from the Institute of Public Policy Research, made important statements about employment issues and problems caused by segregation. The argument in the Alternative White Paper was on children labelled as 'special' were usually destined for special careers; so, the Alternative White Paper pointed out that all institutions should be inclusive and should not try to exclude minorities on grounds of disability, inability, difficult or different behaviour (IPPR, 1993). In 1995, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was passed. The main importance of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was on the debating about government's continuing

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<sup>1</sup> Children (Scotland) Act (1995).

tolerance of discrimination against disabled children and young people, but DDA specifically excluded education. The Education Act 1996 inherited the Education Acts 1981 and 1993 and did not introduce too many changes. The Education Act 1996 excluded the special units in the hospitals but it failed to exclude special schools out of special education.

In 1997, the UK Government published the Green Paper: *Excellence for All Children*. The main objective of the Green Paper was meeting special educational needs and emphasised that schools were for all children. In 2001, the Labour Government passed the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA 2001) which emphasised that first, disabled students not to be substantially disadvantaged and secondly, it is unlawful for the body responsible for an educational institution to discriminate against a disabled person ([http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2001/ukpga\\_20010010\\_en\\_4](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2001/ukpga_20010010_en_4) access date: 28/Sep/09). However, SENDA (2001) also maintained that *he* (Children with special educational needs) *must be educated in a mainstream school unless that is incompatible with the wishes of his parents or the provision of efficient education for other children* ([http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2001/ukpga\\_20010010\\_en\\_2](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2001/ukpga_20010010_en_2) access date: 28/Sep/09).

In 1998, Prime Minister Blair proposed his ambitious idea about creating an international consensus of centre-left ideology for the twenty-first century and responding to the change in global order. The future of social democratic politics was the focus in Blair's concerns and it was known as "The Third Way". One of the important issues in the Third Way was inclusion and exclusion. Social justice was deemed as a core concern in the Third Way politics. Not only social justice was mentioned in the Third Way, but also equality and egalitarianism as well, as Giddens pointed out:

*Having abandoned collectivism, third way politics looks for a new relationship between the individual and the community, a redefinition of rights and obligations.*

(Giddens 1998: 65)

Giddens further mentioned that the government has a whole cluster of responsibilities for its citizens and others, including the protection of the vulnerable; and this was the reason why The Third Way was important in relation to inclusive education; from the political prospective, *Third Way values: equality, protection of the vulnerable, freedom as autonomy, cosmopolitan pluralism* (Giddens 1998: 66), and these principles accord with inclusion.

*Inclusion refers in its broadest sense to citizenship, to the civil and political rights and obligations that all members of a society should have, not just formally, but as a reality of their lives.*

(Giddens 1998: 102-103)

From Giddens' view, education and training became the new mantra for social democratic politicians because Tony Blair described his well-known three main priorities in the UK government as 'education, education, education', and:

*The need for improved education skills and skills training is apparent in most industrial countries, particularly as far as poorer groups are concerned.*

(Giddens 1998: 109)

Education, from Giddens' view, was a key basis of the 'redistribution of possibilities' (Ibid). Exclusion was multi-dimensional and the government should provide the basic

needs to those who are excluded. From traditional social democracy to neo-liberalism, from conventional social policies to the third way politics, the focus of the issue in the politics shifts from exclusion to inclusion.

The progress of inclusion in the UK has a long history. On the contrary, in Taiwan, it does not. The notion of inclusion only emerged in the mid-1990s. Though the notion of inclusion does not have a long history in Taiwan, an interviewee in this research argued that *the spirit of inclusion can be found from ancient Chinese philosophy, though there is no term as 'inclusion*. Deeply influenced by the American systems, Taiwanese special education systems and the concept of inclusion can be seen as copies of the American.

#### **4.2 General Guidelines about Educational Inclusion**

In Salamanca, Spain, 1994, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) held a world conference which influenced internationally in Special Educational Needs provision. Five main important conclusions were drawn:

- (1) *Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning;*
- (2) *Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs;*
- (3) *Educational systems should be designed, and educational programmes implemented, to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs;*
- (4) *Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools, which schools accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs;*
- (5) *Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. Moreover, they*

*provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.*

(UNESCO 1994: 10)

These five points form part of what is referred to as the Salamanca Statement. The main point in the Salamanca Statement was to call on all governments to undertake a variety of actions to try to achieve the aim ‘all children could be included, regardless of differences or difficulties’. All governments should give the ‘highest policy and budgetary priority’ to improve education services, and are encouraged to establish inclusive ordinary schools rather than build new special schools. The importance of the Salamanca Statement is to make schools available for all, as Ainscow *et al.* (2006) indicated that *not only schools should educate increasing numbers of students with disabilities, but they should concern themselves with increasing the participation and broad educational achievements of all groups of learners who have historically been marginalized* (p.295). The inclusive school can be seen as an institution which includes everybody, celebrates differences, supports learning and responds to individual needs. Human dignity and the enjoyment and exercise of human rights are essential in inclusion and participation. The most important of all is that inclusion, in accordance with Thomas and Vaughan (2004), is one of the basic human rights.

However, pupils’ achievements are closely related to their personal background which has a broad complexity. A combination of problems, high crime environment and bad health, for example, can be deemed as elements which exclude children from schooling. To provide special education to children with special needs does not mean that SEN children can do better in such provision because no convincing evidence was found (Pijl and Hamstra, 2005). So Topping and Maloney (2005) argued that equal opportunities do not mean simply treating everyone equally, since that would merely reinforce pre-existing

differences; on the contrary, it implies treating different people differently so that they would have equal opportunities to maximize their potentials.

In Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States (from which Taiwanese education system has evolved), there is a legal obligation on schools to provide curricular and physical access for all pupils who should feel, behave as, and be treated as full members or citizens of the school communities. Therefore, inclusion implies celebrating diversity (Topping and Maloney, 2005), accepting and responding difference (Kearney and Kane, 2006 and Farrell *et al.*, 2007) and participation of all (Yee, 2005 and Nind and Wearmouth, 2006). To make a brief and simple conclusion of educational inclusion, as Ainscow (1999) pointed out *the aim should be to find ways of making schools responsive to pupils' individual needs in the belief that all children are special* (p.28); and *inclusion should go even further, and schools should engage all families and the community as well as all children, seeking effective intergenerational learning across the lifespan, which might occur inside schools or outside or through a combination of these* (Topping and Maloney 2005: 5).

#### **4.3 Classification of Disability and SEN in Taiwan and the UK, particularly Scotland**

##### **Taiwan (The Act of Special Education—1984, Amended June, 2004)**

According to the Laws and Regulations Database of the Republic of China, Taiwan, people who are classified as one of the following can be regarded as “the disabled” and “the gifted”. (see Table 4.1 and Table 4.2)

**Table 4.1—The Disabled**

Mental retardation	Visual impairments
Hearing impairments	Language disorders
Physical handicaps	Health impairments
Severe emotional disturbance	Learning disabilities

Multiple impairments	Autism
Development delay	Other significant handicaps

(Source: The Act of Special Education, <http://law.moj.gov.tw/Eng/Fnews/FnewsContent.asp?msgid=1202&msgType=en&keyword=undefined>)

**Table 4.2—The Gifted**

General intelligence	Scholastic aptitude
Artistic talent	Creativity
Leadership	Other special talents

(Ibid)

**Scotland—Additional Support Needs (ASN), a more flexible, positive and inclusive approach to providing support for learning.**

The philosophy of additional support needs is based on the premise that all children need support to learn but some have additional support needs. Table 4.3 shows circumstances which may give rise to ASN.

**Table 4.3—Circumstances that may give rise to Additional Support Needs (Scotland)**

Children with Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder	Children who have suffered a bereavement in family
Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder	Children who are bullying or being bullied
Children adopted or in the process of being adopted	Children whose health and development is suffering
Child, parent or family member has been victim or witness of serious crime	Children who are carers for relatives or who are affected by disability
Children who live in violent environment	Children in need of protection
Children whose parents suffer from a mental illness	Children whose educational development is suffering (including those excluded)
Children whose parents misuse substances/alcohol	Children/young people affected by HIV/AIDS
Children who have suffered interrupted learning e.g. through long stay in hospital,	Children/young people who are in conflict with the law because of offending

gypsy or traveller families	behaviour
Children/young people in poor housing	Children with disabilities
Children with disfigurement	Children with divorcing/separating parents
Children with dyslexia	Children with dyspraxia
Children with English as an additional language	Gifted or able children whose learning potential is being hindered
Children with sensory impairments	Children with terminal illness
Children whose parent or family member is in prison	Children with temporary medical conditions
Children/young people no longer looked after	Children who have suffered language or communication disorders
Children who are young carers/young parents	

(Source: Hamill and Clark 2005: 34 and SEED 2003: 37

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/47049/0023835.pdf>)

#### **4.4 Stakeholders in Inclusive Education**

Barton (1997) clearly stated that *educational issues are complex and contentious often involving passionately held beliefs and values; and educational policies and practices are inherently political* (p.231). Inclusive education, therefore, encompasses a broad range of stakeholders and it is a complex process. It is also believed (for example: Thomas 1997, Bannister *et al.* 1998, Ainscow 2000, Dyson 2001, Farrell *et al.* 2007, Hsu 2003, Nu 2008 and Huang *et al.* 2008) that inclusion and inclusive education regard all members of society as stakeholders.

##### **4.4.1 Social and Economical Factors**

When referring to inclusion, social and economical factors which result in exclusion are inevitably discussed (for example: Milbourne, 2002 and Evans and Lunt, 2002). As people hear about a person is 'excluded', the first image comes to their minds is 'Is he/she poor?' or 'Is he/she deprived?'. People who think in this way are common and normal because exclusion is closely related to social and economical factors. In both Scotland and Taiwan, the term 'exclusion' often means that a person who lacks of opportunities to get fully

involved in society, and gradually, he/she is excluded. In education, Mittler (1999) indicated that children who fail to benefit from schooling tend to come from families and communities characterised by poverty, high rates of unemployment, poor health, sub-standard housing and family breakdown (p.3). A more serious matter is, as Byrne (1999) argued, the cycle of deprivation in which disadvantages was transmitted from generation to generation had been expressed in both genetic and cultural terms. What should be concerned here and put more attention is 'generation to generation' which provides an idea that exclusion will not disappear by itself; on the contrary, it might be more severe from parents to their offspring due to parents' influence.

From a social perspective, social isolation, social justice and social solidarity are vital when discussing social exclusion. Barry (2002) pointed out social isolation encompasses social exclusion but is not confined to it. Social isolation is to be conceived of as a variable: an individual or group is not simply socially isolated or not, but is rather more or less socially isolated, voluntary or involuntary. For social justice, it is as equality of opportunity. *The principle of justice as equal opportunity holds that people who are equally able should do equally well, ... unless they make voluntary choices that result in their faring differently* (Barry 2002: 19). For social solidarity, *it is undermined by social isolation, whether it takes a voluntary or involuntary form, and its ill-effects may well be more serious when the social isolation takes the form of social exclusion* (Barry 2002: 23).

From an economic perspective, Dyson (1997) and Mittler (1999) believed that children with social and economic disadvantages are easily excluded from schooling. Carpenter (2005) and Ferguson's (2008) reports also highlighted economically disadvantaged children/poor students are at higher risk of behavioural/hyperactivity disorders and language/learning delays and fare less well than other peers with higher incomes families. Poverty and deprivation are regarded as two major factors result in children's exclusion.

Walker (1997) pointed out that poverty is the major role which generates social exclusion and it can be deemed as a lack of material resources, especially income. Deprivation, on the other hand, is the lack of access to adequate standards of material resources, services and amenities (Milbourne, 2002). So, Tsai (1996) maintained that poverty and economical deprivation are obviously seen in the lower/under class communities (p.32-44). Social exclusion is, therefore, a comprehensive formulation which refers to the dynamic process of being shut off, fully or partially, from any of the social, economical, political or cultural systems that determine the social integration of a person in the society; so *social exclusion, may be seen as the denial of the civil, political and social rights of citizenship* (Walker 1997: 8).

Moreover, Barry (2002) argued that in principle social exclusion can occur between groups that are not significantly distinguished from one another economically and suggested that social exclusion tends to become attenuated and eventually disappear in the absence of group economic inequality – unless a distinctive way of life maintains social barriers. Barry kept on pointing out that *an individual or the member of a group may withdraw from participation in the wider society in response to experience of hostility and discrimination* (Barry 2002: 14). Social exclusion, in accordance with Barry's ideas, conflicts with equal opportunity in at least; first, unequal educational and occupational opportunities and second, it actually constitutes a denial of equal opportunity in relation to politics. The lack of job opportunities, which results in poverty, among the adults in the area tends to depress scholastic motivation and thus contributes to poor educational outcomes that condemn the next generation to extremely limited job opportunities in their turn and so, they are themselves part of a self-reproducing process of unequal opportunity (Barry 2002: 20).

To sum up, educational inclusion/exclusion has a complex background, especially in social-economical factors; as West and Pennell (2003 in Topping and Maloney, 2005),

though focused on pupils' achievement, maintained that *a clear gap still exists in terms of participation in higher education between those from the highest and lowest socio-economic groups* (p.76).

#### **4.4.2 Family and Parental Factors**

Family background is a crucial factor with regard to children's inclusion/exclusion from school. Family difficulties can often be linked to poverty, disadvantages and discrimination. Cohen *et al.* (1994) pointed out that with the increasing interpersonal and personal difficulties within families, more children are excluded. From this point of view, relationships and communication within the families, especially parents and family members, become more important. Pupils from 'problem' families should be paid more attention due to their high risks of being excluded. The highlight is on building the inter-relationship into the 'chaotic' (Barker, 1993) families.

In the current education systems, whether in the West or the East, the involvement of parents, whose children have either special educational needs or not, has become more important and considered. Parents with children with special educational needs should be considered in the context of the education provision because they are the most closely carers and information providers to children. With good communication and information sharing, not only schools (teachers, staff) but also authorities or organisations (governments, social work service, responsible bodies and health service) can benefit from the interactions or meetings with parents. As the Scottish Executive pointed out, relationships between parents and the responsible bodies are important so *policies for equality and inclusion must include support for parents and families to be actively involved in their children's education* (Scottish Executive, SEED, 2003). Also, as Huang (2000) argued that *parents are the best 'resource providers' and 'activity supporters' in the special education provision* (p.643). The role of parents is to bridge the communication within schools and outside schools. Collaboration among parents, schools and responsible bodies can ensure

that the most adequate provision can be provided to children with or without special educational needs. Schools are not for only staff and pupils, on the contrary, schools are for all who involved in schooling.

Parents can be seen as experts on their children, and they have rights to know the education provision which influences their children. The schooling system is complicated because it contains not only one particular group that has similar essentials; on the contrary, it is a multi-layer connection among each stakeholder. In both Mandarin and English, there are some proverbs that share the same meaning; for example: ‘like father like son’ (English) and ‘a child grows up like whom foster him/her’ (Mandarin). So, it can be seen that the growing procedure of children is fundamentally based on parents and families. Before children enter schools, no doubt that parents are the most important influence; so, more and more considerations is given to the role of parents.

The role of parents in supporting learning is vital in childhood. The driving forces of the parents whose children have special educational needs should not be restricted; on the contrary, the driving forces should work effectively. Tassoni (2003) pointed out that *all children have needs, and all parents therefore should feel included in their child’s education and care* (p.54). To work with parents and treat them as equal partners will help children fulfill their potential. Children spend plenty of time with their parents in the early stage of schooling and schools can obtain information from the parents. The SEN Code of Practice (DfES) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland clearly pointed out that:

*Parents hold key information and have a critical role to play in their children’s education. They have unique strengths, knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child’s needs and the best ways of supporting them. It is*

*therefore essential that all professionals actively seek to work with parents and value the contribution they make.*

(The English SEN. Code of Practice, 2001, paragraph 2.2)

Parents can provide information about children in schooling; moreover, they offer their obligations and love to make children to live happily at home. Sometimes, parents can become experts or professionals on their children's disabilities and provide the latest information to the responsible bodies and keep contact with schools, responsible bodies and other stakeholders.

### **Family Factors in Taiwan**

In the early stage, the first people who engage with children with special educational needs are parents. As Chinese tradition, parental education or family education is the first step of all aspects of education. So the emphasis of parental education in the early stage of childhood has been mentioned all the time (Tsao, 2001, Hsu, 2003 and Huang *et al.*, 2008). The parents of children with special talents not only take the responsibilities as the characteristics of being parents but also face and help their children dealing with special difficulties and needs, so the burden is much heavier than others. People in Taiwan are conservative, and due to the lack of knowledge of special needs and education, parents often think that children with special needs bring pressure and difficult problems to the family or even worse, the clan. The situation can be often seen particularly in rural areas or the extended families, which have un-educated or ill-educated elders. So Huang (2000) argued that the children with special educational needs are often neglected because of: lacking the knowledge of special needs; religious belief of cause-effect destiny; and the poor economic conditions of the families (pp.633-634). Due to these factors, the rights of children with special educational needs are neglected and abandoned. But still, some parents pay attention and extra care to their special gifted children. Unfortunately, those

who pay attention and care to the special gifted children may lose their patience and energy and the result is in vain because of the lack of the related information for special education provision, frustration and isolation caused by self-learning of the special education knowledge without help, and having no idea of accessibilities of social support and help (Ibid). From Huang's point of views, several contexts can be concluded about the difficulties which parents face in Taiwan. These are:

- *The accessibilities of obtaining knowledge of teaching the special talented children;*
- *The inquires for exploration of children's remedy;*
- *Understanding the ways for children to enter schools and finding supports from schools;*
- *Helping children to accept the places for vocational training;*
- *To guide children to progress their abilities for life planning;*
- *Be familiar with the law and the policy of social welfare of the Government;*
- *To obtain the related information (sources) from society and other related institutions;*
- *Seeking for the support of the self adjustment both in mental and physical dimensions.*

(Huang 2000: 634)

### **Family Factors in the UK, particularly Scotland**

In September 2003, the Social Exclusion Unit published its report *A Better Education for Children in Care* which pointed out that the role of 'home' plays an important part in children's education. Furthermore, effective support at home for learning and development is important for all children. Parents and carers play extremely important roles in children's learning. Lack of commitment to education by parents and carers is a major factor leading to low achievement in school, criminal activity, drug and alcohol misuse, and teenage

pregnancy. Parental or carer support is critical for young children's development and early education (The Social Exclusion Unit, 2003).

For the whole United Kingdom, including Scotland, the Warnock Report (1978) is the initiative which reviewed the educational provision in England, Scotland and Wales for children and young people handicapped by disabilities of body or mind (<http://www.dg.dial.pipex.com/documents/docs3/warnock00.shtml> access date: 28/Sep/09). The notions of 'exceptional', 'additional' and 'different', which can be meant 'special', are all at the heart of Scots Law and policy on SEN (MacKay and McLarty, 1999). In Scotland, the roles of parents in SEN of childhood are more or less the same as Taiwan. The 1980 Act gave a variety of statutory rights for Scottish parents and allowed parents to appeal against:

- *the decision to open or continue a Record of Needs;*
- *the authority's summary of a child's impairment or difficulties;*
- *the authority's statement of a child's special educational needs;*
- *the school named by the authority for the pupils' education.*

(MacKay and McLarty 1999: 799).

The Warnock Report was a milestone in developing the notion of parents as partners in the education of children with disabilities. But MacKay and McLarty (1999) also argued that the partnership is a complex idea that raises many questions, such as: to what extent do parents and professionals have equal powers, rights and responsibilities in the relationship?, and does a focus on roles obscure the importance of the systems and other social dynamics which influence families' and professionals' behaviour and aspirations? (p.799).

### **Discussions of Family Factor between Scottish and Taiwanese Background.**

In Scotland, as well as the United Kingdom, children's rights are given more attention than in Taiwan. As a part of the European Unions, and of course geographical close to the EU, Scotland is much more developed in human rights, including the rights of children in schooling. On the contrary, the parents in Taiwan do not have enough power and lack of knowledge towards the law and related rights (both professors from the interviews pointed out this).

Compared to Taiwan, children with special educational needs in Scotland, it can be argued, are much more fortunate. Here, the word 'fortunate' should be emphasised. It does not mean that children with special educational needs in Scotland can obtain more courses/facilities in schools or extra help in their families. The main difference between Scotland and Taiwan lies in the notion of human rights. Taiwan does not have a long historical notion of 'equality of opportunity'. The notion of inclusion is adopted mainly from American style, which is based on Public Law 94-192. In Scotland, according to the Education Act (1994), it was recognised that every child has a right to education. Although there is no significant difference between Scottish and Taiwanese special education system, the main difference is, as mentioned above, the philosophy of equality. Before 1945, Taiwan was occupied by Dutch, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese<sup>1</sup>; after the Second World War, Chiang, Kai-Shek and his army withdrew to Taiwan and for nearly 40 years people in Taiwan had lived under the Martial Law (1949-1987). It can be said that before 1987, people in Taiwan lived under occupants' control so that the notion of autonomy has not long existed in Taiwanese minds. With little information about equality and justice, people in Taiwan hardly could obtain what they need and want. However, after 1987, the Martial Law was abandoned, and the suppression was loosened. An obvious example is in 1987, in

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<sup>1</sup> Dutch occupy—1622-1662 (1622 in Peng Hu archipelagos and 1624 in Taiwan). Spanish occupy—1626-1642 (Mainly in the north of Taiwan and withdrew in 1642 due to Dutch attack). From 1662, Min and Chin Dynasties started to assart Taiwan. Japanese occupy—1895-1945.

order to enforce pupils' rights to be educated, the Ministry of Education asked every elementary and junior high school accept and should not refuse pupils with moderate/severe mental retardation. With the improvement of information communication technology (ICT) and progress of politics, more and more people pay attention to and provide their efforts towards the issues of equality and justice; and people are aware that it is their rights to strive for their own future.

O'Connor (2007) maintained that the role of parents in the education of their child, particularly a child with additional learning needs, remains a key feature in the development and delivery of effective inclusion (p.547). The involvement of parents in children's education in both Taiwan and Scotland is now regarded as appropriate and normal. However, it is difficult to find the balance among parents, professionals and authorities, because the issue would transform to, for example, who diagnose SEN pupils?, should children be diagnosed just in accordance with their parents' statements and responses which children perform in daily life? It is difficult to balance the power among partnerships, so the National Association for Special Educational Needs provided some principles which indicated the role of parents in education and these are:

- Parental rights: Parents have legal responsibility for the proper care and development of their children. They should therefore be regarded as having a major stake in the way education and other services are provided. For parents of children with SEN, this extends to the provision of a range of inputs from different agencies as well as formal schooling.
- Parental responsibilities: The rights and needs are fundamental and parents have responsibilities that arise from this. For parents of children with SEN, these responsibilities extend to working constructively with other education and care providers and with relevant agencies that contribute to children's well-being and development.

- Parity in partnership: Partnership between parents and professionals implies mutuality of respect, complementary expectations and a willingness to learn from each other. The fact that parents are experts on their child and can influence attitudes and attainment needs to be recognised, respected and acted upon. In best partnership practice, the process of decision making is most effective when professionals acknowledge and incorporate parental perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different viewpoints.
- Empowerment: Parents should be encouraged and empowered to work with professionals to ensure that their child's needs are properly identified and met as early as possible. In order to play an active part in their child's development, parents should have access to all the information that is available and relevant to their child's education as well as to appropriate training that enables them to reinforce learning in the home.
- Effective communication: Parents are assisted in playing an active role if professionals communicate clearly with them and with other professional colleagues. Parents need to be able to understand any differences in professional opinion and the evidence on which these are based. Professionals should seek where possible to resolve such differences in a way that ensures more effective cooperation between all concerned.
- Support: It should be recognized that parents of children with SEN will at times have their own needs for emotional and moral support. Adequately addressing these needs will help ensure that parents can play a full part in planning for and responding to the needs of their children.
- Diversity: While there are some common issues for parents, they do not all have the same or similar needs. There is diversity not just in the culture and interests of different parents but also in the resources that they can bring to bear. Proper account should be taken of such differences to ensure that all parents can be

supported in making as actively as possible a contribution to meeting their children's SEN.

(National Association for Special Educational Needs, 2000)

#### **4.4.3 School Factors**

Schools have changed in a radical way as knowledge explodes and spreads very fast. For example, Frederickson and Cline (2002) argued that the school was perhaps even more radical than the developments affecting the position of children and parents. School factors are more complicated than family factors because they are multi-layered organisations with close links between each sector. The interaction among each sector is important and influential towards inclusive reform. When children enter schools, they encounter a new environment, people and other things; and that is why schools are definitely different from and more complicated than families.

As a major stakeholder in education, schools should consider that every child is regarded as special. However, *schools, like society, experience contradictory expectations and demands* (Barton and Slee 1999:6). To make it clear in each sector, discussions towards each sector in the frameworks of schools, from headteachers<sup>1</sup> to personnel staff, from policies to curricula and from classroom to the whole school setting, are provided.

##### ***(1) The Headteachers***

In Earley and Weindling's *Understanding School Leadership*, they clearly pointed out:

*Numerous research studies and reports from school inspectors and others, claim that leadership, especially headship, is a crucial factor in school effectiveness and the key to organizational success and improvement.*

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<sup>1</sup> In Taiwan, the term "principal" is used.

The headteacher is not only the leader but also a manager in the school. The headteacher is responsible for the aims and policy-making in the school. A particular character of the headteacher is that, within or outside the school, he/she not only has the professional competence and commitment but also keeps relationships with people and maintains developments of team works. Leadership qualities are essential and fundamental to a headteacher. The headteacher should have clarity and appropriateness of aims and be effectiveness of procedures for policy formulation. The headteacher is the leader of a school. The version of the school is based on the leader's personal and professional values. She/He is also the model of the school, towards not only teachers but also students. A headteacher not only focuses on some particular skills, she/he is a person who has appropriate idealisms, reasonable decision-making and is able to propose plans and develop her/his ideas into practice. The role of a headteacher not only focuses on affairs within schools but also outside schools, and the headteacher takes the responsibility of a school's success and failure. The school is a place to foster and cultivate the future seeds, as Lin (1996) argued, the headteacher not only helps her/himself become a leader, she/he also help others become leaders.

The process of inclusion within schools can be regarded as school reform/change, and a great number of writings about inclusion and school leadership were mentioned (e.g. *International Journal of Leadership in Education* and journals of *School Leadership and Management*). The headship and inclusive notion are closely bonded so Carrington and Robinson (2004) believed that school leaders have to create a climate of collaborative effort and ownership of the inclusive process. In inclusive education, headteachers should have driven approaches to inclusion of pupils with SEN as part of their version for their schools as fully inclusive learning communities (HMIE, 2003). When pupils with SEN are

located in mainstream schools, headteachers should have the abilities and responsibilities to respond to and deal with them positively and quickly.

In order to provide a clear view towards the relation of headship and inclusion, the researcher tried to organise some principles derived from the literature; and these principles are:

- A headteacher should provide a clear inclusive strategic direction based on a vision which takes into account the views and needs of all those with a stake in the life of the school and he/she should have relevant personal qualities and interpersonal skills, including the ability to create confidence and motivate and inspire others. She/He is a positive influence on her/his area of responsibility. She/He has the ability to evaluate objectively the qualities of school staff and their contributions to team work and promotes the best inclusive practice identified in the school. She/He can take difficult decision effectively when necessary and is responsible for her/his decision.
- A headteacher has professional competence and commitment based on wide-ranging up-to-date knowledge and skills, including the ability to direct, communicate and manage staff and their development effectively. She/He should be capable to manage change. She/He has clear priorities identified through effective self-evaluation and put pupils' learning and achievement at the centre of management and improvement activities, and his/her behaviours/responses/teaching towards inclusion is a model of best practice.
- A headteacher has to develop productive partnerships within/outside school communities and has very good relationships with relevant stakeholders. She/He is responsive and actively seeks feed-back from team work. She/He is the leader who leads a management team and delegates and shares leadership

effectively. The development she/he planned should involve staff and mutual respect should be built in order to assure the quality of development.

(HMIE, 2002 and Attfield and Williams, 2003)

By using Ryan's (2006) words to sum up:

*Leadership practices need to be organised to promote inclusion because we live in a world that increasingly embrace values, views and practices that are not consistent with inclusion.*

(p.105)

## **(2) Teachers**

*Teachers play 'extremely important' roles in inclusive education* (Nu 2006: 47). The role of teachers is very crucial in education and the attitude of teachers towards educating pupils with special educational needs has been forwarded as a decisive factor in making schools more inclusive (Corbett 1999, Carrington 1999; Carrington and Elkins 2002; Frederickson *et al.* 2004; Wang 2000 and Huang *et al.* 2003). Teachers are persons with very close relationship to children, so they need to know pupils' needs and be responsive to pupils' differences. Every pupil is an unique individual, and she/he has different learning styles. As SEN refers to each pupil's different needs of learning in school, teachers need to be very careful when managing their teaching. Teachers are the key roles for promoting inclusion, so:

*It is vital that they (teachers) understand the principles of curriculum differentiation, and apply those consistently within their own classroom context, in order to reduce the barriers to learning and participation, and to support inclusive learning, through high quality teaching.*

(Cheminais 2002: xi)

Teachers need to have positive attitudes and a great deal of resources and time to support children with special educational needs and teachers need to be open minded and willing to try new organisational and curricular arrangements (Forlin, 2004). Teachers' attitudes directly influence the atmosphere of the classrooms. What pupils see and learn comes from teachers and imitation and modeling are put into pupils. Pupils with special educational needs require more instructions, time and methods of learning, so teachers need to have professional skills to handle with children with special educational needs in a regular classroom. As Pijl and Meijer made a brief summary of teachers with pupils with special educational needs in regular classrooms, they pointed out:

*...teachers' attitudes, available instruction time, the knowledge and skills of teachers and learning methods and materials on hand seem to be important prerequisites for special needs teaching in regular settings.*

(Pijl and Meijer 1997: 10)

Chen (2000) also argued that teachers may be the most important characters in education, no matter in special or mainstream education. The characteristic of special education teachers are complicated; they are teachers in the classroom, carers of the class and also consultants of pupils' families and other stakeholders such as staff related to the pupils, pediatricians, special therapists. It is important for teachers to have more careness and patience because their pupils are special and vulnerable. From Cheminais, Chen and HMIE, several guidelines on teachers with pupils of special educational needs in the mainstream settings can be generated. Teachers in an inclusive setting should:

- show respect for pupils' individual learning styles and differences;
- share the purposes of lessons with pupils and listen to pupil's responses;
- be responsive to pupils' different learning styles;
- pay care to all pupils;

- use different levels of tasks and activities;
- utilize a range of teaching strategies;
- teach thinking skills consistently across the curriculum;
- collaborate with other staff and pupils' parents;
- meet every pupil's needs and carefully judge the provisions for individuals or groups of pupils with differing abilities;
- be open-minded and patient to listen to pupils.

(Cheminais, 2002, Chen, 2000 and HMIE, 2002)

Teachers are the first people to have contact with pupils and in one hand they are educators and carers on the other. The role for inclusive education teachers is difficult because teachers in inclusive settings face different categories of students who have different needs and backgrounds. The inclusive teacher is also the resource for other teachers; it is her/his duty for providing information and bridging communication between other students and, as well as other teachers. Wu (2004) maintained that the teacher in an inclusive setting needs to have sufficient preparation and training and Angelides (2008) even indicated the importance of teachers' initial education. Special education teachers in inclusive education are different from other teachers because pupils are all unique and so, as Wu (2004) pointed out *the inclusive education teachers are more professional than mainstream and normal special education teachers* (pp.126-127) and Zen (2006) believed that teachers need to self-develop and adjust in an inclusive setting so that all pupils can benefit (p.61).

### ***(3) Staff factors***

The system of school contains not only teachers and pupils but also staff such as administrators who are involved in education and the implementation of inclusive schools has a set of related factors. Within schools, known as 'personnel', school staff are less related to the learning-teaching fields. It is difficult to identify and give a definite definition

when mentioning about school staff because inclusion policies among schools are different and the school's priorities are also different from one another. However, to use the term 'staff' has an advantage. The advantage is the term 'staff' includes all the personnel related to schools and has his/her/their own role to play in promoting inclusion. Lipsky and Gartner (1996) pointed out that one of the factors in successful inclusion in schools is the involvement of staff. Chen (2000) also pointed out that staff can be broadly divided into four parts: *administrators, special educational teachers, assistant educational teachers and professionals* (p.713). Each part of the staff has their own characteristics and they are the key factors for the function of schooling. As SEED (2003) indicated that key elements in delivering an inclusive approach to education are the professionalism and expertise of staff. From the senior management team to janitors, every member of staff should have a clear version of the school's aims and objectives. Other general ideas about school staff can be derived from Cheminais' work and make schools more inclusive. These ideas are:

- *To improve mutual respect between staff and pupils.*
- *To strengthen partnership between staff and parents.*
- *To foster staff/governors closer working relationship.*
- *To ensure all staff share a common inclusion philosophy.*
- *To heighten staff/pupils' inclusion role.*
- *To enable staff to remove all barriers to learning.*
- *To make sure CPD (Continuing Professional Development) responds to pupil diversity.*

(Cheminais 2002: 47-48)

In Scotland, HMIE also uses 'The Quality Indicators' to evaluate the process to inclusive schooling. From HMIE's paper, the best inclusive setting which schools should do for the staff are:

- All members of staff have a clear and well focused remit. Information from staff review and other sources is used to inform the school's self-evaluation and planning process. Senior staff have clear responsibilities for, and a commitment to, staff review and development. The development needs of all staff are identified effectively. The provision of support for staff development takes full account of, and carefully balance, whole-school, team and individual needs. The system for identifying and acknowledging successes and needs is applied at all level. Staff are fully aware of the aims and priorities for staff development.
- Well-designed procedures for review are being implemented for all staff. These meet or exceed the key principles of best practice highlighted in local and national guidelines.
- Staff development is well planned and matched to the identified needs of individuals and of the school or team. The continuing professional development programme makes effective use of staff, local and national expertise as appropriate to the school. Activities are followed up and evaluated and the findings are used to influence future planning. New staff, including newly appointed managers and probationer teachers, experience an effective induction process.

(HMIE, 2002)

In schools, staff are the personnel who have the decisive role in promoting the whole school to be more inclusive. Staff are also the bridges between schools and families, schools and the responsible bodies, and schools and other services. For the success or failure in promoting inclusive schools, staff do have their stages to perform; so Farrell (2001) indicated that all staff need to be committed to inclusion and to feel that they have a responsibility to make it work (p.8).

#### ***(4) Children factors***

Children are the main consumers in schooling and their views should be taken into consideration. The voice from children was not paid too much attention until the 1980's. In England, the Children Act 1989 reformed the legislation on children's welfare, and the guiding principle in the Act was that local authorities and courts should treat a child's welfare as the paramount consideration in any decision (Frederickson and Cline, 2002). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child deeply influenced the UK. The Article 12 states:

*States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the rights to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. For this purpose the child should particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial or administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedure rules of national law.*

(Quoted from Newell 1991: 44)

But it was until 1994 that the first Code of Practice on SEN advised that schools should make every effort to identify the ascertainable views and wishes of the child or young person about his or her current and future education (Department for Education, 1994). In Scotland, the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 has a thoroughly consideration about the rights and needs of all children and their families. The Act called on each education authority to have due regard to the views of children and young persons and the Act also provided for the views of children to be heard by each education authority on issues which affect their education (SEED, 2003). For Scottish pupils, their voices can be

heard, their views are taken into consideration and they are encouraged to speak in meetings.

In Taiwan, the researcher believed that due to Chinese conservative attitude and respect/fear of the authority, pupils' views/voices have been neglected<sup>1</sup>. However, more and more people, including educators and parents, agree and support that children's voices should be listened to because the main body of education is children, not adults.

SEN pupils are also consumers in inclusive schools, it is necessary for schools to be more open for pupils expressing their views and in Taiwan, treating pupils as the core of education still needs to be improved. Treating pupils as the core of education and listening to their voices, the inclusive practice can be improved and informed, just as Messiou (2008) maintained *children's voices should be seen as an essential element within the process of developing inclusive practices* (p.28).

##### ***(5) Curriculum factors***

For moving to inclusive education, one of the key principles is that inclusive education must be child-centred. Inclusive education welcomes diversity and provides equal opportunities for all children, as Lin (1996) pointed out that ... *as the rapid change of society, curriculum should be more responsive in accordance with society and the differences of each child* (p.365). Curricula are the main sources of children's knowledge, and if the curriculum cannot be suitable for children, then it loses its function. The SEED clearly pointed out that curriculum framework should encourage schools and teachers to be flexible and innovate in curriculum design and diversity to better meet the needs and

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<sup>1</sup> Very few reports or writings about pupils' voices (both non-disabled and disabled pupils) were found during the period of this study; and through daily communications, some people (including teachers and parents) said 'can we change one thing just because our children love/believe/are interested in it?'. This attitude, the researcher believed, is based on traditional Chinese 'parent-based' or 'adult-based' concept; for example, Wong *et al.* (2004) pointed out that *parents in Hong Kong are passionate about education because they know that it continues to be the key to status, wealth and material comforts* (p.261).

wishes of pupils and assist them to reach their full potential (SEED, 2003). Pupils with disabilities are the same as ordinary pupils, and they have the rights to access to a full and broad curriculum.

However, Freire and Ce'cer (2003) argued that it is not enough to put all the children together in a regular school setting where children share a common curriculum; it is therefore important to design a curriculum that suits all children. Flexibility, as Wedell (2005) believed, of the demands of the curriculum is clearly at the heart of progress towards inclusion. From the Inclusion Statement of the National curriculum 2000, Flavell indicated that pupils with special educational needs are like their peers and by *(a) providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils is the main issue in the curriculum factor. In the curriculum, (b) suitable challenges in learning process are needed to be set. (c) The curriculum should be responsive the pupils' diversity and (d) motivation and concentration are important in pupils' learning and the curriculum should provide pupils' motivation and concentration* (Flavell 2001: 1-8).

In Taiwan, it is argued (Wang 2000 and Wu 2004) that the curriculum is too focused on competence which results in differentiation. Since education is for all, a quality of curriculum which can reach high expectations and standards should be designed for all pupils, as the Scottish Executive (2002) indicated that *pupils with disabilities should as far as possible have access to a full and broad curriculum, similar to that followed by their non-disabled peers* (p.15) or as Chen and Chen (2003) believed the curriculum is designed for everyone in accordance with individual differences.

### **Summary of School Factors from both Taiwan and the UK, particularly Scotland**

According to the Social Exclusion Unit Report, it is recognised that bad experiences of education and poor educational attainment among children in care are important because:

- *school directly impacts on their quality and enjoyment of life;*
- *low attainment contributes to increased likelihood of social exclusion in later life;*
- and
- *both low attainment and subsequent social exclusion have high social and economic cost.*

(Social Exclusion Unit Report 2003: 14)

Schools are important places of children's development. In both Taiwan and Scotland, as well as other countries in the world, schools can be deemed as major sources of friendships, interests and opportunities for children. In schools, children have opportunities for socialising with their peers. Education is a basic human right and exclusion from school is a denial of the right. In accordance with the Family Service Unit Report, exclusion from schools affects two groups of children, both of which should be received attention by the related personnel (parents, teachers and expertise) and institutions (schools, social welfare units, etc.). The first is those who have learning disabilities, including those whose ability to learn are impaired by emotional or behavioural difficulties; the second is those whose behaviours are considered disruptive, and where the school system is unable to maintain them (Cohen and Hughes, 1994). However, the fact might be totally different, as Searle (2001) argued that young people are frequently shattered personally, and institutionally, when a school – which beyond all things purports to offer knowledge, insight and lucidity – appears to teach them the opposite, in relation to those human truths based in their families and communities that give them confidence, pride and succour as human beings.

As exclusion is getting more and more serious, more and more people put their efforts on the education system because children are seen as our future. *Children have, of course, always been expelled from schools and it seems likely that at level of the individual and his/her family the implications of this have usually been serious* (Bordie 2001: 21).

Segregation (Differentiality) becomes an important issue in recent years because it is against to the rights of the basic human ideology that is all children should be provided the equal right of being educated (Shieh, 2000). Inclusion, on the contrary, is a philosophy that all people are equal and valued/treated with respect.

#### **4.4.4 Brief Conclusions of Factors from both Taiwan and Scotland**

In Taiwan, the aim of special education provision is a way to provide special provision to pupils who have special educational needs. As Hsu (2000) pointed out, special education provision is an inevitable method for pupils who have extra needs which are different from other peers. After reaching the age of primary schooling, it is very important for pupils to take the first step that gives them contact with the wider society. Schools are similar to societies, but of course, not so complicated as societies. From the research evidence, if pupils are excluded by schools, it is more likely that pupils will be excluded by society as a consequence. So, schools do play important roles in the early stage of childhood learning.

In Scotland, all children are entitled to free school education, and no child has been deemed as 'ineducable' or 'untrainable' , however profoundly disabled (Closs, 1997). In primary stage, the provision should focus on all children, and the provision should include *the flexibility of the guidelines, and assessment procedures provide an appropriate and clearly understood structure for the development* (Closs 1997: 89). The provision of special education in Scotland is to admit children who have special educational needs.

Education, especially early stage education, deeply influences children's development. Education is also regarded as the driving force of social change. So, Jamieson, MSP and Minister for Education and Young People in the former Scottish Executive, pointed out:

*A child's early years and time at school provide precious opportunities for learning. Opportunities missed at these time can have a major impact on a child's chances in later life..., we are determined that children, who need extra help, receive the right support at the right time.*

(Scottish Executive 2003: 3)

Educators and relevant stakeholders are always interested in the issues of educational change; and inclusive education is not an exception. In the pursuit of equality and education for all, inclusive education provides equal opportunities to both non-disabled and disabled pupils, as the Ministry of Education in Taiwan indicated that:

*Inclusive education is based on equal opportunities for education and resource-sharing idea...it provides SEN and normal pupils the opportunities to live and learn with each other...so that the idea of "Yu Gio Wu Le" can be achieved.*

(MOE, <http://epaper.edu.tw/069/dic.htm>, 2004)

#### **4.5 General Research Questions**

1. What do policy makers and education professionals understand by the term 'social inclusion' in Taiwan?
2. How do parents regard the phenomenon of mainstreaming pupils with disability in primary schools in Taiwan?
3. What are the differences between rural and urban locations when implementing inclusive education in primary schools in Taiwan?
4. To what extent do policy makers/professionals/parents equate inclusive education with being educated equally?

## **Specific Research Questions Derived from General Research Questions**

### *Derived from RQ.1*

1. Is there any difference in interpretations of social/educational inclusion between policy makers and professionals?
2. What are policy makers and professionals' concerns regarding the implementation of social and educational inclusion policies in Taiwan?

### *Derived from RQ.2*

3. What are parents' reactions towards putting non-disabled and disabled pupils in a same learning environment in primary schools in Taiwan?
4. What are parents' responses when locating non-disabled and disabled pupils in a same learning environment in primary schools in Taiwan?
5. To what extent do Taiwanese parents agree/disagree the concept of educational inclusion?

### *Derived from RQ.3*

6. Is there a difference in parents' ideology of inclusion between rural/urban locations?
7. Is there a difference in resource/support between rural and urban locations for inclusion?
8. Is there a difference in school practices on inclusion between rural/urban locations?

### *Derived from RQ.4*

9. Is there any convergency and/or divergency on the issues of inclusive education among policy makers, professionals and parent?

## **PART TWO      METHODOLOGY**

### **CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH PARADIGMS AND DESIGN**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The aim of this section is to consider the theoretical and philosophical basis for the research approaches adopted in this study. The approaches adopted are grounded in a number of research paradigms: Symbolic interactionism, Interpretivism and Positivism/post-positivism.

Popkewitz (1984) believed that the social and educational researcher appropriates, exploits, reformulates and verifies ideas that have their roots in social movements. As with Popkewitz, Pring (2004) believed that education referred to experiences or instructions which nurtured the capacities for subsequent problem-solving and enquiry (p.14). In education, the central idea of knowledge in sociology is concerned with truth, rationality and knowledge which are constructed within particular societies at particular times; so, truth, rationality and knowledge can only be operative relative to their own particular society (Winch and Gingell, 1999). Education is deemed as an activity within society and has multi-dimensional aspects which bridge relationships among individuals, societies and sciences; so Popkewitz (1984) maintained that *the relation between technique and value in science implies that social research is based upon certain background assumptions about society and individuals* (p.19). Education is also a social activity and has interactions of its various components within society. So Popkewitz concluded:

*Research is influenced by a community of scholars who follow accepted lines of reasoning, standards of discourse, and definitions of problems and the perspectives of research are increasingly incorporated into common-sense reasoning and professional definitions. The theories of social and professional research help to define political, social and educational problems.*

According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), researchers are part of the social world that the researchers study, and there is no escape from reliance on common-sense knowledge and methods of investigation; so all social research is founded on the human capacity for participant observation (p.21). With participation of the researcher within the research focus and systematically exploiting the participation in the setting under study, researchers can produce accounts of the social world (ibid); and therefore:

*...philosophical examination of research questions, and of the enquiries to which those questions lead, must start by trying to get clear the nature of that which is to be researched into.*

(Pring 2004: 6)

However, debates on the theory of knowledge, also known as epistemology, permeate research activity. Epistemology is *the branch of philosophy that studies the nature and theory of knowledge* (The American Heritage Dictionary); *specialized the part of philosophy that is about the study of how we know things* (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary); and *the philosophical study of the nature, limits and grounds of knowledge* (The New Penguin Compact English Dictionary). Knowledge, according to epistemology, is based on truths and beliefs and so the definition of knowledge can be presented<sup>1</sup>. Educational researchers, as social science researchers, put the focus on what knowledge is and how knowledge is acquired. The real world is the main goal which educational researchers are trying to seek; that is, the real situations are needed to be explored, as the aim of this research study and Pring's (2004) idea is on:

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<sup>1</sup> Using Winch and Gingell's (1999) example; for someone to know a statement X, say that 'Socrates is bald', they (a) have to believe X; (b) X has to be true; and (c) they have to have good reasons for believing X (p.83).

*The researcher becomes part of the world to be researched, and the truth is no longer a relation between statements and the facts which the statements are about, but rather a negotiated and agreed account of what should be regarded as real.*

(Pring 2004: 81-82)

## **5.2 Symbolic Interactionism**

Symbolic interactionism is *a theoretical framework that focuses upon the relationships between human agents and is concerned with the way in which competent social agents construct and make sense of the social world which they inhabit* (Edgar and Sedgwick 1999: 395). The origin of symbolic interactionism can be traced back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the University of Chicago; it was George Herbert Mead whom was believed the most creative pragmatist philosopher during World War I and Great Depression (Reck, 1964). Mead's idea about gesture is that gesture is the act of one organism operating as the stimulus to another organism for his/her response, so *when an image of an anticipated consequences accompanies the gesture, meaning arises, and reflective consciousness dawns* (Reck 1964: xxvii). According to Reck, Mead believed that a significant symbol, or word, is the fundamental element of which language is composed and defined the significant symbol as the gesture, the sign, the word which is addressed to the self when it is addressed to another individual, and is addressed to another, in form to all other individuals, when it is addressed to the self (p.xxviii). The main idea of symbolic interactionism is that the society of human beings is full of symbols; for example, languages, letters, colours and shapes are symbols that can cause interactions among

human beings. Influenced by John Dewey, Mead believed that human beings are best understood in relation to their environment<sup>1</sup>.

The main context of symbolic interactionism is interaction with society and the development of 'self' and 'mind' in individuals. So, self, action, social interaction, object and joint object are the main components. Derived from Mead's idea, Reck (1964) pointed out that *human conduct, controlled by inhibition and voluntary attention, increase gesture "the signs of activities which are not carried out"* (p.xxvii). Symbolic interactionism advocates that the researchers should engage with social situations, so that the researchers can understand the social phenomena that are encountered. The nature of symbolic interactionism, according to Blumer (1969), has three premises, which are first, human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them; secondly, the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellow human beings; and thirdly, these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he/she encounters (p.2). The context of social interaction forms the meaning of things, and human beings are the roles of the interaction and so it is inevitable to mention about human beings, the 'I', the 'you', the 'he/she' or the 'self'; and symbolic interactionism is the process of interaction in the formation of meanings for individuals and a study of human group life and conduct (Nelson, 1998).

The self is both subject and object and is seen as a product of thinking about oneself from the viewpoint of others. As Blackledge and Hunt (1985) argued: a person plays a part moulding himself/herself, but others are involved in so far as people 'take their roles' (p.239). Further, using Hargreaves' (1975) analysis of social interactions in educational context, Blackledge and Hunt developed Hargreaves ideas by noting that people give

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<sup>1</sup> For example, human beings need water, which arises out of a combination of hydrogen and oxygen. Human beings, so is water, are something over and above the atoms that make them up (Mead, 1946).

meaning to objects in the world. When a person interacts, he/she interacts with other people who have goals and their own ways of interpreting the world (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985). As Hargreaves (1975) indicated that the fact that all positions within a social system are related to other positions has important consequences for the position-role complex (p.46). The position-role, known as role-set, plays an important part in social systems because positions are inter-related<sup>1</sup>, and so *all social systems, from the small unit such as the family to the large unit such as a nation, consist of a complex structure of inter-related positions* (p.45). From Hargreaves' idea, it can be concluded that an individual must realise when he/she acts, he/she does so within social situation.

Meltzer *et al.* (1975) pointed out that some sociologists, examples being George. H. Mead and John Dewey, think that the most basic element in symbolic interactionism is the idea that the individual and society are inseparable. It is inseparability of the individual and society that symbolic interactionists believe because:

*Society is to be understood in terms of the individuals making it up, and individuals are to be understood in terms of the societies of which they are members.*

(Meltzer *et al.* 1975: 2)

According to Charon (1985), the symbolic interactionist emphasises that humans are dynamic, they are rational problem solvers, the society is a process of individuals in interaction-cooperating, role taking, aligning acts and communicating. So:

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<sup>1</sup> In Hargreaves' book, 'mother-sons/daughters', 'doctor-patient' and 'teacher-pupil' were used to explain the position-role, which is linked to a number of other position-roles, the incumbents of which have expectations about the actor's behaviour towards all the other role partners (Hargreaves 1975: 47-49).

*The human engages in overt and covert action in the present, recalling past, planning for future, and the action that takes place between individuals is an important influence on the direction of individuals and collectives...that symbolic interactionism is an exciting and useful perspective for understanding human social life.*

(Charon 1985: 176)

Symbolic interactionism is therefore, with how people engage with each other; *the human being is understood as acting in the present, influenced not by what happened in the past, but by what is happening now* (Charon 1985: 22). Charon (1985) also believed that interaction is not only happening between people but also within individuals (p.23). Hence, human beings are thought to act in a world that they define. People act in responses to the way they define the situation they are in, and while that definition may be influenced by others' interactions, it is also a result of their own definition. People all have the definitions about the world they act in; and part of that definition is their own. So Charon concluded that *it involves conscious choices, we direct ourselves accordingly, we assess our actions and those of others, and we redirect ourselves* (Ibid). Symbolic interactionism is, obviously, one of major theoretical perspectives in sociology, because symbolic interactionists, as McClelland (2000) pointed out that, *focus on the subjective aspects of social life, rather than on objective, macro-structural aspects of social systems* (<http://web.grinnell.edu/courses/soc/s00/soc111-01/IntroTheories/Symbolic.html>, access date: 20/Aug/2007).

In summary, the focus of symbolic interactionism is on human interaction instead of on personality or social structure. The focus of symbolic interactionism is also on definition, the present and humans as providers and receivers of active symbols. People are seen to be influenced by their perspectives rather than attitudes developed in the past. The reason is

that people do not merely respond to the world they live, on the contrary, people define and interpret the world. Individuals' interactions and communications in society form the society and develop a common, shared perspective.

### **5.3 Interpretivism**

Human actions and human behaviours are always the foci in research in social science as well as in educational research. Explanations given to a particular situation differ from one research to another due to the different accounts of the nature of explanation. Phillips and Burbules (2000) maintained that *human action is laden with meaning and it is purposeful, and often it is symbolic and influenced by cultural beliefs and practices* (p.74); *so interpretation is required, guided by contextual factors and so forth* (p.75); and *in interpretive educational research, the intention of the actor is nearly always one important factor that needs to be considered* (p.77). In social science, interpretivism is also known as interactionism. The interpretive or hermeneutical activity, according to Phillips and Burbules (2000), has been surrounded by philosophical and methodological issues during the eighteen, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries.

Influenced by George Herbert Mead, it is believed that Herbert Blumer developed the interpretive approach to human conduct, and made the 'self', which closely connected aspects—the self as process and as object—as the pivotal notion of interpretive approach (Athens, 1997). Mead's key feature in his social psychology focused on the analysis that human being has a self. According to Mead:

*The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within the process.*

Mead discussed the mind prior to discussing the self, by using the dog-fight as an example, which arises through communication by a conversation of gestures in a social process or context of experience—not communication through mind (Mead 1946: 42-50). What language, Mead (1946) believed that, seems to carry is a set of symbols answering to certain content which is measurably identical in the experience of different individuals and if individuals respond in different ways to the stimulus, the stimulus means different things to them (p.54); and the experience can be divided into *impulse*, *perception*, *manipulation* and *consummation* phrase<sup>1</sup>; therefore, the importance of language in the development of human experience lies in the fact that the stimulus is one that can react upon the speaking individual as it reacts upon the other (p.69). However, the definition of meaning of a thing differs in accordance with individuals responses, because meaning arises and lies within the field of the relation between the gesture of a given human organism and the subsequent behaviour of this organism as indicated to another human organism by that gesture (p.76); also, the gesture stands for a certain resultant of the social act. So, meaning is given or stated in terms of responses (Ibid).

Mead's famous notion towards the self is on 'I' and 'me', which the 'I' is the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others; the 'me' is the organised set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes; and the attitudes of the others constitute the organised 'me', and then one reacts toward that as an 'I' (p.175). In short, the external constitutes 'me' and the internal constitutes 'I'; and Mead believed that there would not be an 'I' in

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<sup>1</sup> In his book, *The Philosophy of the Act* (1938), Mead believed that there are four stages in the act. In general; first, the stage of impulse, that is all perception involves an immediate sensuous stimulation and an attitude toward this stimulation, which is that of the reaction of the individual to the stimulation. Secondly, the stage of perception, which is a relation that involves a duration and a process between a highly developed physiological organism and an object, or an environment in which selection emphasizes certain elements. Thirdly, the stage of manipulation, describes the relationships and separation of perceptual and scientific objects. The fourth stage is the stage of consummation, that is, in the perceptual world the distance experiences are primarily stimuli to which the individual responds by approaching or withdrawing from the stimuli (pp.3-25).

the sense in which we use that term if there were not a 'me'; there would not be a 'me' without a response in the form of the 'I' (p182). So Lewis (1991) indicated that in Mead's 'I' and 'me', the 'me' can be interpreted as the social attitude and the 'I' as the response (p.177).

Herbert Blumer, deemed as Mead's mentor, pointed out that a human being can act toward himself/herself as he/she might act toward others:

*We are given, then, a picture of the human being as an organism which confronts its world with a mechanism for making indications to itself. This is the mechanism that is involved in interpreting the actions of others. To interpret the actions of another is to point out to oneself that the action has this or that meaning or character.*

(Blumer 1962: 181)

Through symbolic interactionism, Blumer (1969) believed that the three simple premises<sup>1</sup> of symbolic interactionism fail to see that the use of meanings by the actor occurs through a process of interpretation because there are two distinct steps in the process of interpretation; and they are: first, the actor indicates to himself the things toward which he is acting; he has to point out to himself the things that have meaning; and second, by virtue of this process of communicating with himself, interpretation becomes a matter of handling meanings (p.5). Therefore, Blumer believed the actor is interacting with himself and it is a stance of the person engaging in a process of communication with himself; and it is necessary to see that meanings play their part in action through a process of self-interaction (Ibid). Blumer (1962) believed that each individual aligns his action to the action of others by ascertaining what they are doing or what they intend to do—that is, by getting the

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<sup>1</sup> Also seen in 5.2.

meaning of their acts (p.184). Mead (1964) also pointed out that most social stimulation is found in the beginning or early stage of social acts which serve as stimuli to other forms whom these acts would affect (p.135). By getting the meaning of the acts, derived from Mead's notion of taking the role, Blumer (1962) pointed out that in taking such roles the individual seeks to ascertain the intention or direction of the acts of others (p.184). Aboulafia (1991) used Mead's dog-fight to indicate that a gesture may be thought of as a stimulus that calls out a response and it also may be thought of as that feature of an action that can stand for or symbolize that which follows the gesture; so meaning is objective and can be observed and studied, for it is defined in terms of the responses of organisms to each other (p.1). However, Aboulafia also pointed out that meaning in human beings is not simply a function of objective responses that can be noted by a third party, because human beings are aware of meaning and have capacity to point them out to themselves, even in the absence of others (Ibid).

Blumer developed the interpretive approach to human conduct and made self as the process and self as the object. The self as process, according to Athens (1997), refers to the conversations that human beings carry on continuously with themselves. Self-conversations are carried out by human beings with the making of indications toward themselves; and in order to respond the indications, further indications are made. *Self-indications are made whenever people note or point out anything to themselves or other people* (Athens 1997: 28). So, Athens (1997) argued that interpretations of a situation have two ongoing and correlated phrases. The first phrase is definition, which is that people define the situation facing them in terms of what they see is being done or is likely to be done by the other participants in the situation. The second is judgment, which is that people decide on the proper course of action to take in the situation given their definition of it, and people judge the situation by assuming an attitude of the generalised other and indicating to themselves how they ought to act (pp. 28-29).

In order to interpret other people's behaviour, it is vital to understand self and other people. A particular sort of action from other people may not have the same meaning. So to interpret a particular action one needs to know people's intentions. However, as Pring (2004) pointed out:

*To understand other people, therefore, requires understanding the interpretations which they give of what they are doing. We need to know their intentions.*

(Pring 2004: 98)

Also, Liu and Liao (2006) indicated that the actions in human society have internal meanings and so in order to research human actions, the researcher should include and pay attention to the contexts of the actions and the intentions of the actors (<http://www.nhlue.edu.tw/~gimewww/epaper/9501/epaper9501.htm>, access date: 25/Aug/2007).

The reactions from human beings are based on experience; and *certainly our experiences are selective, and the principle of selection is usually the relevance to perceived needs* (Pring 2004:99). So, Pring (2004) believed that in order to do the research, the researcher needs to put himself/herself into the situation and to be engaged within society in which he/she is going to research, the researcher needs to *get on the inside, to share in those practices and be part of the society in its constant defining and redefining of reality* (p.100). As the researcher gets in to the situation, the situation also changes because the researcher also becomes a participant in this situation or action; using Pring (2004) and Mead's (1964) words, two general short conclusions can be given as follows:

*The researcher becomes part of the world to be researched, and the truth is no longer a relation between statements and the facts which statements are about, but rather a negotiated and agreed account of what should be regarded as real.*

(Pring 2004: 81-82)

and

*Insofar then as the individual takes the attitude of another toward himself, and in some sense arouses in himself the tendency to action, which his conduct calls out in the other individual, he will have indicated to himself the meaning of the gesture. This implies a definition of meaning—that is an indicated reaction which the object may call out. When we find that we have adjusted ourselves to a comprehensive set of reactions toward an object we feel that the meaning of the object is ours.*

(Mead 1964: 244)

Pring (2004) also pointed out the ‘uniqueness fallacy’ which is the criticism of interpretivism and argued that the fact everyone or every group is unique in some respect to the claim that everyone and every group is unique in every respect (p.109). This research was conducted in Taiwan, where Mandarin was the language used to collect the data. Trying not to be biased through translation and interpretation by the researcher was the primary concern<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Pilot studies in the interview (two interviewees—both are teachers and friends of the researcher) and parental questionnaire (six parents—also seen in 9.1) were conducted prior to formal conduction and distribution.

## 5.4 Positivism and Post-positivism

### Positivism

Positivism is *a way of thinking that is based only on scientific facts and not on other types of knowledge* (MacMillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners). It was August Comte (1798-1857) who coined positivist philosophy which described his systematic re-construction of the history and development of scientific knowledge. Comte believed that positivist knowledge was the inevitable outcome both of the progressive growth of the individual mind and of the historical development human knowledge (Halfpenny 1982: 13); and positivism tradition distrusted knowledge-claims which went beyond what was accessible to observation (Pring 2004: 91). The positivism tradition, according to Pring (2004), distrusted and rejected philosophical and religious beliefs that gave a non-empirical account of the world. Positivism seems to refer to those accounts, which study systematically what is clear, factual and open to observation (Ibid). From the mid nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, positivism was deemed as the trend in the philosophical thinking. The central idea of positivism was on that only natural science was the authentic knowledge and only the reality was the object of authentic knowledge. Comte believed that the whole range of scientific disciplines had a great and fundamental historical law, in other words, Comte's famous law of three stages<sup>1</sup>. According to Comte, science and religion play important roles in human beings' historical development. Derived from Comte's famous law of three stage, Bryant (1985) believed that in the theological state, absolute knowledge—supposes all phenomena to be produced by the immediate action of supernatural beings; the metaphysical state, is only a modification of the first state, the mind supposes, instead of supernatural beings, abstract forces, veritable entities inherent in all beings and capable of producing all phenomena; and the final stage, the positive state, the mind has given over the vain search after absolute notion, the origin and

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<sup>1</sup> The law holds that in the course of the development of mankind the human mind progresses through three different modes of philosophising, the theological or fictitious, the metaphysical or abstract, and the scientific or positive (Bryant 1985: 28).

destination of the universe, and the cause of phenomena, and applied itself to the study of their laws. (pp.28-29). From Comte's idea, the positivist advocates believed that experience is seen as the ultimate foundation of human knowledge and denies possibilities of meaningful discourse concerning supersensible objects. Giddens (1974) pointed out that Comte's work both shares in and best exemplifies the views of the nature of science that dominated nineteenth-century thought—which not only took scientific knowledge to be the paradigm of all knowledge, but also saw in science the solution to the major practical problems facing mankind (pp.1-2). However, after Comte, the term of positivists was seldom used by philosophers and social thinkers because *it has been used so broadly and vaguely as a weapon of critical attacks, both in philosophy and in sociology, that it has lost any claim to an accepted and standard meaning* (Giddens 1974: 2).

Halfpenny (1982) compressed Comte and other philosophers' ideas toward positivist philosophy as follows: positivism is a paradigm that knowledge improvements are: first, the motor of progress that guarantees the emergence of superior forms of society is competition between increasingly differentiated individuals, and secondly, the source of social stability. Positivism generates sound knowledge that is available to humankind and is grounded in observation. Science consists of a corpus of causal laws on the basis of which phenomena are explained and predicted. Positivism is a unity of science thesis and all sciences can be integrated into a single natural system; and the natural science of sociology consists of the collection and statistical analysis of quantitative data about society. Positivism is a secular religion of humanity devoted to the worship of society. Positivism also encompasses a theory of meaning, combining phenomenism and logistic methods, and captured by the principle of verifiability, according to which the meaning of a proposition consists in its method of verification and it is also a programme for the unification of the sciences both syntactically and semantically. Positivism is a theory of knowledge according to which science consists of a corpus of interrelated, true, simple,

precise and wide-ranging universal laws that are central to explanation and prediction, as Deductive-Nomological schema<sup>1</sup>. Positivism is a theory of scientific method according to which science progresses by including laws from observational and experimental evidence. Positivism is a theory of scientific method according to which science progresses by conjecturing hypotheses and attempting to refute them, so that false conjectures are eliminated and corroborated one retained (Halfpenny 1982: 114-115).

Debates over positivism continue by philosophers from social scientists and others. So, Halfpenny (1982) argued that many sociologists have been bewitched by the developments and changes in philosophers' analyses and understandings of explanation, experience, causality, laws and theory; and these sociologists also have responded by adopting a whole spectrum of views, which sociologists have continued to pursue a programme aimed at constructing a natural science of society centring on causal laws derived from or tested by observational data with the aid of statistical techniques (p.120).

Foundational epistemologies, including positivism, had dominated philosophical thinking for about a century; but the second half of the twentieth century was the time that non-foundationalist epistemology became to flourish. Phillips and Burbules (2000) indicated that there are six main issues that are extremely troublesome for foundationalists. The first problem is *the relativity of the 'light of reason'*; which clearly states that what is obvious to one person may not be obvious to another because what is indubitable and self-evident depends on one's background and intellectual proclivities and is hardly a solid basis on which to build a whole edifice about knowledge. Secondly, *the theory-laden perception*; which is regarded as biased because in the observational theory, what an

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<sup>1</sup> Deductive-Nomological (D-N) schema was generated by Carl Gustav Hempel, a logic positivist, who proposed that sound explanations must fulfil four conditions: first, the explanans must entail the explanandum; second, the explanans must contain general laws which are necessary for the deduction of the explanandum; third, the explanans must be capable of empirical test; and the fourth, empirical condition is that explanans must be true. The D-N schema provides a basis for the unification of the sciences (Halfpenny 1982: 63-64).

observer sees, and also what he or she does not see, and the form that the observation takes, is influenced by the background knowledge of the observer—the theories, hypotheses, assumptions, or conceptual schemes that the observer harbours. Thirdly, *the underdetermination of theory by evidence*; which points out that we cannot claim that observational or other evidence unequivocally supports a particular theory of fully warrants the claim that it is true because there are many other theories that also are compatible with this same body of evidence, that is, theory is underdetermined by evidence. Fourthly, *the Duhem-Quine thesis<sup>1</sup> and auxiliary assumptions*; is that evidence relates to all the network of beliefs, not just to one isolated part; all of our beliefs are ‘up for grabs’ during the test of any one of them—people can save one assumption or belief if people are willing to jettison another one; in short, it is impossible to test a scientific hypothesis in isolation. *The problem of induction*; is that if human knowledge is based solely on experience, humans cannot have knowledge about things that humans have not experienced, in other words, how do humans know phenomena that humans have not experienced will resemble those that humans have experienced in the past? Finally, *the social nature of scientific research*; is that the classic empiricists did not make much of the obvious fact that researchers belong to a community; but there has been a growing acknowledgment of the fact that the community to which the scientist belongs plays a more central role in determining what evidence is acceptable, what criteria and methods are to be used, what form a theory should take, and so forth; in other words, the growing recognition of the fact that scientific inquiry is a social activity (Phillips and Burbules 2000: 14-25).

Pring (2004) also pointed out that in positivist thinking, the foundation of all knowledge must be the immediate experiences that we have and the meaning of a proposition lies in its mode of verification. However, if there is no such evidence, no way of verifying the

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<sup>1</sup> The Duhem-Quine Thesis states that any seemingly disconfirming evidence can always be accommodated to any theory (Klee, 1997), that is, it is impossible to test a scientific hypothesis in isolation because the test requires one or more background assumptions.

statement which one is claiming that something is the case, then they (the world, or whatever, has certain properties or features) are not genuine statements, whatever their grammatical form (pp. 92-93). So, statements essentially have no meaning, they are just expressions of emotion. In social research, including educational research, the educational theory is a mixture of value judgments, aims, and statements which are too loosely phrased for anyone to know what would count as evidence for or against them (p.94). Particularly in educational research, Pring (2004) brought out criticisms of philosophical position towards positivism, and these are; first, there can be no clear logical distinction between research into physical phenomena and research into social institutions and structures; and secondly, the positivist spirit requires a clear distinction between the aims and values of education and the means of reaching these ends (pp. 94-95).

### **Post-positivism**

Post-positivism, known as post-empiricism, is the notion derived from the criticisms of positivism which focuses on the belief that human knowledge is not based on unchallengeable or rock-solid foundations; on the contrary, human knowledge is conjectural; as Phillips and Burbules (2000) maintained that in human world, understanding can be misunderstanding and a position that one fervently believes to be true—even to be obviously true—may in fact false (p.2).

Post-positivism is a position that arose historically after positivism and replaced it (Phillips and Burbules 2000: 4). Positivism can be deemed as a form of empiricism which was based on foundationalist notion and dominated the Western philosophical theories till the end of the nineteenth century. Philosophers advocated in empiricism or foundationalism believed that if one thing would be labelled as knowledge, an item must have to be securely established and the item had a secure foundation, in other words, rock-solid foundation. To the empiricist, according to Phillips and Burbules (2000), the secure foundation of

knowledge is experience, which of course comes via the human senses of sight, hearing, touch and so on (p.6). Empiricists and foundationalists believed that knowledge without evidence, especially the observational evidence, was just speculation; and only when relevant warranting or justifying observations and measurements have been made then speculation can be claimed as knowledge. In the 1920s and 1930s, logical positivism was initiated. Logical positivists asserted the speculation which no observational data could be collected as non-scientific and non-sensical, and therefore, the speculation became meaningless. Metaphysics, derived from this notion of logical positivist, did not have secure or rock-solid foundation and was based on inferential assumption.

As mentioned in the previous part about the critiques of positivism, the long reign of the foundationalist epistemologies came to an end because there are six main issues that are extremely troublesome for foundationalists. In order to confront the six issues generated from foundational epistemologies, a new approach was born, the post-positivism; and *post-positivists believe that human knowledge is not based on unchallengeable, rock-solid foundations—it is conjectural* (p.26). Positivists believe that human knowledge is established on solid and absolutely secure foundations whilst post-positivists think that there is no such foundation, so in accordance with Phillips and Burbules (2000), post-positivists accept fallibilism as an unavoidable fact of life (p.29). From post-positivists' point of view, to accept the imperfection and fallibility of evidence is one of the tenets, because postpositivists believe that knowledge is conjectural.

Nothing is immune from criticism, nor is post-positivism. Criticisms towards post-positivism also arose due to its claim that knowledge is conjectural. However, post-positivism can also be deemed as pluralism. In undertaking research from the post-positivists' view, using multi-types of methods is acceptable because:

*The post-positivist approach to research is based on seeking appropriate and adequate warrants for conclusions, on hewing to standards of truth and falsity that subject hypotheses (of whatever type) to test and thus potential disconfirmation, and on being open-minded about criticism.*

(Phillips and Burbules 2000: 86-87)

The notions of multiple beliefs, multiple truths and multiple realities are also accepted by the post-positivists who believe that the scientific research does not depend solely on subjectively experienced or believed realities; instead, post-positivists try to find a way to build procedures and criteria that can support or sustain commonly adjudicated truth claims.

Educational research is like science and can also be categorised as social science, and post-positivistic science gives an adequate account to social sciences, and to educational research; so Phillips and Burbules (2000) adopted post-positivism as a philosophy of science adequate for understanding competent research in the natural sciences as well as in the social sciences and educational research (p.67). In short, in educational research, *the crucial question, of course, is how researchers are to provide the necessary warrant to support the claim that their understandings can reasonably be taken to constitute knowledge rather than false belief* (p.4).

## **5.5 The Research Design**

According to Kervin *et al.* (2006), the research design includes: *the method employed*, that is, quantitative, qualitative or mixed mode if both words and numbers are utilised; *the control that the researcher has*, that is, experimental or non-experimental; *the contribution to knowledge* and *the nature of the questions asked* (p.16). In education research, there are two basic types: **descriptive research** which is used to answer descriptive research

questions; and **experimental research** which is used to answer causal research questions (Lauer 2006:13-15). Without manipulation, causal research questions and control of all elements, this education research thesis can be regarded as a descriptive/non-experimental research that gathers empirical information. Based on Kervin *et al.* (2006) and Lauer's (2006) ideas, descriptive research designs include: simple descriptive, comparative descriptive and correlational; and therefore, this research study can be regarded as: first, a descriptive research, by using words or numbers, *seeks to describe and interpret what exists* and is used *when data are collected to describe persons, organisations, settings, or phenomena*; for example, interviews (personal interpretations towards inclusive education), focus groups (both non-disabled and disabled pupils' views on inclusive settings) and observations (teachers' reactions and both non-disabled and disabled pupils' interactions under inclusive settings) in this research. Secondly, a comparative research which *explores the relationships between variables* and this comparative descriptive design *is used to describe and compare two or more groups of participants*; for example, interviews (convergency/divergency among interviewees' responses), focus groups (differences between non-disabled and disabled pupils), observations (different reactions/responses in teachers and differences between non-disabled and disabled pupils under inclusive settings) and parental survey (urban versus rural areas) in this research. Thirdly, a correlational research design which *is used to describe the statistical association between two or more variables*; that is, the analysis of parental survey with the utilisation of SPSS software in this research (Kervin *et al.* 2006: 16, 32-33 and Lauer 2006:14-15).

This research study was carried out in a wide range of stakeholders that included outsiders<sup>1</sup> (professors and legislators) and insiders<sup>2</sup> (parents, principals, teachers, pupils and parents)

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<sup>1</sup> From the perspective of descriptive design (interviews with professors and legislators) merged with symbolic interactionism and interpretivism.

<sup>2</sup> From the perspective of descriptive (interviews with principals and teachers), comparative descriptive (parental questionnaires and focus groups) and correlational (parental questionnaires and interviews with principals and teachers) research designs merged with symbolic interactionism, interpretivism and positivism/post-positivism.

in order to fulfill the overall aim of the study, that is, to describe, identify, comprehend and analyse the notion and practices of inclusive education under Taiwanese system. Following the aim, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods which were used for research design and data collection was decided. Perspectives from symbolic interactionism, interpretivism and positivism/post-positivism were also merged in order to analyse data.

The research methodology (see chapter six) involved twelve interviews, four observations, six focus groups and parental surveys. The selection of interviewees was a feature of overall research design focused on national/local level policy-making and general information towards inclusion whilst parental surveys focused on parents/carers' reactions and views on a more specific field, that is, inclusive practices within schooling. Observations and focus groups were used in order to protrait vivid descriptions of both non-disabled and disabled pupils' interactions, relations and reponses when located within an inclusive setting.

In relation to this research, the basis of symbolic interactionism is on how stakeholders view the term 'social inclusion' and in relationship of special education provision in primary schooling. A number of stakeholders, such as legislators, principals, teachers, special education teachers, parents and pupils are included in this research. Furthermore; both non-disabled and disabled pupils were observed via data collection and the analysis of respondents' answers, gestures, tones and other relevant responses are provided in the following Part Two, the field study. Through the analysis of the interactions between different stakeholders, each role/stakeholder provided his/her expectations about how other roles behave, should behave, or supposed to behave towards him/her; as:

*Some of the characteristics of the symbolic interaction perspective are an emphasis on interactions among people, use of symbols in communication and*

*interaction, interpretation as part of action, self as constructed by others through communication and interaction, and flexible, adjustable social processes.*

(Gingrich 2000: <http://uregina.ca/~gingrich/f100.htm>)

Through the field study, the researcher also played a role as an interpreter and observer. The researcher focused on the interactions generated via participating within the life of inclusion. A person or a group has their own gestures, languages and symbols. Taking the interviews as examples, each interviewee had his/her own way of responding to the questions, and through respondents' gestures and intonations (for example: raise tones or emphasise), the researcher was able to identify the stress that they placed on the situations and interests which were useful and related to this research study. The researcher engaged with relevant stakeholders, such as legislators and principals<sup>1</sup>; and was interested in realising themselves, such as teachers, special education teachers and parents from both non-disabled/disabled pupils, and the environment, in other words, inclusive classrooms.

In this research study, the interpretive methods were applied to describe the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools in Tainan City and Tainan County. However, human behaviours, according to Pring (2004), are infused with intentions, and each gesture or action has a signal. Even the same gesture or action from different actors has different meaning; for example, raising a hand from a non-disabled pupil meant he/she would like to answer the question, but it might not have the same meaning from an ADHD pupil. The intentions, motives, actions and reactions are the foci by which the researcher is trying to seek for the answer of a particular action, so the researcher needs to know how the actors understand or interpret their actions. Furthermore, the researcher is also an actor in the research and has his/her own intentions towards those

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'principal' equals to Scottish term 'headteacher'.

whom he/she is researching. Therefore, subjective meaning from the researcher has different understandings and interpretations which the participants bring with them to the situation because *we each inhabit subjective worlds of meaning through which we interpret the social world* (Pring 2004: 98). Besides, as Lauer (2006) noted that findings from descriptive research design should avoid cause-effect statements because *descriptive studies can produce valid conclusions only about association* (p.29). At this stage, trying not to be biased from researcher's own experiences and avoiding causal statements (for example: inclusive classroom causes both non-disabled and disabled pupils higher/lower attainment) were important.

To understand one situation, such as relations between non-disabled and disabled pupils, or action, such as interviewees' gestures during interviews, the researcher must see things, background of behaviours and other related events from the point of view of the participants. Focused on participants' emotions, feelings, aspirations, wants, needs and hopes, the researcher pointed to the *uniqueness* (Pring, 2004) of certain people, from headteachers to non-disabled pupils, in the certain situation, that is inclusive primary education in Tainan City and County.

Scientific facts, from the positivist's view, in this research study provided the real reflection from participants. However, Wilson (2000) argued that *research on how to make inclusion work is one thing, but research designed to evaluate inclusion is something else* (p.304). The empirical facts might be misrepresentative because post-positivists claim that human knowledge is conjectural. In order to avoid conjectures, the data collection of this research study was undertaken using multiple methods. Pring (2004) indicated that research should begin with clarifying that is be researched into and ambiguity is to be avoid (p.9). Knowing, understanding, evaluating and respecting are regarded as the developments of education concerns as well as human capacities; therefore, the focus of educational

research, according to Pring, must be on learning and teaching, and this research is not an exception.

### **In Brief**

As moving into the conceptualisation of inclusive education, which has a complex structure of inter-related positions involving students, parents, teachers, social workers and so on, it was realised that researching inclusive education must proceed from comprehension and understanding of the background of exclusion, and this research study should be multi-dimensional to capture stakeholders' experiences and broader social structure. The primary focus of this research study was on stakeholders' reactions and responses towards current implementation of primary inclusive education in Taiwan, particularly in Tainan City and County. It also considered the binary of regular/special education in relation to the spaces of educational discourse through the perspectives of professionals, legislators, parents and pupils. Those educational discourses generated from this research study might be used to provide useful guidance towards the future primary education in Taiwan.

The basis of this research study was to seek adequate grounds and warrants that can provide useful information towards relevant stakeholders in Taiwan's primary education system. Multiple beliefs, truths and realities are proposed and discussed in order to give an appropriate account towards future inclusion in a Taiwanese context.

## CHAPTER SIX: METHODOLOGY

### 6.1 Main Methodologies

#### *Sources of Data*

The sources of data used in this study are based on both secondary data, that is, government publications in Taiwan and the United Kingdom, particularly in Scotland, and on primary data consisting of: (1) interviews; (2) observations; (3) focus groups; (4) questionnaires. Other resources, such as publications in SEN are also taken into consideration in this study as supplementary data.

#### *Secondary sources about Scotland:*

The secondary sources used in this thesis mainly focus on government publications and the Internet documents. For the past thirty years, the Scottish Office, the Scottish Office Education Department and the Scottish Executive Education Department, and currently the Scottish Government Education and Training Unit have published a great number of documents on primary education. For example, *5-14: A Practical Guide for Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools*<sup>1</sup> (the Scottish Office), the *Curriculum and Assessment in Scotland: National Guidelines* (the Scottish Office Education Department) and *Count Us In* from Learning Teaching Scotland, provide a broad and precise range of education provision and these guidelines include addressing the needs of all children in Scottish primary and secondary schools. Currently, *The Curriculum for Excellence* is in preparation which aims to enable all pupils to develop their individual capacities. In the Guidelines, SEN pupils are also included, as the *Assessment 5-14* indicated that success and progress should be recorded for all pupils, including those with a Record of Needs<sup>2</sup> (LTScotland, <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/htmlunrevisedguidelines/Pages/assess/assessoverview.htm> access date: 29/Nov/2007). On the other hand, the Internet, of the Scottish

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<sup>1</sup> Currently revised as 3-18-year-olds curriculum, known as Curriculum for Excellence.

<sup>2</sup> Record of Needs is used in Scotland as Special Educational Needs.

Government <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Home> provides a number of publications. The documents published in the forms of books or on the Internet by the UK/Scottish Governments or related to Scottish education provision and in relation to special educational needs/inclusive education are shown in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1: Official documents in relation to pupils with special educational needs.**

Prior to the devolution in 1999, most Acts on the issues of special educational needs were UK-wide, and Scotland was, and still remains, part of the UK.

Source of Publication	Title of publication	Year	Impact on SEN
England, Wales, and Northern Ireland	The 1944 Education Act	1944	Pupils with special educational needs could be educated in normal schools.
Scotland	The 1945 Education (Scotland) Act	1945	Pupils with special educational needs could be educated in normal schools. The duty of education authorities to establish nursery schools if there was sufficient demand from parents.
England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland	Warnock Report	1978	SEN pupils have “Statement”.
Scotland	1980 Education (Scotland) Act	1980	Early identification of special educational needs.
England, Wales, and Northern Ireland	SEN Code of Practice	1994	Increase parents’ rights <sup>1</sup> towards education.

<sup>1</sup> The 1981 Educational Act empowered parents’ involvement in children’s schooling.

England, Wales, and Northern Ireland	Disabilities Discrimination Act	1995	Though specifically excluded education, the Act still asked responsible bodies to provide special students with learning support <sup>1</sup> .
England	Excellence for all Children	1997	Increase inclusion and provide service for pupils with SEN.
Scotland	Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act	2000	It shall be the right of every child of school age to be provided with school education.
England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act	2001	Pupils with special educational needs have the rights as their non-disabled peers.
Scotland	Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act	2002	Bodies responsible for schools to prepare and implement strategies relating to the accessibility, for pupils with a disability, of school education.
Scotland	Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act	2006	To make further provision for the involvement of parents in their children's education and in school education.
Scotland	The Equality (Scotland) Act	2006	Respect the diversity within Scottish schools.
Scotland	Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act	2009	In respect of placing requests in relation to the school education of children and young persons having additional support needs and in respect of arrangements between education authorities in relation to such school education.

<sup>1</sup> Scotland's Children (Children (Scotland) Act 1995)—legislation on care and welfare of children.

(Source: Lawson and Gooding, 2005, Huang, 2001, the Scottish Government, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/Recent/Q/MonthPicker/-1/YearPicker/-1/Keywords/Act/Subject/464/SortBy/1/Page/7> access date:29/Nov/2007 and Office of Public Sector Information, <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/> access date: 05/Oct/2009)

***Secondary sources about Taiwan:***

Most data about Taiwan are available on the website of the Ministry of Education ([www.edu.tw](http://www.edu.tw) or [www.edu2.tw](http://www.edu2.tw)). Personal writings also provide useful information. For example, *General Ideas of Special Education* (Wang, 2000) is a good secondary source as the author is a civil servant of the Taiwan Government. A list of official documents published in the forms of books or on the Internet by Taiwanese government and in relation to special educational needs/inclusive education is shown in Table 6.2.

**Table 6.2: Acts in relation to pupils with special educational needs in Taiwan**

Title of Act	Year	Impact on SEN
Constitution Law	1947	All citizens have the right to education.
Basic Education Law	1999 (amended)	Assist individual to achieve his/her potential.
Regulations of Special Education (Curriculum and Pedagogy) Actualization	1999 (amended)	Consider individual difference, take care of each individual.
Detailed Actualization of Special Education	2003 (amended)	Pupils with disabilities should be educated in normal mainstream schools.
Special Education Law	2004 (amended)	Mainstream schools should accommodate pupils with special educational needs.

(Source: Wu, 1999 and Laws and Regulations Database of the Republic of China, <http://law.moj.gov.tw/> search for keyword: special education, access date: 29/Nov/2007)

## **Primary Data**

The primary data in this study consist of first-hand information gathered through direct observations and recording. After deciding interviews, observations, focus groups and parental questionnaires as the most appropriate instruments for gathering primary data in this study, the intention and design of each instrument was set out.

The nature of the primary data collected in this study focused on concepts, facts, responses, understandings and attitudes on inclusive policies and inclusive education. The primary data collected from instruments formed the fundamental framework of this study and can be categorised as quantitative and qualitative data which are in the form of number and in the form of verbal and symbolic materials. Each instrument has its strengths and weakness, and therefore, four instruments were designed and used in order to supplement each other's weakness. Winch and Gingell (1999) indicated that in education, truth, rationality and knowledge are central ideas of sociology; and hence, the focus of this study is also on these concepts.

## **6.2 Instrumentation**

Instruments in this research study were designed for collecting data from different perspectives towards inclusive issues. According to the research interests and research questions, these four instruments provide a broad perspective towards current exclusion/inclusion issues and inclusion implementation within primary schools. Instruments applied in this research study tried to gather information from participants' reactions and interpretations towards a specific field, that is, inclusive education. Detailed description of each instrumentation is provided in sections 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3 and 6.2.4.

### 6.2.1 Interviews

The interview served three purposes, according to Cohen *et al.* (2003); first, it was useful as *the principal means of gathering information having direct bearing on the research objectives*, that is, inclusive education and policies; secondly, it was used *to test hypotheses or to suggest new ones or as an explanatory device to help identify variables and relationships*, in other words, personal opinions and knowledge towards inclusion; and thirdly, the interview may be used *in conjunction with other methods in a research undertaking* (pp.268-269). Through direct verbal interaction and conversation between individuals, the interviewer gathers data, as Cannell and Kahn (1968) defined the interview as obtaining research-relevant information (p.527).

The interview is not merely a data (information) collection exercise, but also a social encounter, as Blumer's three premises of symbolic interactionism (See Chapter 5.2). The interview is a reflexive and reactive interaction between the researcher as well as the respondent. The interview, whether formal or informal<sup>1</sup>, is to meet with a person (persons or groups can also be included) to assess his/her/their merits and obtain information via interactions between interviewer and interviewee. Through the interview, information and data related to inclusion/exclusion/inclusive education can be gathered and collected. The advantage of the interview is to incite and inspire the production of meanings which focus and address inclusion issues to research concerns.

The purpose of this research interview is to obtain information and understanding of issues relevant to the general aims and specific questions of a research project (Gillham, 2000). The main purpose of this research interview is that the researcher wants to know and develop a rich understanding towards the issues on inclusion and exclusion; and the interviewee is just to provide his/her own knowledge to the issues and to answer directly to

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<sup>1</sup> In this study, twelve formal interviews were conducted with professionals with a number of informal interviews which mainly based on informal conversations towards inclusive issues.

the questions. The researcher also considered himself as an interpreter who observed, recorded and tried to refine the issues. Through the interactions of the interviewer and the interviewee, discourses are generated and information is collected.

Good quality for the interview should have criteria, as Kvale (1996) indicated:

- *The extent of spontaneous, rich, specific, and relevant answers from the interviewee.*
- *The shorter the interviewer's questions and the longer the subject's answers, the better.*
- *The degree to which the interviewer follows up and clarifies the meanings of the relevant aspects of the answers.*
- *The ideal interview is to a large extent interpreted throughout the interview.*
- *The interviewer attempts to verify his or her interpretations of the subject's answers in the course of the interview.*
- *The interview is 'self-communicating' – it is a story contained in itself that hardly requires much extra descriptions and explanations.*

(Kvale 1996: 145)

The interview in this research used a face to face conversation and was used to collect data in a wide variety of social contexts. The data and information gathered from the interviews could provide the knowledge to the interviewer to the needs of researching topic. Through the interviews, different opinions and knowledge were provided by the interviewee. The critique, however, argues that using interview as a practical tool may result in the conversation topic focusing on interests only to those who are in one particular or unique situation and the interviewer occupies his/her own unique world of beliefs and understandings so that meanings are negotiated between researcher and researched (Pring, 2004, pp. 39-40). Cohen *et al.* (2003) also pointed out that the number of respondents in interview and overall reliability are limited. In order to maintain a broad perspective within this research study, other research instruments were conducted. This research interview

was a two-person conversation and focused on obtaining relevant research data and information. Through verbal conversation with the usage of tape recorder, interviewees' responses were audio recorded.

### **Construction of the interview schedule**

The interview schedule had six sections, with five to six questions in each section. The interviews were audio recorded by the researcher, except two cases<sup>1</sup>. With the process of audio records, the interviewer could focus on the topics and concentrated on the usage of particular words, gestures and so on of the interviewee. *The words and their (interviewees) tone, pauses, and the like, are recorded in a permanent form that can be returned to again and again for relistening* (Kvale 1996: 160). The research interviews were conducted in Mandarin on a 1:1 basis in each interviewee's office or work place.

The interview schedule consisted of six sections as follows:

- Awareness and interpretation
- A policy priority
- Educational implication
- Obstacles to reform
- Impact of policy on the work of the interviewee
- The way ahead

### **Awareness and Interpretation**

The first part of the interview schedule started with interviewees' knowledge and experience about the term 'social inclusion'. Social inclusion is closely linked to the social policies because it is the priority for both Taiwan and the UK, particularly Scotland. Social policies are deemed as the index of social progress. To know the background and

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<sup>1</sup> One of the interviewees directly said "I don't want to be audio recorded" and another thought it was not a good idea to be recorded.

knowledge of the interviewees was the first step of conducting this research interviewing. A number of questions were compiled and asked through the interview. The first part of the interview was also the introductory phase. In this stage, attention of the interviewees was brought into the procedure; and the introductory phase helped interviewees get to the interview contents and let the interviewees know what the topic was. Also, the purpose of the interview was explained to the interviewees.

### **A Policy Priority**

Social policies are always closely related to people's living. Social policies are important for improving the quality of life. How can social policies be best used and implemented into people's daily life were focused. Social inclusion is compounded by a number of factors, such as: economics and health. The main focus of the interview was on the role of social policy implications of the term 'social inclusion'. Social inclusion has its difficulties when put into practice. The difficulties of implementing social inclusion were discussed. Furthermore, it was inevitable to discuss about the role of central and local governments when mentioning social policies. Central and local governments had their roles to play for moving social inclusion into practice. Which responsible body should be responsible for the leadership or supervision or even decision-making was also important due to the inseparability of both central and local governments. The main issue in this section was to make a clear identification on interviewees' knowledge for social inclusion and what the policy priority the interviewees consider more important.

### **Educational Implication**

This thesis is focused on the linkage of social inclusion and special educational needs in primary education system in Taiwan with reference to the United Kingdom, particularly Scotland. The relationship between social inclusion and primary education provision are closed linked because inclusion, both social and educational inclusion are the trends in

recent years. For this reason, it is important to gather information on educational implication from the interviewees. The main focus in this section was on how education can achieve or promote more equal opportunities to all range of pupils and on the role of education in promoting greater inclusion. Also, it was important to find out whether special educational provision was enough or not in the school programmes, because this information reflected the current situation of special educational provision in Taiwan.

### **Obstacles to Reform**

All kinds of reforms have difficulties. From the interviewees' background, the researcher wanted to find out the difficulties and clarify them. With the present environment, what the stakeholders could do and will do for the reform or changes in the future was the focus. Obstacles provided the direction for the future reform and modification. From different interviewees, more ideas on obstacles could be obtained and, hopefully, the solutions could emerge.

### **Impact of Policy on the Work of the Interviewee**

In this section, the key focus was on interviewees' profession of the term 'social inclusion' and to what extent their professional responsibility was. To promote greater inclusion, supports from other people or organisations are crucial. This research study tried to focus on what kind of support the interviewees obtained and where they could ask for assistance if they needed. Another focus was also on the target groups which the responsible bodies should promote greater inclusion. The final part of this section addresses the criteria that could be used to evaluate the inclusion provision.

### **The Way Ahead**

This section focused on the importance of inclusive education and the implementation of inclusion in education as a means of improving the society. Pupils with different

disabilities have different needs. With the interviewees' expertise, the allocation of pupils and services could be clarified. Also, in this section, the barriers of promoting greater inclusion could be identified. The main point of this section was to provide some solutions and suggestions for those who wish to promote greater inclusion within primary schooling. Detailed interviews of this research study are provided and discussed in Chapter 7, and a copy of the interview schedule is provided in Appendix B.

### **6.2.2 Observations**

Pring (2004) indicated that *it may seem common sense that, if one wants to know something, one goes out and has a look* (p.33). The observational method in the research is attractive because it affords the researcher opportunities to gather live information and data from live situation through non-intervene participation. As Patton (2002) pointed out *the observer's notes become the eyes, ears and perceptual senses for the reader* (p.23). So, *the descriptions must be factual, accurate, and thorough without being cluttered by irrelevant minutiae and trivia* (Ibid). Observations in this study were live activities which involved the researcher and the participants, and enabled the researcher to enter, take part in and comprehend the interactions/relationships in the inclusive setting. Through the observation, the researcher was included in the inclusive setting without intervention in teaching-learning process, so that in one hand it became a powerful tool for reaching and gaining insight into inclusive situations and on the other hand, it did not interfere with teachers' teaching and pupils' learning. With regard to Blumer's (1962) point of view, this research observational method intended to obtain the meanings of pupils and teachers' actions in an inclusive classroom.

The advantages of observations, in accordance with Cohen *et al.*(2003), are:

*This (observational data) enables researchers to understand the context of programmes, to be open-ended and inductive, to see things that might otherwise be unconsciously missed, to discover things that participants might not freely talk about in interview situations, to move beyond perception-based data, and to access personal knowledge. Furthermore,...observed incidents are less predictable, there is a certain freshness to this form of data collection that is often denied in other forms.*

(Cohen *et al.* 2003: 305)

Observation is often used in the educational research because it provides vivid descriptions and thorough contexts to the researcher. Observation is strong in reality because the researcher puts his/her focuses on an individual participant or groups of participants; and observational data are also used to prevent bias. Through pen portraits/notes, detailed descriptions of the participant/participants can be drawn out.

Observation has its advantages towards social researches; however, Pring (2004) argued that observations are filtered through understandings, preferences and beliefs of the observer; and what is observed is not open to immediate acquaintance—the meanings and motives of the observed need to be taken into account (p.35). Therefore, the method of focus group was applied in this research study to portray the likeness in the reality and to provide detailed descriptions to the researcher. The observation, on the other hand, is to chart the *incidence, presence and frequency* (Cohen *et al.* 2003: 306) in the relevant events related to the research topic. Choosing a proper case for the observation, a full research description is generated.

Through observations, the researcher is given opportunity to investigate what is happening in the real situation. The main objective of observation in this research focused on the

interactions on both non-disabled and disabled pupils in an inclusive setting, investigated the difference between urban and rural areas, namely Tainan City and County, and observed teachers' responses in a class with SEN pupils. The observation was a non-interventional method in gathering qualitative data. Manipulation was eliminated through the process of the observation. The observation is the study of a reality, using Cohen *et al.*'s (2003, from Adelman *et al.*, 1980) words, 'the study of an instance in action'. One of the advantages of the observation lies on the researcher observes effects in real contexts. Besides, *observations work the researcher toward greater understanding of the case* (Stake 1995: 60).

With the provision of collaboration and coordination, corroboration and triangulation from additional methods in this research study, reliable data make sure that reliable inferences are derived. Detailed chosen cases and observational data are provided in Chapter 8 and Appendix D.

### **6.2.3 Focus Groups**

Some writers (for example: Meltzer *et al.*, 1975) believed that the individual and society are inseparable. Meaning, language and thought are core principles in the formation of meanings for individuals and society (Nelson, 1998). The focus group is an organisation consists individuals who interact with group members rather than the researcher; and this kind of group interviewing is a useful method of conducting interviews because under less tension than face-to-face interview, the group may provide more information (Krueger and Casey, 2000). The focus group is a qualitative research method and generates a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs. Participants' voice can be heard through the group discussions and the researcher can obtain the information and needs of the participants. As Frey and Fontana (1993) pointed out that the focus group is led by a moderator (the researcher) who keeps the respondents' foci on certain topic (pp.29-30).

The focus group, as Cohen *et al.* (2003) pointed out, *is from the interaction of the group that the data emerge* (p.288). Individual participants, as primary school pupils in this research study, may not cope with the one-to-one interview and the focus group is the alternative option because through group discussions, individual participants may likely to ‘talk’ more than one-to-one interview, because participants interact with each other rather than with the interviewer and the views of the participants can emerge (Ibid).

In this research study, six focus groups were conducted for gathering pupils’ voices towards inclusive education, as *what the participants in the group say during their discussions are the essential data* (Morgan 1998: 1). Different locations (Tainan City and Tainan County) and different primary schools were chosen. Five to six pupils in a group (14 non-disabled and 21 disabled pupils in total) were invited to form the focus groups. The researcher did not categorised pupils who have the same disabilities. In general, the role of the researcher in the focus group could be regarded as:

- The facilitator: to help the focus groups understand their common objectives and plan to achieve them without personally taking any side of the discussion.
- The moderator: to convene, head and moderate the discussions in the group interviews and try to avoid involved and influence the group interactions.
- The listener: to listen to the conversation throughout group interviews.
- The learner: to learn from the conversation throughout group interviews.
- The observer: to observe the interactions and responses throughout group interviews.

The aim of focus groups in this research was to address questions of inclusion, that is, non-disabled and disabled pupils’ views on peer relationships, pupils’ opinions towards inclusive education, pupils’ feeling about special/normal pupils and feedback of being located in an inclusive setting. In order not to break the consistency of the data, the

researcher tried to only listen to the conversation instead of making any unnecessary speaking which might result in biased influence, as Morgan (1997) argued:

*Due to researcher's interests, the researcher creates and directs the groups makes them distinctly less naturalistic than participant observation so there is always some residual uncertainty about accuracy of what the participants say.*

(Morgan 1997: 14)

Due to the agreement between school principals and special education teachers, no behavioural disorders pupil was allowed to participate in these research focus groups and details and discussions of the focus group are provided in Chapter 8.

#### **6.2.4 Questionnaire**

The aim of conducting questionnaires was to engage as large a sample of parents as possible in this study. In social research, the questionnaire is a commonly used instrument. Wilson and McLean (1994) pointed out that the questionnaire is widely used for collecting survey information, providing structured, often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher, and often being comparatively straightforward to analyse. The questionnaire, from positivists' view, uses a strict scientific method to obtain authentic knowledge; and from post-positivists' view, provides a position that one fervently believes to be true—even to be obviously true—may in fact be false (Philipps and Burbules 2000: 1). The characteristic of the questionnaire, as Gillham (2000) pointed out, is that the questionnaire provides a 'quick fix' for research methodology. But he also indicated that the questionnaire is rarely adequate as a research method on its own. The questionnaire has its limitation, as Pring (2004) argued that two persons might both answer 'yes' towards one question but mean different things due to personal perspectives or predictions which cannot be quantified; and too many questions do raise issues on which

there is disagreement over interpretation as well as over the facts (pp.38-39); so the need of other necessary methods as complementary methods is also inevitable.

The purpose of this research survey was to explore parents' opinions and responses on the issues of inclusive education, mainly in primary schooling in Tainan Region. The questionnaire addressed the following issues:

- Background knowledge;
- Expectations and opinions about pupils;
- Parents' expectations and;
- Future expectations and conclusions.

The sample of parents was chosen from two selected areas in Taiwan, namely, Tainan City and Tainan County and the basis background for these areas were outlined in Chapter 1 and Chapter 6 Section 3. The design of the questionnaire focused on, as Cohen *et al.* (2003) pointed out: clarity of purpose, that is, clear on what needs to be included or covered in order to meet the purpose(s); exhaustive in its coverage of the elements of inclusion, asking the most appropriate kinds of data to answer the research purpose(s) and asking for empirical data (p.247). The questionnaire provided detailed information including the purpose of the research questionnaire, the researcher's contact telephone number and assured parents of confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaire contained four main parts and had 16 questions. Some of the questions had more than one option to be ticked, and clear indications were given if the question had multiple choices.

The pilot study, distribution and analysis of the questionnaire are discussed in Chapter 9 and Appendix G.

### 6.3 The Sample

The quality of an educational research should be based not only on the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also on suitability of sampling strategy (Morrison, 1994 and Cohen *et al.*, 2003). In the preliminary stage of this research study, the researcher made sampling decision in the overall planning. Due to the limitation of gaining information from the whole population, a smaller group was chosen for representative of the whole population, that is, Tainan Area.

Tainan Area is in the south-west area of Taiwan; in the Government Administrative system, the area is divided into Tainan City and Tainan County. Tainan area is located on the Cha-Nan Plain and the geologic strata are mainly flat. Tainan was the capital of Taiwan in Chin Dynasty due to its perfect location and mild climax. After the Second World War, Taipei was selected as the capital, but Tainan still retains its reputation of cultural background. There are eight areas in Tainan City and the population is 756,859<sup>1</sup>. There are 46 primary schools in Tainan City and 1,889 classes with the pupil number of 60,647<sup>2</sup>. Tainan County has a more complex geographical background and Administrative systems. There are two cities, seven towns, twenty-two counties, five hundred and twenty one villages. The population of Tainan County is 1,105,793<sup>3</sup>. There are 181 primary schools in Tainan County with 81624 pupils<sup>4</sup>.

Tainan is an ancient city and it is also famous for its ancient remains, for example, the AnPin Fort (can be traced back to Portuguese occupation) and MaZhou Temple (traditional Chinese Taoism). The first Confucius Temple and the first primary school were also found

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.tncg.gov.tw/01ac/acstat/94y/9509people.pdf>, Tainan City Government, access date: 3<sup>rd</sup>/Oct/2006

<sup>2</sup>[http://www.edu.tw/EDU\\_WEB/EDU\\_MGT/STATISTICS/EDU7220001/data/serial/student.xls?open](http://www.edu.tw/EDU_WEB/EDU_MGT/STATISTICS/EDU7220001/data/serial/student.xls?open), number of students by location of schools, session year 2005-06, Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics, access date: 13<sup>th</sup>/Oct/2006

<sup>3</sup><http://www.tainan.gov.tw/cht/index/people.aspx>, Tainan County Government, access date: 3<sup>rd</sup>/Oct/2006

<sup>4</sup>[http://www.edu.tw/EDU\\_WEB/EDU\\_MGT/STATISTICS/EDU7220001/data/serial/student.xls?open](http://www.edu.tw/EDU_WEB/EDU_MGT/STATISTICS/EDU7220001/data/serial/student.xls?open), number of students by location of school, session year 2005-06, Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics, access date: 13<sup>th</sup>/Oct/2006

in Tainan. Tainan City was a traditional industry city, but with more and more factories being moved to Mainland China, it has gradually become a tourist city as contains many ancient sites and attractions. Tainan County, on the contrary, is a fertile area of land with varieties of agriculture (such as rice and mangos) and fishery (from the Taiwan Strait fish farms to inland reservoirs).

### **6.3.1 The Interviewees**

This research was based on the interviews with several stakeholders who had relationships with primary educational provision and/or inclusion/exclusion issues in Taiwan. In this research, interviews with the stakeholders exploring knowledge and experience of social inclusion policies and inclusive education were the main methods of gathering information. The stakeholders were: two professors, two principal from an elementary and a junior high school, the Chief of Special and Pre-school Section from Education Bureau, Tainan City, three special education teachers and four legislators. A set of open and closed interview questions (question 1 to question 32—see Appendix B) was used and the interviewees were asked to respond to the relevant questions in an open manner.

#### **Interview samples**

The stakeholder groups were defined as: professors, politicians (the legislators), principals, teachers (special education teachers), and public servants (from the Education Bureau, Special and Pre-School Section, Tainan City, Taiwan).

For the purpose of this study the selected interviewees were:

1. A professor of Social Work.
2. A professor of Special Education.
3. A principal of an elementary school, Kaohsiung County.
4. A principal of a junior high school, Tainan City.

5. The Chief of Special and Pre-School Section, Education Bureau, Tainan City Council.  
The Chief used to be a kindergarten (in a primary school) teacher and a principal.
6. A special education teacher and associated coordinator of Special and Pre-School Section, Education Bureau, Tainan City Council.
7. A special education teacher/administrator of an elementary school, Tainan County.
8. A special education teacher of an elementary school, Tainan City.
9. Four legislators: three were elected from Tainan city and one from Tainan County.  
According to the Taiwanese Constitution, there are five major Departments (Yuans) in Central Government. These are: the Executive Yuan, the Legislative Yuan, the Judicial Yuan, the Examination Yuan and the Control Yuan. The legislators are national public servants and elected by local (in which the legislator's domicile is) people.

The professor from the social work used to be the surrogate vice-mayor of Taipei County. He has considerable knowledge and information about social policies, social welfare and educational provision. In 2005, he was a Minister on secondment to Taiwan national government, the Executive Yuan

Another professor is an expert in special education of pre-school, elementary school and junior high school. She is also the pioneer of inclusive education in Taiwan. In 1989, the first inclusive education centre was founded by her, and she has published widely in this field. From the inclusion centre, the experiential classes are observed and assessed. This professor is famous in the north of Taiwan, and a researcher's friend introduced her.

The two principals selected are well known to the researcher's family. They have been in the position for more than ten years. Both principals had served in elementary and junior high schools before and now one is the principal of the urban junior high school and

another is the principal of a rural elementary school. In these selected elementary and junior high schools, programmes of inclusion have been implementing for at least two years. Due to the focus of inclusion in rural and urban areas might different, these two principals were chosen.

The Chief and the coordinator from the Tainan City Council were public servants. The Chief is an expert in primary education, but new in the position as the Chief of the Section. The Chief takes the responsibilities for decision making, but due to little knowledge about inclusive education, the notion of inclusion had been introduced before formal interviewing. The coordinator is a special education teacher and is responsible for the special education provision and decision making; the responsibilities of the coordinator mainly focus on coordination among kindergartens and elementary schools. From the home page of Tainan City Council, the phone number was obtained, and with their permissions, the interviews took place in their office in Tainan City Council.

With the help from one of the principals, one special education teacher was introduced. Another special education teacher is also the administrator of special provision in a school. Both special education teachers work in a large city/county elementary school. The one, whom was introduced by the principal, is a subject teacher and has several disabled pupils distributed from the first to sixth grade. The special education teacher and administrator also has disabled pupils spread to each grade and the main responsibilities for him are to coordinate the programmes within the school and to communicate with other agencies, such as local government and other schools.

In Taiwan, legislators are elected by people who live in the same domicile, but legislators are public servants at national level. Basically, there are two major parties in Taiwan, Kuomintang (KMT) and Democratic Progress Party (DPP); and the majority of legislators

belong to these two parties. Legislators in Taiwan are the representatives of people and for doing so, legislators often organise a place and time for listening to the voice from their domicile people. Finding contact information from the Internet and making appointments, four legislators agreed to be interviewed, two from KMT (one male and one female) and two (one male and one female) from DPP. The reason for choosing these targeting legislators based on first, equal in gender; secondly, their professional expertise; and thirdly, easy to access. The male legislator of KMT is a lawyer and used to be a member of Chinese Human Right Committee. The female legislator of KMT is the President of the Youth Life and Care Association and the consultant of Women Committee of Tainan City and this is the third time she had been elected as a legislator. The male legislator from DPP is the spokesman of DPP and a doctor and this is his third time of being a legislator. The female legislator from DPP is the Chief Manager of DPP's Women Affair Department and this is also the third time of being elected as a legislator.

### **6.3.2 The Observations**

Based on the case study approach, four disabled pupils<sup>1</sup> were chosen randomly from two primary schools. The primary schools (excluded by which had been chosen for the questionnaire) involved were chosen one each from the City and County. In each school, two disabled pupils, one from Grade 3 and one from Grade 6, were chosen on the suggestion by the Chief of the Counselling. With the consent of the principals and their parents, the process of the observations was conducted in the inclusive classroom. The process of the observation was non-interventional and the researcher just sat in the back of the classroom and observed the cases, their peers and the classroom/subject teachers.

Before/After formal observations, the researcher had a brief chat with the classroom teachers, the special education teachers; and sometimes with the subject teachers, in order

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<sup>1</sup> This study focused on pupils with physical and mental difficulties so it excluded talented or gifted pupils such as pupils with musical or art talents.

to gather useful information about the targeted pupils. The research observations were non-intervention and could be deemed as *structured observations and even sampling* (Cohen *et al.*, 2003) due to the systematic numerical data and tally marks made during observations.

The observation took around eighty minutes per day, one class (40 minutes) in the morning and another in the afternoon (excluded Wednesday<sup>1</sup>) and lasted for a week<sup>2</sup>. Event sampling, namely, a tally mark was entered against each statement each time it was observed. A fully observational data was provided in Appendix D.

### **6.3.3 The Focus Groups**

Six focus groups were formed from primary schools pupils with 5 to 6 participants in each group. Two primary schools (the same as the ones used for the observation<sup>3</sup>) were chosen with the exclusion of the classes conducted for the observations. As the observations, the focus groups were divided into two categories, three focus groups from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and the other three focus groups from the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade. Consent was granted from the principals, classroom teachers and special education teachers.

Six focus groups were carried out by the researcher, four groups in April and May 2006 and two focus groups in January 2007. Three to four disabled pupils with the rest non-disabled pupils was the formation of one focus group<sup>4</sup>. In all, 35 pupils were involved. Before conducting the focus group interviewing, pupils were taught that a small group would gather after their formal class time, roughly between 3 to 4 pm in another classroom.

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<sup>1</sup> No class on Wednesday afternoons.

<sup>2</sup> In primary schooling in Taiwan, an academic week starts from Monday and ends on Friday.

<sup>3</sup> Consents were granted from the principals, special education teachers and subject teachers.

<sup>4</sup> This study focused on pupils with physical and mental difficulties so talented or gifted pupils such as pupils with musical or art talents were excluded; and due to the agreements with principals and special education teachers, pupils with ADHD or behavioural disorders/problems were excluded, because they were afraid that pupils with these difficulties would jeopardize the focus groups.

The chosen pupils for the focus groups were encouraged to speak during the focus group time by their special education teachers. The researcher prepared some snack and drinks and built a comfortable and relax atmosphere. During the process of the focus group, the researcher also encouraged the participants to talk as freely as they could.

**Table 6.3: Focus group participants**

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
Grade 3	SEN-3 Other-3	SEN-4 Other-2	SEN-4 Other-2			
Grade 6				SEN-4 Other-2	SEN-3 Other-3	SEN-3 Other-2
Total	35 pupils—14 non-disabled pupils and 21 disable pupils					

### 6.3.4 The Parental Questionnaires

There are 46 primary schools in Tainan City and 181 in the County. In the remote areas of the County, few primary schools provide inclusive setting because the number of students is too small, and pupils with learning difficulties are located in the nearby big towns. In Tainan City, primary schools are required to provide an inclusive setting in accordance with the wishes of pupils' parents. From the population of primary schools, random numbers were used to select, twelve primary schools (roughly one tenth, excluded those without providing inclusive setting): five from the City and seven from the County.

The sample size, in other words, how large the sample for the research should be is a critical issue, as Cohen *et al.* (2003) argued that *...too large a sample might become unwieldy and too small a sample might be unrepresentative* (p.93). The results arising from the sample might not be typical of the whole situation of inclusion implementation in primary schools in Taiwan. Another important issue is the schools which were chosen.

Rural areas, for example: AnPin Area (industrial and sea shore area) in Tainan City and LiuChia County (mountainous area) in Tainan County, have few primary schools provide inclusive settings. Students with special educational needs in rural areas are located, with the help of the Local Governments and charity institutions, in nearby city centres or town centres. Therefore, the sampling might also not represent the situation of the targeted areas. Due to the uncertainty of how many questionnaires would be returned; 2155 questionnaires were distributed<sup>1</sup>. Unlike the Scottish primary education system, there are six grades in the Taiwanese primary school system. Grade 3 (P4 in Scottish primary school) and grade 6 (P7) were selected because grade 3 is in the middle of primary schooling and grade 6 is the end. To explore general ideas and to find out feedback from parents whose children are located with pupils with SEN or whose children are SEN pupils, classes without pupils with special educational needs were excluded.

Telephone calls and e-mail were used to make contact with the Chiefs of the Consultant or Chiefs of the Personnel prior to the first meeting with them. With the consent from the Chiefs of the Consultant or Personnel, the researcher was invited to have a brief interview with the Principals in each primary school if the Chiefs wanted so. After reading the questionnaire, the Principals and the Chiefs decided whether permission could be given. Only one school refused to participate due to the anniversary activities in the school. In replace of refused school, another school was chosen randomly. With the consent from principles and chiefs, permissions from the teachers of each class were also obtained before the questionnaire distributed to the pupils to take home to their parents. Brief introductions were also provided to the classroom teachers before distribution and if anything was ambiguous or unclear, opinions and feedback were also obtained from the classroom teachers. After checking the questionnaire with principals, the chiefs of Consultant/Personnel and the classroom teachers, the questionnaires, in Chinese version,

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<sup>1</sup> Roughly 1 to 1.5% of population.

were distributed to 12 selected primary schools between March and May, 2006. The participants spent 15 to 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The duration for returning the questionnaire was one week. Seven days after distribution, the questionnaires were gathered by the classroom teachers and then handed in to the Consultants' offices, and the researcher was phoned to collect the questionnaires from each primary school.

#### **6.4 Data Collection**

The data collected for this research study was mainly based on two categories. One was from publications, journals and books from both Taiwanese and the UK, particularly Scottish Governments or related authors' writings; and another was the data collected from stakeholders' point of view or responses towards inclusion. Publications, journals and books provide first hand information towards exclusion/inclusion policies and inclusive education; and the review of the literature provided the researcher a great deal of information on the topic by which the researcher was studying. Primary data provided a vivid description on issues related to the researcher's interests and research questions.

Publications (including on-line publications and journals) and books were regarded as documents which provided information and built the foundation of this research study. The issues of human's rights (including pupils'), can be found from the United Nations, British/Scottish and Taiwanese Governments; and exclusion/inclusion are 'hot' issues in both Western and Eastern countries. The documents used in this research study were mainly words whilst primary data were more similar to pictures. With the combination of primary data with secondary source, this research study drew a general portrait of inclusion/exclusion issues in Taiwan, particularly in Tainan Area, and aimed to provide useful suggestions for future implementation.

## **6.5 Ethics and the Researcher's Responsibility**

Social researchers not only have the responsibilities to their researches for the truth of information and knowledge obtained but also for the participants who take part in the researches, as Cohen *et al.* (2003) indicated that *social researchers must take into account the effects of the research on participants, and act in such a way as to preserve their dignity as human beings* (p.56). The ethical concerns in this research study lied on the following areas:

- Consent
- Confidentiality/secretcy/anonymity
- Ownership/feedback
- Social responsibility

### **The interview**

Initially, the interviewees were phoned and mailed via the Internet and asked for their permission to be interviewed and audio recorded (two interviewees were unwilling to be recorded). The interviews were held in the interviewees' offices in Taiwan. The interviewees were informed that the communications between them and the researcher were only be used in the research study, that is, this thesis and future publications from this research. The researcher guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality in any written documents. The interviewees were also told that they could stop and withdraw at any time.

### **The observation and focus group**

Consents were obtained from schools' principals, Chief of Consultant/Personnel Office, special education teachers (a special education teacher in each focus group) and classroom/subject teachers. Pupils were told by their classroom teachers and special education teachers about being interviewed or observed. Pupils' parents were informed<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In focus groups, some pupils' parents did not allow audio recorder.

about the group interviews and observations; and pupils' privacy and confidentiality were also guaranteed. In each focus group or observation<sup>1</sup>, at least one teacher, either classroom teacher, special education teacher or probationer teacher, was present.

### **The questionnaire**

Consents were obtained from the principals, Chief of Consultant/Personnel and classroom teachers. Pupils were asked not to write their names or any personal detail on the questionnaire sheet and were informed that the questionnaire was for their parents only. Confidentiality was given to the parents in the hope that they would answer as many questions as they could. A note (explanation) about the aim of the questionnaire, the researcher's contact information and confidentiality/privacy was attached in front of each questionnaire.

### **Ownership, feedback and social responsibility**

The researcher retained the data, and once the thesis or other relevant publications are published; others would be given the opportunity to access the results. Feedback will be provided, either in electronic forms or publications. The aim of this research study is the pursuit of truth in inclusive context and the researcher also took the social responsibility which is addressed as *researchers have a responsibility to acknowledge both their own value positions and whatever truth emerges from the research process* (Lewis 2003: 198).

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<sup>1</sup> The subject teacher in each class was also informed prior to the observations.

## **PART THREE      FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

### **CHAPTER SEVEN: FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS**

#### **7.1 Awareness and Interpretation**

##### ***Have you heard of the term ‘social inclusion’? If yes, where did you first hear of it?***

In the first section, the main focus was on interviewees’ knowledge of social inclusion and inclusive education.

When encountering the term “social inclusion” for the first time, all interviewees agreed that inclusion had the idealism of justice and equality. As a legislator pointed out: *inclusion is what Government should do for all people*. In schools, a principal also had the same point of view, he said: *It seems that some children from native families sometimes discriminate others whose mothers are from China or Vietnam*. Basically, the principal believed that children did not suffer any discrimination when they were born, because he believed Mencius’ “Zen Shin Ben San” which can be translated “Human nature is fundamentally good”. *Those children were affected by their parents/grandparents, and the concepts generated from families are difficult to change*, the principal sadly pointed out.

In the interview, the social work professor obtained his knowledge of social inclusion from publications, both from France (in the 1970’s) and the United States (in the 1980’s). Another professor was very insistent that she already had the ‘concept’ though not the ‘term’ of social inclusion. The concept is similar to the Confucius’ idea of “Yu Gio Wu Le” (see Chapter 2.1). One legislator heard the term when studying in the United States. The resources associated with the term ‘social inclusion’ and ‘inclusive education’ for principals and school teachers were obtained mainly on their professional training in schools; two principals accessed the information from their CPD (Continuing Professional

Development) and two special educational teachers obtained the knowledge when they studied in Teachers' Universities; and one special educational teacher obtained the information in a meeting for children with special needs in 1999. Legislators responded that they had learned the ideas mainly from Taiwan Government's memorandums and publications on social policies and special education provision. The only one interviewee, who had little knowledge of the term 'social inclusion', interestingly, was the Chief of the Special and Pre-school Section, Education Bureau, Tainan City. This interviewee is an expert in pre-school education and was only assigned as the Chief of the Section in February, 2005 (the interview took place in April, 2005) and that was why this interviewee had little knowledge on inclusion.

Interviewees who worked in elementary and junior high schools had often heard the term 'inclusion'. But one of the principals also had an interesting answer. This principal works in a small county elementary school and said: *I only heard about the term 'social inclusion' on television propaganda when it comes to the national election days.* But the principal firmly pointed out that *when we introduced 'inclusive' option and carried it to classrooms, 'inclusion' was accepted by most school teachers.* He remembered that once in a school semester meeting, a class teacher provided her reflection to every attendant: *The notion of inclusion is basically based on the concept of equal opportunity and it is the way to a better society.*

Most interviewees obtained their first knowledge on social inclusion from the published material and used this source for the latest information towards inclusion. The Taiwanese Government, according to a legislator, has been paying a great deal of attention to the issue of social inclusion and trying to put more effort on those who are excluded from either society or schools by the implementation of special inclusion policies within schools.

***When You First Heard of the Term ‘Social Inclusion’. What Ideas or Thoughts First Came to Your Mind?***

When the interviewees first heard of the term ‘social inclusion’, the meaning attributed to the term was based on justice and egalitarianism. From all interviewees, only one principal thought that the term ‘social inclusion’ was an ideological propaganda term which was mentioned during the national election periods because for doing so, the candidates could possibly have more votes. The rest of the interviewees took the view that social inclusion is not only a slogan but also necessary for a just society. Interestingly, special education teachers thought that social inclusion was just a motto derived from the upper class, but on the contrary and in fact, social inclusion had its deeper meanings on social, cultural, psychological and value levels. A special educational teacher pointed out that *what we say about inclusion is like the compensation from those who dominate the society.*

***Many People Have Different Interpretations of the Term ‘Social Inclusion’. How Would You Describe in Your Own Words What You Think the Term Means?***

Each interviewee had his/her own interpretations about social inclusion. The main idea of social inclusion, from the interviews, is a method that provides the same or equal opportunities for all. Interaction and relationships among people are vital. A special education teacher thought that *if a person loses his/her capabilities to interact with others, he/she is excluded spontaneously.* With help from outside agencies and other people, people with difficulties can be included without difference.

Due to the different backgrounds of interviewees, the primary concern and targeted groups for which inclusion should be implemented differ. For the professor of social work, the main targeted groups were disadvantaged groups. For the professor of special education and special education teachers, children with special educational needs were the priority. Two principals needed to pay attention to and took responsibilities for schools, teachers,

staff, parents, pupils and affairs outside schools. The burden and responsibilities of the principals were greater than any other staff within schools. Legislators need to listen to people who elected them. A legislator pointed out that *we are elected by people. We, of course, have pressure from those people who vote us. What people said to us is our primary concern.*

A principal argued that social inclusion was ‘natural’ (for example: some children were born in poor families or poor health) and politics was the supportive force. The principal pointed out that since people lived within society, inevitably, they were included. But unfortunately, when a child was born disabled, he/she was sometimes excluded because of his/her own fear to face the reality which he/she was different from others. In some cases, as both principals pointed out, pupils were excluded because *they (disabled pupils) understand their differences and cannot accept these kinds of differences.*

However, paying too much attention to children with special educational needs became artificial inclusion, the principal argued. Artificial exclusion, taking special schools which disenfranchise people’s rights as an example, was easier to eliminate; but one principal argued, the feeling of being lower than normal people generated from disabled people was the main reason. In many cases, he continued *pupils who are excluded from schools often lack of self-esteem.* Two special education teachers also agreed with this point. Without proper help and support, this kind of situation became the vicious circle and extended to the next generation. The associated coordinator of Special and Pre-School Section, Education Bureau, Tainan City Council concluded *not only do these pupils (disabled students) need help; their parents also need to be cultivated with the proper attitudes towards their children.*

***Do You Think That Social Inclusion Is Desirable? Why?***

All the respondents agreed that social inclusion was desirable because it embraces the concept of equal opportunities. Social inclusion is positive and a principal pointed out that *social inclusion should not only be the political slogan, it has its own meaning for social equality*. A special education teacher thought that *social inclusion could elaborate its greatest function in accordance with every person's ability*. A professor argued that social inclusion was the way for promoting social harmony. A principal agreed that social inclusion was desirable, but he did not agree that to promote equal opportunities would demolish exclusion. The principal thought that everyone had different level of abilities, talents and so on and *by promoting equal opportunities does not mean to promote greater inclusion, on the contrary, it may get worse*.

To eliminate exclusion through an artificial way results in the exclusion of other people (or groups). The social work professor and two principals did not think that too much help (force) from outside could improve greater inclusion. The professor argued that *inclusion sometimes generates spontaneously, even it sometimes emerges by itself, for example: in some mountainous rural primary schools, aboriginal pupils and other can get well with each other*. Two principals also agreed with this and had the same points. From the interviews, apparently, social inclusion was desirable for its role in promoting an equal society. But how to eliminate exclusion became another issue. In Taiwan, a principal argued that *the term 'social inclusion' has become a powerful tool for politicians, and unfortunately results in breaking up the society*. Using social inclusion as political propaganda, society was divided into different groups, for example, at least the dominant and subordinate groups; and the principal is concerned with the results of the future.

***Do You Think Social Inclusion Is Applied To One Particular Group (e.g. aboriginal people or disadvantaged people) or Can It Be Applied To a Variety of Groups? If So, Why?***

In the interviews, the responses towards ‘do you think social inclusion is desirable?’ were with one accord. Social inclusion should be applied to a variety of groups. If social inclusion was applied to one particular group, definitely, it would become another form of exclusion to other groups. Social inclusion was the way for promoting greater equality. The main issues, derived from the interviews, were how to classify so called disadvantages and who is in charge of the distinction (for example: by doctors or parents). After the distinction, the responsible bodies should classify the categories and make the prior decision. At the present time in Taiwan, one professor pointed out that *the first step for Government to do is making all people understand and comprehend the notion of equality*. However, a principal worried that misunderstanding arose when implementing inclusive education within schools. Social exclusion is a phenomenon which is difficult to eliminate. The agreement with all the interviewees was that the Government should try to avoid every kind of exclusion and promote equal opportunities to increase inclusion. Social exclusion, no matter in any kind of form, should be avoided. The Government should initially set up prior target groups and then implement to all other groups in society.

More opportunities and chances should be provided to promote greater participation. The principals and the special education teachers in the interviews were all satisfied with the implementation of inclusion within schools; but so far, the targeting groups within schools were pupils with mental or physical difficulties. In the interviews with the Chief of Special and Pre-School Section and other three special education teachers, only one mentioned about the phenomenon and the importance of second generations of foreign wives.

## **Brief Summary**

In modern society, social exclusion is virtually inevitable because of bureaucracy and class. With inclusion, differences among groups can be eliminated and more understanding among different groups can be established. One professor pointed out that:

*Education and capitalism have the same characteristic which focuses on market trends. Apparently, if a child has a poor condition, such as poor health, family break down or other mental or physical retards, it is more likely that the child has the higher risk to be excluded. We need to be careful about this cause-effect consequence.*

(Social work professor)

All the interviewees agreed that initially it was hard to put social inclusion into practice; but it was possible to overcome the difficulties. After working towards social inclusion, it was not as difficult as they had expected. Social inclusion can provide fair opportunities for those who are exploited and all interviewees agreed that the notion of inclusion should be installed when children start their education. Inclusion has a crucial role to play in modern society and all interviewees agreed that the best place for improving the notion of inclusion is in the school. To sum up, as was done at a seminar in FuJen University in Taiwan, the Eleanor Roosevelt's words act as the conclusion:

*Where after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any map of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person: the neighbourhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, or child seeks equal justice, equal*

*opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere.*

(<http://src.social.fju.edu.tw/Seminar1.doc>, 2004)

## **7.2 A Policy Priority**

### ***What Do You See as the Social Policy Implications of the Term Social Inclusion?***

The second part of the interview schedule focused on the policy priority with responses to social inclusion. Due to different working background, the interviewees had different responses. Special education teachers and school principals put their focus on disadvantaged students whilst legislators focused on specific minority groups, such as disadvantaged, aboriginal people and foreign wives.

All the interviewees agreed that the term ‘social inclusion’ implied the notion of equality. But it is also important to mention, as a professor pointed out that *when increasing disadvantaged groups’ rights, we might ignore others’ right*. From the interviews, it was agreed that policies towards social inclusion should be broad enough to include all the disadvantaged groups. However, when mentioning the targeted groups, the interviewees had different opinions from each other. The two professors thought that it should be better to set up the targeted population (for example: aboriginal people or children from foreign wives) and then appropriate services could be provided. For example, the social work professor pointed out that that *first, to make sure which group is in the urgent situation and immediate supports could be provided; and second, with equal distributions of the service to other disadvantaged groups, equality is gradually achieved*. Special education professor pointed out that it was better to provide help to all the minority groups at the same time, but unfortunately, *it is difficult to do so because the social welfare is not complete and consummate at the moment, but we still try to relocate the resources and help*. In school level, as the special education professor, special education teachers had similar

answers/feelings on social policies implemented within schools. The interviewees thought that policies of social inclusion could definitely help to create a fair society, but *social inclusion is not the propaganda*, as a principal argued; *social inclusion is an automatic and spontaneous process because people were merciful*. The interviewers' focuses were on social justice, civil rights and exclusion from discrimination. Social inclusion implied mainly on equality, not only in the education system but also in a broad scene. A legislator pointed out:

*Social inclusion does not simply imply the notion of equality; it also implies the degree (level) of a society's civilization. Inevitably, exclusion exists in society and it is difficult to demolish it.*

(Legislator)

***We Suppose Social Policy Is Always Important for Improving the Quality of Life. What Would You See as the First Step that the Policy Could Take to Promote More Inclusion?***

Social policy undoubtedly played an important role for improving the quality of life, as the social work professor and two legislators maintained that *social policies are crucial driven forces for changing people's minds*. But the first step that the policy could take to promote greater inclusion, due to different backgrounds of each interviewee, was totally different. Interviewees who worked within schools paid more attention to the issues related to educational fields whilst social work professor, legislators and the Chief focused on the majority population. In the interviews, special education teachers thought that education was a good way to change people, both non-disabled or disabled; and the social policy for improving inclusion should start from schools as early as possible. A principal argued that this social policy was similar to the direction which indicated people the way to access inclusion. A legislator and a special education teacher had similar opinions because *Taiwan does not have a long period of democracy. If we want to promote greater inclusion*

*or other policies, the propaganda of social policy is a very good way.* It was also important that, as a professor pointed out that *do not make the social policies into lip service*, because if the social policy was only a slogan then it became a trap. From this professor, the first step that the policy should do is to inform the notion of inclusion to the public, and then concrete activities should be implemented. However, a principal believed that social policy was nothing but advertisement due to Taiwan's *unhealthy political environment*<sup>1</sup>.

### ***What Obstacles Do You Envisage in Implementing Social Inclusion Policies?***

The question for the interviewees focused on obstacles when implementing social inclusion policies. Through the interviews, the obstacles for implementing social inclusion policies were mainly on people's mind-sets. Two professors, two legislators and a special education teacher had the same opinions and indicated that the main difficulty for improving greater inclusion was on how to change normal people's minds and their attitude to disadvantaged groups. Interestingly, the special education professor indicated that *this kind of situation (people's mind) is changing* while the social work professor argued that *the lower classes, conceptual gaps still exist*. The Chief thought that the main difficulty for implementing social inclusion policies was on issues of budgets; and a special education teacher also thought that money was the major factor for promoting greater inclusion within schools; for example, she pointed out that *all facilities need money*. Some interviewees worried about money and normal people's thoughts whilst a principal thought that inclusion was too idealistic to implement. He argued that *it is natural born inequality, why do not we (for both non-disabled and disabled) just keep our common and moral attitudes*. He specifically made the point: *Exclusion is a product of hierarchy and we need to recognise and accept that every single person is different and everyone needs to respect others*.

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<sup>1</sup> The principal thought that people in Taiwan, including the majority of the mass and politicians, lack of accomplishments in politics.

From different backgrounds of the interviewees, their primary concerns differed. It could be concluded, from the interviews, that three major factors were clearly specified: budgets, people's mind-set and people's attitudes. *Misunderstanding creates exclusion and inclusion is the antidote, we should cherish the value of inclusion*, a legislator made this conclusion.

***What Do You See as the Role for Central and Local Government in Promoting Social Inclusion?***

The final two questions in this section focused on the roles of central and local government (authorities). The role for the central government, from the interviewees, could be concluded as the most important and crucial. The reason was *the central government is the centre for all important decision-making* (a legislator). The role for central government, as a principal argued, was also *like the model* because it was the highest executive unit in the whole country.

For social policies, central government was deemed as the main responsible body for both making policies and implementing them. On the other hand, central government was a model because the lower organisations followed the way which the central government used to do. For promoting social inclusion, the Chief of Special and Pre-school Section pointed out that *the central government should focus on the general objectives*. The main function of the central government, from the Chief, was decision-making; and she insisted that the mechanism should be based on cooperation, coordination and negotiation. The policies, which have the characteristics of one and all and are in the national levels, belong to the central government. On the contrary, local government takes responsibilities for relatively minor policies.

Basically, the interviewees agreed that the characteristics of the central and local governments were supportive to one another. The policies that central government made should be supported and implemented by the local government. On the contrary, the local government should report people's responses and the results of the implementation to the higher authorities. In policy formation, the roles for both central and local governments are important. The government takes the responsibility for educating people to respect others, no matter what kinds of background. The role of central government, from the interviews, was the same as the supervisor and inspector; and the local government carried out and implemented the policies which were instructed by the central government. Complementarities and cooperation between central and local government were crucial.

### **Brief Summary**

Social inclusion implies justice, rights, equality and of course, egalitarianism. The term 'exclusion' applies to 'disadvantaged' or 'minority' groups. Social policies for inclusion, in accordance with social work professor, should be broad enough to include all the groups; and he argued that *not only the minority groups need help, but also do others whom we deem as normal*. Social policy is not merely the policy within a country; it is the index that shows how advanced is a nation's quality and humanity. When making social policies, as a legislator indicated that *people's voice should be listened to, from the ruling classes to the lower classes*; or as a special education teacher pointed out that *we want our voice heard and put into consideration*. When implementing social inclusion policies, the engagement to obstacles and difficulties is inevitable. Due to the different backgrounds among each interviewee, the responses also differed; but mainly, the focuses were on 'how to change normal people's views' and 'financial difficulties'. The difference between normal and sub-normal was not easy to break down; but at least, for the first step, all the interviewees agreed with the notions of 'respect the differences' and 'celebrate the diversity'. Most interviewees thought that the roles of central and local governments were certainly

important. The bridge between central and local governments should be well established and respect was the key. With good communications between central and local governments, benefit could be established.

### **7.3 Educational Implications**

Education is a mean for changing people's minds and thinking. As an old Chinese proverb: *Education is a strategy and a method to change and alter human beings' thoughts and environment.* Education is a powerful weapon for the alteration of minds. In another proverb, "Shio Hsui Shan Zan", clearly indicated that *both teachers and students can benefit from education through the interaction of learning and teaching.* Education is a process that instructors and learners interact and benefit from one another.

#### ***What Are the Implications for Education in Promoting Social Inclusion?***

The implications for education in promoting social inclusion focused on, as a special education teacher pointed out: *equality, decency, morality and respect.* Education, according to a legislator and a principal, should not be market oriented because education was a mean for eliminating inequalities. The principal's opinion was that education was a basic right of human beings and should include all pupils. Using the BBC news 24 (9:30-9:35, October 15, 2005) as an example; the news indicated that in the United Kingdom, *education is for all, but good schools have few poor students...* What made the situation like this was because the middle classes manipulated the education system. The UK Government worried about this for the threat of making more exclusion. A principal works in a newly established school also had this kind of problem. He pointed out:

*It is a new school, everything is new. Many parents, especially those wealthier than others, like to send their children to new schools because all the facilities are new. Pupils from poor families are excluded due to the limitation of, for*

*example; transportation. It should not be like this, but unfortunately, it is the reality.*

(Principal)

The implications for education not only lie on being educated equally but also in other aspects; as a principal said *it is more important for us to pay attention to the differences of pupils' psychologies, cultural backgrounds and others*. A legislator also had a similar opinion as the principal; he pointed out that *inclusive education should be based on the balance of people's attitudes/respect*. From the principal and the legislator, inclusive education not only provided a place to all pupils but also provided the notion of diversity; and education is seen as a powerful tool for changing people's minds. From the interviews, the implications for education in promoting social inclusion laid on the notions of equality, justice and respect; as a legislator concluded *from schooling, pupils know what is right and wrong*.

***Do You Think that A Higher Level of Attainment Can Be Achieved Through Social Inclusion, or Does the Opposite Apply?***

The discussions about whether higher level of attainments can be achieved through inclusion varied. All four legislators did not have any comment on this issue. The Chief of Special and Pre-school Section could not judge. Most answers were from practical action and real school life, in other words, special educational teachers and principals. The professor from special education had an interesting reply to this question: *Yes, but maybe not*. The reason was to what extent or expectations do we judge or have for special pupils and their peers. The professor from social work had two diverging points of view. On the one hand, he thought that a higher attainment 'may' be achieved through inclusion, but unfortunately, he did not give any definite example; on the other hand, he also worried that too much attention was paid to special children which resulted in another form of exclusion

for both non-disabled and disabled pupils. Both principals had similar reflections. They thought *a higher level of attainment 'should' be achieved through inclusion, but the result of inclusive education does not seem to have too much difference*. Both principals argued that a higher level of attainment, especially in academic matters, could not be achieved. The reason was, as a principal pointed out, teachers' burden became heavier. Due to market-orientation, as the principal pointed out, parents' concerns needed to be taken into consideration. Both principals believed that a higher level of attainment in human relationships could be achieved, but not in academic performance. Three special education teachers also had the same conclusions.

From the interviewees who work within primary schools, it seemed that the responses were more negative. Generally, pupils with special educational needs could reach a higher level of attainment, such matters as communicative skills, interaction with others and life skills. Two principals and three special education teachers, unfortunately, did not feel *obvious* or *apparent improvement in academic performance* from pupils with special educational needs. As to the normal pupils, their responses to this question was, interestingly; from a principal and two special education teachers, *not really*.

***On the Assumption that Education Should Provide Equal Opportunities for All, Which Groups in Society Should Education Promote Greater Opportunity Than At Present?***

The interviewees agreed that inclusive education applies to provide equal opportunities for all. The issue of which group in society should education promote more opportunities was a difficult choice, as two legislators suggested that *all groups (including normal pupils) should be taken care of*. The special education professor argued that *all* (both non-disabled and disabled pupils) *should be paid attention*. The Chief of Special and Pre-school Section suggested that a primary target should be set up. The Chief thought that every pupil had the right to attend the school and educational institutions should be broad enough to include all

pupils from different backgrounds and different difficulties. A principal had totally different responses. He argued that *changes should initiate from families*. The principal found that pupils were ‘contaminated’ and influenced before they entered schools, so he straightforwardly pointed out that *the notion of inclusion should start from family education*. From teachers’ ‘family interviews’ (In Taiwan, classroom teachers in primary schools conduct interviews in each pupil’s family at least once a semester), the principal realised that the problem laid not on pupils but their families, especially those from lower educational background parents or grandparents. Furthermore, the principal thought that being installed and fostered with discriminative notion, pupils attended schools and treated others (not only disabled pupils but also their normal peers) with improper attitudes, and this was the initiative of educational exclusion. A special teacher also had a broader response about this question. He pointed out that *we should start from every dimension for promoting inclusion; from societies, families, pupils and of course, schools*. Only a principal and a special education teacher thought that for disabled pupils in society should education promote greater opportunity than at present. The special education teacher did not provide any reason; on the contrary, the principal detailed: *The policy for inclusive education in my school focuses on pupils with disabled enchildion* (a handbook similar to Scottish ‘Statement’ for special needs pupils). *But for those intermediate or severe difficulties, we transfer them to special units*.

***Do You Think that Our Schools Provide Enough Programmes for Improving Inclusion?***

***If Yes, Please Indicate. If No, Please Identify Where This Should Be Improved?***

Four teachers (including the Chief) from different schools were interviewed. Four schools provide a curriculum to pupils with special educational needs, but only with minor impairment. Only one school provided curricula and facilities for those pupils with intermediate or severe physical, but not mental, impairments. The only one institution that served pupils with intermediate or severe difficulties (both mental and physical) was the

inclusive centre (in the north of Taiwan) which was founded by the special education professor.

Due to the differences among schools, inclusive programmes are different. The Chief was not sure that if the schools provide enough programmes or not, because *different schools have different policies*. With the practical experiments, the special education professor pointed out that primary schools in Taiwan *definitely* did not have enough programmes for pupils with SEN due to the lack of resources and help from other services. In a school, the special education teacher pointed out that different curricula were designed in accordance with pupils' differences. In another school, according to one principal, the IEPs (Individual Education Plans) had been carried out. In the other school, programmes were not only designed for pupils but also for parents. Special education teachers had diverse responses; and some thought that they had enough programmes whilst some felt the programmes were insufficient. The programmes for improving inclusion were different due to different circumstances. Only one legislator answered this question. She thought that schools did not provide enough programmes for improving inclusion; and the reason was the Government's limited budgets. The legislator also thought that programmes should be designed for teachers, for example: CPD (Continuing Professional Development).

***The Main Purpose of Education Is to Develop Pupils As Whole People. Does Inclusion Play A Role in This? If Yes, Please Specify.***

Question five concerned whether inclusion could play a role in education which was to develop pupils as whole people. Interestingly, all four legislators chose not to answer this question because they did not think they had enough information. As a legislator replied *it is difficult to answer due to my little knowledge in practical work within schools*. Both professors thought that inclusion did play a role in education system. The social work professor said *I do believe inclusion plays an important role in this* (education is to

develop pupils as whole people). The special education professor had similar responses as the social work professor; she replied *education changes people not only mentally but also physically; in this case, changing thoughts is the main point*. Both professors' arguments were on "change pupils' thoughts". Even more, a professor argued that *when normal pupils go home, they bring the concepts into their families*. A special education teacher also agreed that inclusion did play a role to develop pupils as whole people, but interestingly, the answer from this special education teacher ended as a question tone 'really? not really?' which was the same as one of the principals and the Chief. The argument of the principal was:

*Schooling is only a stage. Before schooling, pupils are educated (or influenced) by their careers. Then they come to primary schools. After primary schooling, students need to go junior and then senior high schools. Inclusion plays a role in primary education which develops pupils as whole people, but post primary schooling, or even after they leave schools, are as important as primary education. I believe people are influenced not only in education but also in other aspects.*

(Principal)

The Chief thought that inclusion 'should' play a role in developing pupils as whole people, *but inclusive policies only play a tiny part of all school policies*. The Chief thought that inclusive policies were part of a school's policies, and inclusive policies should be accompanied with other supplemental policies. In the interviews, professors, one principal and two special education teachers positively agreed that inclusive policies played a role in developing pupils as whole people. The principal pointed out:

*Inclusion is a form of respect; respect to self and respect to others. Since the aim of education should develop pupils as whole people, inclusion provides the fundamental knowledge about treating people equally.*

(Principal)

A special education teacher thought that inclusion not only provided opportunities for pupils with special educational needs, but also provided opportunities for normal pupils to know others who were mentally or physically different from them. Another special education teacher emphasised that *inclusive education provides opportunities for pupils, from the different world.*

***Does Inclusion Really Imply the Notion of Equality? If Yes, Please Specifically Indicate. If No, Why?***

The last question focused on interviewees' responses on the implications of inclusion. One interviewee was not very sure that inclusion implied the notion of equality. The Chief replied *inclusion seems like to have the implications of equality, but...*(without saying anything) *it seems strange too.* Two interviewees thought that the answers for this question were both 'yes' and 'no'; as the special education professor pointed out:

*Theoretically, inclusion implies the notion of equality, so the answer is 'yes'. But on the other hand, inclusion makes other people feel deprived, especially to those normal pupils' parents or grandparents.*

(Special education professor)

A special education teacher pointed out the conflict among school teachers. He said that *inclusion implies the notion of equality to 'special education teachers', but to normal teachers, it does not;* because normal teachers felt that the resources were unbalanced.

Both professors and the special education teacher thought that inclusive policies should promote greater equality, but without careful design and implementation, inclusion would become another form of exclusion. The social work professor thought that inclusion did imply the notion of equality; his argument was based on the notion that people had the same rights, not only in education but also in other aspects. Two legislators agreed that inclusion implies the notion of equality. *Acceptance and respect*, as a legislator argued, *are vital to a better society and inclusion is the key*. Another legislator pointed out that *the notion of inclusion provides people opportunities to see and judge things from different angles*. Two principals and two special education teachers also agreed that inclusion implies the notion of equality. One principal maintained that *every one has the right to be educated* whilst another principal used examples: *This school is located in rural area, but we still implement inclusive policies within school*. Two special education teachers had the same idea as the principal who believed everyone had the right to be educated but in a narrower sense, mainly focused on pupils with mental or physical difficulties instead of all pupils.

### **Brief Summary**

This section focused on the educational implications. The notion of educational equality does not have a long history, for example; women's rights for education. But, what does inclusion mean? The answer is risky, as in the interview, a professor replied *when we aim at one group, bias is generated*. He concluded:

*But the way how we or education can best use inclusion as a means of improving a better society is important and crucial. Inclusive education, as well as social inclusion policies, does not merely put all pupils in the same classroom. It needs to be thoroughly considered and designed.*

(Social work professor)

Education is the way to teach and foster people with appropriate attitudes and knowledge. The traditional education system for pupils with special educational needs was segregation. By dividing pupils into non-disabled and disabled deprived the rights of being educated equally. Inclusive education is about equality, respect and decency. *No one can deprive pupils' rights to education*, a special education teacher argued. By means of education, pupils can be cultivated through their early stage so that they will respect each other in the future. The role and focus of education (schools), as a principal argued; *is to provide concepts and opportunities to all children so that pupils can be cultivated as whole people.*

#### **7.4 Obstacles to Reform**

##### ***Do You Think It Is Difficult or Easy to Promote Greater Inclusion? Why?***

The responses from the first question, interestingly, were extremely contrasting. Only two interviewees, a principal and the Chief, thought it was easy to promote greater inclusion:

*Life encompasses different people, things and surroundings. Spontaneously and automatically, inclusion occurs because pupil inevitably contact with different circumstances.*

(Principal)

As this principal, the Chief also thought that it was easy to promote greater inclusion. The Chief did not give clear answers why she thought so; she just replied *I think it is easy because we take it for granted.*

The rest of the interviewees thought that it was difficult to promote greater inclusion. Two professors thought it was *very* difficult to promote greater inclusion. The social work professor's arguments focused on the market-economy while the special education professor focused on people's mind-sets and the risks when promoting greater inclusion;

that is, minority groups might think there was not enough ‘sincerity/honesty’ because most policies were made in accordance with the majority groups’ needs and the policies for the minority groups seemed to be and were regarded as ‘compensations’. The social work professor argued that judging one thing from one angle was not enough; and the suggestion social work professor made to promoting greater inclusion was on the balance between majority and minority groups. The special education professor’s point for promoting greater inclusion was on changing people’s minds. She maintained that it was difficult to promote greater inclusion because different people had different ways of thinking. From the practical works of her inclusion centre, she pointed out that inclusion seemed easy to be accepted by most people, but when asking parents if they wanted to send their children into inclusive setting (with one to three SEN pupils), the answer was ‘No’<sup>1</sup>. The special education professor believed that equality for all can be accepted by most parents; but when it came to reality, the result was reverse. A principal had the same opinions as the special education professor on the issues of parents’ considerations. The difference between the special education professor and the principal was that the professor’s inclusion centre was an ‘experimental institution’ in which every one knew the centre was for SEN pupils instead of non-disabled pupils. Except parent’s thinking, this principal also mentioned that money, attitudes and facilities were obstacles in normal mainstream primary schools, especially in old rural areas schools, “*just like my school*”. The principal’s arguments focused more on facilities rather than parents’ thinking because he believed that parents’ thinking would gradually change. One legislator replied *it is hard* without specifying the reason. Other legislators gave more details. One legislator argued and emphasised that the reason was hard because promoting greater inclusion was risky due to the way of promoting greater inclusion. One legislator argued that the *tendency to*

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<sup>1</sup> Most people, more than eighty percent (questionnaires done by the professor’s inclusion centre), according to the special education professor, accepted the notion of inclusive education. But when parents were asked if they could send their children to an inclusive classroom (including mental and physical difficulties pupils), less than ten percent of parents (including both non-disabled and disabled children’s parents) agreed.

*balance* a society was difficult. He used Dr. Sun, Yet-Sen's (National Father) theory as an example: *People were born differently*. Interestingly, another legislator had the same ideology and believed that it was hard to change the current situation because people were born unequally. Her argument was not on promoting greater inclusion; but on promoting more opportunities (for example: schools, jobs and environments) for disadvantaged people to make their own choices. Two special education teachers thought that it was difficult to promote greater inclusion. One special education teacher pointed out that *pupils' attitudes and behaviours were influenced before they started school*. How to change pupils' *fixed opinions* and *how to change parents' (grandparents') thoughts* became this special education teacher's concern. The other special education teacher's focus was on 'resources', such as manpower and money which were vital for the completion of school policies.

***If the Government's Budgets for Promoting Greater Inclusion Could Be Increased, What Do You Think Should Be the Priority for Targeting the Additional Resources?***

The second question in this section focused on the government's budgets. When the interviewees were asked about the priority for targeting the additional resources, the responses varied. The special education professor argued that changing people's thoughts should be the priority whilst the social work professor argued exclusion in whatever form should be eliminated and terminated. But both professors had similar view and priority, that is, changing people's minds would be the first step. The legislators focused on a more realistic level. Only one legislator put her focus on changing people's thoughts because she thought that all difficulties were generated from people's incorrect/inappropriate concepts. But the rest of the three legislators paid attention to promoting more opportunities. The reason for this, according to one legislator, was the Government's lack of intervention and also, people thought that disabled people's working abilities were worse than normal people and should not be paid the same (salary) as normal people. Another legislator

argued that every one was different, so differentiations existed. The Chief replied that every one (or every group) was the targeting priority, but unfortunately, the budgets were never enough due to Government's priorities were on economics and national defence. From principals' and special education teachers' points of view, their concerns were on pupils with special needs and teachers' training, i.e. the IEPs for SEN pupils and CPD for teachers and other school staff. A principal pointed out that the priority for targeting additional resources should be focused on fulfilling the needs of pupils with special educational needs and changing the mind-set (for example: everyone had the right to be educated and should be respected no matter what his/her background was) of normal pupils and normal pupils' parents; and argued that *in my opinion, there does not exist so called 'priority'. We should start from all aspects.* One special education teacher had the same ideas as the principal; she thought that if the budgets could be increased, 'all' were being the priority for targeting the additional resources. The 'all' means, pupils' (both non-disabled and disabled) needs, school facilities, teachers and staff's training, etc. On the contrary, one special education teacher argued that *since the focus is on 'inclusion', no doubt that additional resources should be focused on pupils with special educational needs.* A special education teacher thought that additional resources should be targeted on 'human resources', and pointed out that primary schools in Taiwan did not have enough manpower; particularly on experts, therapists and psychologists.

***Thinking about Appropriate Learning Environments/Settings, Would You Wish to Change the Present Learning Environment for Pupils with Learning Difficulties?***

The responses were basically on hard wares, in other words, facilities. The only one interviewee who wished to change the present environment or settings for SEN pupils was the special education professor. The arguments she made were; most primary and secondary schools did not have capacities to accommodate SEN pupils and the number of special education teachers and experts in normal mainstream schools was insufficient. The

special education professor wished to change the present learning environment for SEN pupils; *but due to budgets, it is difficult for us to change the present environment.* The social work professor did not comment on this question because *my focus is on social work, not in schools.* Two principals thought that policies and schools had already had a great number of improvements. According to the principals, the overall environment for pupils with special educational needs did not need to be changed; but some tiny details could be improved. A principal used his school as an example: *Last year, a pupil with walking difficulty was located on the fourth floor in one of the buildings, but no elevator in that building* (with an embarrassing laugh); but he emphasised that facilities were getting improved. The other principal focused primarily on the improvement of facilities such as disabled toilets and ramps; and this principal not only argued that some traditional schools did not have enough facilities (hard wares) to accommodate SEN pupils but also pointed out the importance of soft wares. He indicated that the average age of teachers in old schools is older than that in newly established ones; and there is a generation gap between senior and junior teachers. Only one legislator had opinions on this question. She pointed out that *the present environment seems good for both non-disabled and disabled pupils. I do not have any reason for changing present learning environment.* The legislator was similar to one of the principals in the interviews. She thought that overall learning environment for pupils with special educational needs did not need to be changed; the environment just needed to be added some more facilities. However, she also mentioned about pupils with severe difficulties and believed that pupils with severe difficulties should be accommodated in special schools or units. The Chief of Special and Pre-school Section replied that she would not change the present learning environment for pupils with special educational needs because *inclusive education seems to have advantages of integration and segregation; so I do not think I would change the present learning environment for SEN pupils.* The rest of the teachers (the Chief used to be a primary school teacher), in the interviews, only one replied that *I never think of this question.* The other two special

education teachers focused on the same topics. Different from one of the principals, a special teacher thought that the materials ‘within’ the classroom needed to be improved, in other words, teaching materials. Teaching materials included, in accordance with the special education teacher, facilities (such as laser pens and tape recorders), textbooks, personal computers, etc. The special education teacher wanted more focus put on pupils within the classroom. The other special education teacher said that more equipment; such as different curriculum and assessment handbooks for teachers, should be provided to help SEN pupils and teachers who had SEN pupils in the classes; however, this special education teacher believed that it would not be necessary to change the present environment. In the interviews, the special education teachers believed that facilities and equipment within classroom should be given greater attention because schools had already had inclusive policies; the focus was that further steps (e.g. equipments and facilities) or actions (e.g. curricula and guidelines for teachers/staff and pupils) should also accompany with inclusive policies.

***If You (or Your Children) Had Severe Difficulties in Learning, What Kind of System Would You Choose – Mainstream (pupils in their neighbourhood communities) or Special Education? Why?***

The fourth question was more hypothetical. The aim of this question was to see how interviewees choose their learning environment. Two professors thought that both segregation and inclusion had advantages and disadvantages. It was a dilemma for them to make the decision. The social work professor replied that the decision depended on pupils’ situation (severe or mild disabilities). The special education professor argued that both inclusive and special schools should exist, so she replied *I choose both*. The Chief chose mainstream education because no one had the right to deprive disabled pupils’ rights of being educated with normal pupils. Two principals chose mainstream education because they thought it *might be* better for both non-disabled and disabled children. One principal

argued that *in mainstream schools, both non-disabled and disabled pupils realise that there are differences between them*. Another principal thought that mainstream education provided the notion of equality and pupils could share their experiences. However, one principal pointed out that *if the pupil is really unsuitable for mainstream education, he/she should be accommodated in a special school*. While two principals supported mainstream education, special education teachers had different stories. Three special education teachers had same opinions as the special education professor. They argued that both normal mainstream and special education played important roles in the education system. One special education teacher pointed out:

*We could not merely put all pupils in the same class and say this is equality. Some pupils are really difficult to get involved in the class, for example, pupils with mental and behaviour problems are really a heavy burden for teachers and other pupils. Sometimes, I find segregation is good.*

(Special education teacher)

The other two special education teachers thought that segregation was both a negative and positive way, because segregation sometimes really had its function. One special education teacher used an example in her school: *Some pupils are segregated from the class because they intervene or interfere others' learning*. But this special education teacher also emphasised and mentioned that after segregation, those pupils should be relocated into mainstream classroom. From the interviews of special education teachers, both mainstream and special education were taken into consideration when a pupil has difficulties in learning. But according to the special education professor and teachers, mainstream and special education should not separate from each other. Actually, as the special education professor concluded: *A better learning environment is to combine advantages of mainstream and special education*. Two legislators had similar responses as the special

education professor and one pointed out that *depending on the individual difference, then decision can be made*. This legislator deeply believed that making the decision is not the key; on the contrary, *individual's differences and conditions are the key*. Another legislator argued that disabled pupils have the rights to interact with his/her peers and *I do not think that in a thirty pupils' classroom, one disabled pupil will slow down the learning pace*. One legislator had an interesting answer towards this question, he said:

*Theoretically, or if some one asked me this question in the public, I would answer 'mainstream'. But if I, or my children had severe difficulties in learning, I would prefer special education. Special education has its function, and I think inclusive education is too romantic. We are dealing with people, not animals; and people have thoughts which are most difficult to deal with.*

(Legislator)

### ***What Other Obstacles or Difficulties Could You Think of When We Refer to Inclusion?***

The last question in this section was about other obstacles and difficulties when referring to inclusion. From the interviews, there were a great number of obstacles and difficulties when referring to inclusion. The special education professor pointed out that changing people's minds (from one person to the whole community), obtaining supports and money were difficulties. The special education professor set up the inclusion centre and she engaged a great number of obstacles when carrying out inclusive implementation into the reality and into schools. On the contrary, the social work professor's obstacles mainly focused on thinking; namely, *the difficulties lie in 'benefit deprivation'* which addressed that for the majority in the society, people who had already had advantages would never agree that their advantages be taken by others; and for the minority, the services seemed to be compensations and sympathy, and the minority might not feel satisfaction. The Chief argued that the current difficulty laid on manpower, in her words, *specialists and experts*

*and of course special education teachers.* The focus of the principals and special education teachers was on schools, teachers (both normal and special education teachers), pupils and parents. A principal pointed out that in classroom teachers' feedback, a teacher complained about a SEN pupils in her class because the SEN pupil influenced other pupils' learning. The teacher could not do too much because there was only one teacher in the classroom. Some pupils thought that the special pupil should be 'kicked off' the class; and some parents also thought that the special pupil should go to a special unit. Another principal also had the same problem as mentioned above; besides, he believed that changing normal teachers' thoughts towards SEN pupils was also the key. Two special education teachers had the same feeling as the principal. They thought it was difficult to change normal teachers' concepts. But one special education teacher provided a different view. She pointed out:

*Traditionally, we have systems for assessment and evaluation, but they are for normal pupils. How about those pupils with special educational needs? Another difficulty comes into my mind and this difficulty is that a teacher cannot pay his/her attention to too many pupils at one time. If there is a special pupil in a class, we need two teachers, or at least, a class teacher and an assistant.*

(Special education teacher)

Three legislators replied to this question. Their concerns were money (including budgets from both central and local governments) and mind-set (people within and outside schools). One legislator had an interesting answer to this question *inclusion is good but I do not believe any country in the world can demolish exclusion.*

## **Brief Summary**

Section four addressed the obstacles to reform; and obviously, to promote greater inclusion is difficult. Through the interviews, the researcher found that the basic problem of promoting greater inclusion in Taiwan laid on old (normal pupils' parents) or older (grand parents) generations' concepts and attitudes. The situation was even worse in rural areas because in such areas, people thought that children with disabilities were the punishment from the heaven. As a researcher's friend who works in a rural primary school pointed out:

*Pupils with disabilities are sometimes deemed as demons. They bring shame to the families. No one in the family would take care of or pay attention to the children with disabilities. Pity, but it is true.*

(Wang<sup>1</sup>, 13/Aug/2005)

Mr. Wang and the researcher were senior high school classmates and he said that it would not be necessary to hide his emotion when discussing this issue. Very strong words were used in the conversation. The researcher rephrased his words due to academic thesis. All the interviewees, including Mr. Wang, agreed that no matter how hard it was to promote greater inclusion, it was everyone's responsibility to do their best for breaking the barriers to the reform.

## **7.5 Impact of Policy on the Work of the Interviewee**

### ***To What Extent Is Social Inclusion Part of Your Professional Responsibility?***

Each interviewee had the promotion of social inclusion as part of his/her professional responsibilities to different degrees. The expertise of the social work professor was on family policy. *Inclusion and exclusion are not such important issues in my professional responsibility*, the social work professor said, *because there are so many characteristics in*

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<sup>1</sup> Also seen in Chapter 1.2, 2.2 and 10

*one family*. Different from the social work professor, much of the special education professor's effort was put on the issues of inclusion and exclusion. In 2004, the professor started her programmes on the 'inclusion of normal and hearing/verbal difficulties pupils'. After negotiating for years with the governments (including Central and Local Governments), Shin-Chu Inclusion Campus was established on the 14 of June, 2004. The special education professor was also the chairwoman of the Fu-Lung Inclusive Education Foundation. The special education professor's expertise was on, according to her introduction on the website, inclusive education, early intervention, child development and special education teaching ([http://www.nhctc.edu.tw/~smw/eng/G\\_wu/All\\_wu.htm](http://www.nhctc.edu.tw/~smw/eng/G_wu/All_wu.htm), 26/10/2005). The Chief of Special and Pre-school Section was a kindergarten teacher and principal. The main duty of her position, according to the Chief, was on bridging communications between pre-school services and elementary schools, managing schools affair (such as: budgets and complaints) and administrations. Both principals had been working as principals for more than ten years. One principal believed that the role of a principal was like the most powerful manager and careful mother in schools, so he said *the role of the principal is in one hand the leader of a school and on the other hand the janitor*. Another principal added that a principal dealt with everything from top to down. The legislators were professionals in law. One of the legislators is a member of the Chinese Human Right Association and is himself a lawyer; and cared about everything, from national to individual issues; that is, all individual's needs. The special education teachers' professional responsibilities were narrower. Working within schools as special education teachers, their primarily concerns focused on students, not only special educational needs pupils but also non-disabled pupils. A special education teacher pointed out an important role of special education teacher was on bringing and flourishing the notion of equality to whole school. For the special education teachers in Taiwanese primary schools, another title is given as "resource class teachers", who *have more resources than normal classroom*

*teachers and take the responsibilities for letting normal teachers/parents/pupils accept the notion of inclusive education.*

### ***Do You Feel Sufficiently Supported?***

The second question focused on interviewees' feeling of supports in inclusion. Only one interviewee felt that the support was not sufficient. Interestingly, the interviewee was the special education professor. It took the special education professor fifteen years to establish the inclusion centre and not so many supports from outside and even budgets were cut off; so she replied: *Sufficiently supported? Not really.* The special education professor further pointed out that because the location of the Inclusion Centre was in Hsin-Chu, a place was famous for high technology products, she could ask for donations easier, for example; money and personal computers; and so she believed other places in Taiwan would have worse conditions. On the contrary, the social work professor thought that he was sufficiently supported because both central and local governments paid significant attention to the rights of the minority groups and he could see that the Government really had done something for people. The reason why two professors had a totally different response, after interviewing with one legislator, became clear; namely, budgets. According to the legislator, budgets were allocated in accordance with the differences of each city or county. The bigger the city was, the more budgets were provided. The legislator also pointed out that *pupils with special educational needs are only a small quantity of students. I can understand why the special education professor said so.* Another legislator also had a similar opinion and pointed out that there were problems about unemployment, national health system and others; the Government could not put all the focus on education, and even the focus was on education, special education and SEN pupils were one of the whole education systems. A legislator not only focused on educational issues, but also indicated that legislators needed to have a broad sense of people's needs, everyone's needs. The Chief of Special and Pre-school Section thought

that she was totally supported by either policies or her colleagues. She was not satisfied only with insufficiency of personnel, resources and money. However, the Chief insisted that *not perfect yet, but we are working hard to reaching perfect*. Two principals felt sufficiently supported as well. One principal was *satisfied with the government's policies, implementation and parents' reactions*. The principal further pointed out that the present urgency for inclusive policies was that schools needed to set up more 'resource classes'. The other principal pointed out that he felt sufficiently supported within and outside the school. He believed *school staff and parents support inclusive policies. Local government provides necessary help, such as special education experts*. But there were two points this principal did not feel happy with; first, inclusive policies sometimes confused people, such as assessments and evaluations towards severe or intermediate SEN pupils and issues of locating these severe or intermediate pupils into normal mainstream classrooms; and secondly, inclusive policies could not be carried out without limitation, because *each game had its rules*, so did inclusion. Both principals felt sufficiently supported from the governments, parents and school staff. But according to them, something (for example: inclusive policies and the boundary of inclusion) still needed to be clarified. The responses from the three special education teachers were more or less similar to the principals. The special education teachers' answers mainly focused on colleagues and parents' supports. One special education teacher believed that through communications with other teachers and parents or people who against inclusion, *gradually, they changed their minds*. This special education teacher also saw that some parents, including normal pupils' parents, would rather happy to see their children enjoy studying than suffering from studying; however, *ha ha* (embarrassing laugh), *though there was not so much progress in academic performance*. When asking if there was anything about support that did not reach their satisfactions, the three special education teachers answered "no". These three special education teachers were satisfied with supports.

### ***To What Extent Do You Think That the Authority Can Do for Inclusion?***

The authorities had the responsibility for the success and failure of inclusion. A legislator believed that *the more focuses on inclusion, the better future will be*. The authorities, according to the special education professor, were the responsible bodies which provided every kind of support, but it was difficult to tell to what extent the authority could do for inclusion. The social work professor did not have any comment on this issue. He only replied *there are a great number of things which the authority should do and provide for people*. The Chief believed that exclusion generated from misunderstanding among different groups; so the authorities should provide propaganda and information which were powerful strategies and tools for shifting the mass's thoughts. Two principals had different responses towards this question. One principal argued that inclusion took place spontaneously; and if the authority paid too much attention to or effort on it, inclusion would be manipulated by the authority of some certain groups. So, the principal argued that with too much involvement of the authority on the issues of inclusion, *inclusion, I am sure, will become another form of exclusion*. On the other hand, the other principal thought that the authority could do a lot for promoting greater inclusion, such as making clear inclusive policies so that schools could follow, and helping schools to categorise pupils' disabilities because schools staff were not doctors or paediatricians. Three special education teachers also had different responses. A special education teacher worked in an urban primary school pointed out that the authority should *listen to the voices* from the minority groups and should *provide appropriate help* and of course, the authority had power to *give commands to schools or people*. Another special education teacher thought that the authority could *host and organise conferences* which had powerful *influence* within or outside schools. The other special education teacher pointed out that there were two advantages with the involvement of the authority; first, the authority *had power to ask other teachers to attend the meetings within schools*; and secondly, *to ask parents to take part in the conferences/meetings held by schools*. The three special education teachers had

one point in common: the authority had power to order and to control from a superior role. *With the help of the authority*, according to a special education teacher, *it is easier to put inclusive policies into practice*. Only one legislator answered this question. The legislator thought it was difficult to answer, because each authority had its limit, and one authority could not surpass another authority's purview. The legislator concluded *I think, for this question, it depends on the authority's volitions, or in other words, their power of willing*.

***When We Emphasise Inclusion, Does It Mean that We Should Try to Avoid Exclusion in Whatever Form?***

This question was whether, when emphasising inclusion, any kind of exclusion should be avoided. Basically, except those who did not answer this question, all responses tended to avoid exclusion in whatever form. The special education professor said *of course, exclusion in whatever form should be avoided*. The social work professor and the two principals had totally the same answers. Their responses focused on exclusion should be avoided in whatever form, but in reality, it was too difficult to avoid exclusion. The social work professor and principals believed that inclusion was a form of exclusion and could not be totally avoided; and so the social work professor replied *well, not even 'totally', I doubt that we cannot even demolish half forms of exclusion*; and a principal pointed out that *in reality, everyone is different and we cannot change the difference*. The social work professor and the two principals' arguments focused on natural born differences and inequalities; and inclusion/exclusion were the products of these phenomena. The Chief of Special and Pre-school Section just simply answered *yes, we should try to avoid exclusion in whatever form* without saying anything else. Two legislators replied as simply as the Chief, "yes"; while another legislator explained more. She thought that *we should judge individual differences first*; and she believed inclusion should be human-based and depended on the individual situations; so *the main thinking for inclusion is to strive for thoroughness and to be realistic and practical*. The legislator argued that without striving

for thoroughness and being realistic and practical, inclusion became the cloud-castle. One special education teacher thought that exclusion should be avoided in whatever forms whilst the other two teachers put their focus on levels or evaluation of pupils' disabilities. One special education teacher believed that inclusion was good but it did not mean inclusion was perfect, the main point was *if we did not know what pupils' real needs before we put them in inclusive setting, then it becomes exclusion; and this exclusion is caused by us*. Another special education teacher thought that both inclusion (mainstreaming) and exclusion (segregation) had values to exist because not every pupil was suitable for inclusion and *we cannot merely put all pupils in the same environment just because we think this is good for them*.

***Do You Think that Policies in Social Inclusion Take Only Some Certain Groups' (People's) Account or Take Everyone's Needs into Consideration?***

Two professors thought that social policies should take some certain groups' account into consideration, as social work professor's argument, *because the focus is on them*. The special education had the same idea as the social work professor because *if the policy took everyone's needs into consideration, then the policy's focus becomes vague*. The answer from two principals was different from two professors. Both principals thought that social inclusive policies should focus on everyone's needs. As one principal pointed out *if the policy only took some particular groups' account, then it becomes exclusion again*. Another principal did not provide too much information why he thought that social inclusive policies should take everyone's needs into consideration. He simply answered *social inclusive policies should be fair to everyone, so everyone's needs should be taken into consideration*. When hearing the question, the Chief said *well, I am not sure*; but after silence for two or three seconds, *I think policies should consider everyone's needs*. Four legislators, without saying too much, had similar replies. Four legislators thought that policies should take everyone's needs into consideration because *policies are for everyone*

*within the society.* Only one legislator provided more details. He pointed out that *since it is the social policy, the focus should be on the public, that is, “all people’s” needs.* The legislator concluded *since it is the ‘social’ policy, the public is the ‘target’.* Other three legislators’ answers for this question were only ‘everyone’, ‘whole people’ and ‘all’ without providing more information. Special education teachers’ focuses were on particular groups; but they also provided different points of view from other interviewees. As a special education teacher believed that inclusive policies were made because some people (groups) were excluded, that was why the focus should be on certain people; *but, the social policy is for the mass, so it cannot be too narrow for only some certain groups.* This special education teacher believed disadvantaged people were part of society, and so were normal people, *since we want to include the disadvantaged, we should view things from their angle.* Two special education teachers had general agreements that social inclusive policies should first stand on some certain groups’ views and then take everyone else’s needs into consideration. As one special education teacher concluded *I will put my focus on particular groups, especially their mind-set and thoughts, then consider everyone’s needs.*

### ***By What Criteria Should Inclusion Be Measured and By Whom?***

The interviewees had very different responses toward this question. The social work professor only replied that inclusion should be monitored by people whilst the special education professor provided more details: *I think, some neutral organisations, for example: experts or observers from foreign countries are good choices.* A principal pointed out that inclusive policies should be measured by Bureau of Education (the local authority), school itself, the organisations which was in charge of administrations and parents (both from non-disabled and disabled pupils). The other principal’s focus was mainly on teachers because teachers were closely linked to pupils and school policies. This principal thought that it would be a mess if there were too many people or groups

measuring inclusion. As for the criteria, the principal thought that if both non-disabled and disabled pupils could be satisfied with their learning environment, then inclusion policies could be deemed as successful. The Chief of Special and Pre-school Section thought that it was the responsibility of the Bureau of Education because local governments modified and adjusted policies from the central government so *local governments are the best choice for measuring inclusion*. Three special education teachers thought that the local government (Bureau of Education) took the responsibility for measuring inclusion. One of the special education teachers also thought that the school also took the responsibility for measuring inclusion because *when inclusion is implemented within the school, obviously, the school also takes the responsibility for measuring inclusion*. Two legislators answered this question. One thought that inclusion should be measured by all people whilst the other thought that as many organisations as possible. The legislator who thought inclusion should be measured by all people did not provide more information and the other pointed out that *central and local governments, experts, parents, teachers and pupils take the responsibility for measuring inclusion*. Interestingly, only this legislator and a principal mentioned pupils when measuring inclusion.

### **Brief Summary**

The interviewees had very different backgrounds of professional responsibility. Most interviewees felt that they were sufficiently supported, but there was still a great deal of effort could be done; for example, extra help from experts and larger budgets. All the interviewees thought that exclusion was essentially unfair, no matter within the school or in society. But to avoid exclusion in whatever form, from the interviews, seemed controversial and too idealistic. From the interviews, inclusive policies should take everyone's needs into consideration as well as some particular groups. But how to find the balance between everyone's needs and particular groups' needs remained unsolved. A general agreement that to be fair or equal to every pupil or every person was hard but both

central and local governments still had to support inclusion because everyone had the right to live within society. In short, the interviewees agreed that how to make the balance among different groups and find the golden means were important for promoting greater inclusion.

## **7.6 The Way Ahead**

### ***In Your Opinion, How Important Is It to Promote Whole Inclusive Education in the Future?***

The final section of the interview schedule concerned the way ahead. From the interviews, education is a means which could change people's mind-sets and concepts. All the interviewees agreed that inclusive education would and should be the trend in the future. The social work professor thought that it was important to promote whole inclusive education in the future because pupils were taught to respect and to understand each other, and then pupils could accept the difference; so the trend of promoting whole inclusive education into schools seemed inevitable. The special education professor preferred to use the term 'full' inclusion instead of 'whole'; and the argument was between '*whole*', *in my opinion, is similar to 'integration'*, and '*full* inclusion is that all the system is adjusted to suit pupils'. Two principals also agreed that whole inclusive education was important, and their schools were also trying to include all pupils from different backgrounds. But on the other hand, two principals also thought that it was really difficult for promoting whole inclusive education; as one principal pointed out that *inclusive education is too idealistic because the school is only one part of whole systems*; and another principal believed that family education was also vital as school education. The Chief of Special and Pre-school Section thought that it was important for promoting whole inclusive education in the future because right attitudes were cultivated and installed in the school; and when children grew up, they also brought the notion into the society, so the function of schooling not only lies on education but also on changing society. The three special education teachers regarded

whole inclusive education as important. Only one special education teacher simply answered *yes, very important* without saying anything else. The other two special education teachers specifically pointed out the role of inclusive education in the future. One special education teacher argued that *with the inclusive environment, unbiased concepts are cultivated and pupils can cherish the virtue of respect*; and another special education teacher pointed out that *inclusive education is a driven force for a better society because both non-disabled and disabled pupils have and realise the notion that they have the same rights*. The concern from the special education teachers was on the cultivation of pupils' mind-set. A special education teacher also indicated that the role of inclusive education not only focused on providing equal opportunities to all children but also offering the appropriate notions of equality and egalitarianism. All the four legislators thought that whole inclusive education was important in the future. One legislator did not have further explanation towards this question and the rest provided their opinions. One legislator pointed out that due to globalisation, the notion of equality spread very fast and the government also paid much more attention to the disadvantaged groups, *for example, there are at least two or more disabled people work in each of the local government's department*. This legislator used the example whilst another legislator emphasised the notion of 'normalisation'. He argued that *they (normalisation and inclusion) have some similarities. I think inclusive education provides the opportunity for pupils to see the difference between each other and to respect each other*. The other legislator felt that inclusive ideas provided people more opportunities for judging different things and believed that *inclusive education brings the notion of righteousness to pupils and eventually, pupils will bring this notion into the society*. The focus of the legislators was on the notion of equality which was brought through inclusive education. The legislators thought that inclusive education could foster pupils' attitudes and mind-sets; and a fair society could be established in the future. But, a legislator also argued that *can a better*

*future be established by inclusive education?* This question remained unsolved because the legislator did not say anything more.

***From Research, Inclusion Can Improve Pupils' Abilities, For Example, Relationships Between Peers. How Can We Best Use Inclusion in Education As A Means of Improving Our Society?***

From two professors, their replies mainly focused on changing people's mind-set. The special education professor thought that inclusive education provided people opportunities to interact with others from different backgrounds and share experience. The social work professor's concern had a broader sense. He pointed out that the trend of globalisation focused on improvements of the right, justice and equality; and *every one has the right, not only in education, but also in other aspects*; and through inclusive education *pupils can learn the difference among peers and understand each person is unique and should be respected*. The two principals had different views from the professors. One principal thought that both advantaged and disadvantaged people would benefit from inclusive education because the minority group would receive '*instructions*' and normal people could access '*stimuli*' from inclusive education. The principal focused on the benefit inclusive education brought to both normal and disadvantaged pupils whilst another principal focused on people's attitudes *inclusive education provides different thinking models for both normal and disadvantaged people*. The Chief put her focus on the unity of the society which was based on understanding and *inclusive education provides a setting which all pupils study, learn and share in the same environment; and when pupils enter to the society, they also bring this notion with them*. Three legislators, unfortunately, did not have any idea about this question. Only one from the four legislators simply responded that inclusive education was *a concrete idea* and made people realise and understand the *individual difference*. Three special education teachers, two of them had similar responses towards this question and the other had a totally different response. Two special education

teachers thought that inclusive education changed people's concepts, not only pupils'. One special education teacher believed that when a pupil was changed in schools, he/she also brought the notion to the family; *so, inclusive education can change both pupils and their parents*. Another special education teachers pointed out that education was an excellent way to change people's concepts and *the function of education, including inclusive education, is to build a better future, from individuals to the whole society*. The one who had a totally different response thought that inclusive education 'should be' the way to improve our society, but in fact, the consequence may be out of expectation. He argued that *the realistic world is crucial and you know, pupils cannot just go home and tell their parents that what they learn in schools is 'good relationship with disadvantaged peers'*. This special education teacher believed inclusive education had its role to play in educational system, and it did really provide pupils with righteous concepts *but...*(without saying anything), *it is too difficult*.

***Should Inclusion Also Need To Be Levelled According To Pupils' Difficulties, For Example, Pupils With Severe Learning Difficulties May Need Extra Help, or We Just Put Them All in the Same Classroom?***

All interviewees thought that inclusion should be levelled according to pupils' difficulties, but two interviewees also pointed out that in their inclusive setting, they tried to locate pupils with severe difficulties in the same classroom with other normal peers. The special education professor was one of the interviewees whose setting was to put all pupils within the same classroom. However, in Inclusive Centre, the special education professor clarified that it was important to point which 'grade' should a pupil attend did not depend on pupils' age, it depended on pupils' abilities. *A pupil with multi-impairments who is twelve years old is located in the third grade<sup>1</sup> because it is better for putting him in the lower grade*. A special education teacher used her school's "resource classes" as examples. She indicated

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<sup>1</sup> A pupil who is twelve years old should be in 6 Grade in normal mainstream primary school.

that all pupils were put into class according to their age, so were pupils with special educational needs, *but the problem is, some disabled pupils cannot perform well when they are located in a class where all the students are in the same age. I think if we do not level pupils in advance, inclusion cannot reach its potential.* Though both the special education professor and teacher's setting (the Inclusive Centre and a mainstream school) located pupils with SEN in the same classroom, levelling pupils before entering the class was also an alternative (e.g. this special education teacher thought that *without levelling pupils, we will not have chance to identify their needs*). The social work professor argued that pupils should be levelled according to their difficulties because SEN pupils might lose confidence in normal classrooms. But the social work professor also doubted that even pupils were levelled in according with their difficulties *will younger normal pupils look down on their older classmates? It is really difficult to judge.* The Chief of Special and Pre-school Section thought that disabled pupils, *of course, based on their difficulties, should be levelled* because *if inclusion is just to locate all students in the same class, I believe that both non-disabled and disabled students will not benefit from this kind of inclusion.* Both principals, as other interviewees, thought that students should be levelled according to their difficulties. One principal believed that examinations or tests were to distinguish one pupil from others; and *inclusive education is not an exception.* Another principal used "equality without differentiation" to demonstrate his ideas; and *if inclusion does not level pupils, then it becomes another form of exclusion, the exclusion to normal pupils.* The principal pointed out that in his school; pupils with minor difficulties were located in the mainstream classroom. But when it came to academic classes such as mathematics or chemistry, pupils with special educational needs were re-located in the different class. For doing so, the principal argued, *it is better for them because they cannot keep the learning pace as normal kids.* Two legislators simply answered "yes" without providing more information. One legislator had the same ideas as the principal mentioned above. She thought that "equality without differentiation" was not really equal; and levelling *is to find out the*

*difference and so resources could be allocated.* Another legislator, interestingly, used Darwin's "Theory of Evolution" as an example. He pointed out that *Darwin's Theory of Evolution showed that poor species would be extinctive by natural selection. If disabled people are located in the same environment as other normal people, I think it is difficult for them to survive. So, inclusion does not merely allocate the resource or just put people in the same surrounding, it needs to be well designed.* Two special education teachers did not provide too much information. They both thought that inclusion should be levelled according to pupils' difficulties; and their answers were 'yes' towards this question. In these two special education teachers' schools, pupils with special educational needs were levelled according to their difficulties.

***The Barriers Generated By People Are Always Complicated. How Can We Breakdown the Barriers?***

Surprisingly, this question was answered by all respondents. Social work professor thought that man-made barriers were easy to breakdown, but people's mind-set was difficult to change. He believed that people's mind-set was the main target and *if every one has the concept of equality, then the barrier can be terminated.* The special education professor also had the same opinion as the social work professor but with different views towards man-made barrier. She further pointed out that to demolish exclusion was everyone's responsibility. Unfortunately, she admitted that to breakdown barriers generated by people was very difficult, maybe impossible; because *the barrier contains multi-dimensional causes; money, benefit, allocation of sources, etc.* The Chief used problems and solutions to demonstrate the current situation while implementing inclusive policies into families. She said:

*For example; we know pupils from single parent or grandparent have higher risks of being excluded. The problem focuses on 'lack of care'; and the solution*

*focuses on 'helpers from social work or voluntary charity'. In the Education Bureau, a great deal of effort is put into pupils from single parent, truancy, poor health, etc. But I have to emphasise that all we are doing now is the 'surface' job. I think central government should pay more attention to re-educating people.*

(The Chief of Special and Pre-school Section)

Two principals, as the social work professor, thought that people's mind-sets/concepts were the most important in this issue. One principal said *even we have the school bus, his (a male SEN pupil) parents still do not care about if he goes to the school or not.* Another principal also used an example to demonstrate this issue; and interestingly, both principals had barriers from, mainly, special pupils' parents, because special pupils' parents were afraid that their children were taken advantages or bullied by other normal pupils; so these parents thought that *special education schools/units may be better places for their disadvantaged kids.* Four legislators had different opinions towards this question. One legislator had the same opinion as the social work professor and two principals. He thought that people's mind-set was the most difficult barrier and what governments should do was to install and educate people with the concept of equality. Another two legislators thought that both adults and young people should be educated with inclusive policies. As one of these two legislators believed that *acceptance of the notion of equality in adults and young people* would be the focus and *I think the major difficulty at this moment is that people do not have (or realise) the notion of equality.* Another legislator focused on the power of law because *the law is a powerful means for changing people's behaviours, conducts and it is also a time-saving, practical and economical method.* Three special education teachers' concerns were narrower focused on issues within the school. Special education teachers had one opinion in common and that was 'meeting' with parents. One special education teacher pointed out that regular meeting with parents from both non-disabled and disabled

pupils could provide information and knowledge about inclusion and *hopefully, parents could be influenced and gradually changed*. But in fact, as another special education teacher pointed out, few parents attended the meetings. So, this special education teacher thought that there should be some encouragement or stimulus for parents to attend school meetings so that good school inclusive policies could be conveyed or communicated to the parents (from non-disabled and disabled pupils). This special education teacher also used *'parents association'* in the school, *and this association is to bridge the relationships among the school, the class, pupils and parents*. The association could then promote relations with all stakeholders within a class. Except the issues within the school system, the other special education teacher also pointed out the role of the local government's budget and the solution. She argued *all activities could not be well implemented if the budget was not enough...and the local government should also get involved in schools' activities*. Three special education teachers' responses focused on the practical work within schools. But they also admitted that the barrier for inclusion of pupils with special educational needs was difficult to breakdown, especially for those pupils with emotional and behaviour difficulties. According to these three special education teachers, fortunately, this situation was changing because more and more parents and pupils accepted mainstreaming.

***If You Could Think of Other Advantages or Disadvantages Which Are Generated By Inclusion, Please Give Details.***

The special education professor did not reply to this question because all advantages and disadvantages were discussed in previous sections. The social work professor argued that the main advantage of inclusion focused on *wider participation for all people* and people had rights to get fully involved in the society. The Chief thought that inclusion was the way for an equal society. But on the other hand, inclusive policies and implementations needed to be designed and implemented professionally/carefully because *without enough*

*professional, such as experts of special education, inclusion becomes nothing but a slogan.* Only one principal had his opinion towards this question; and *I think the major points are inclusive policy and budget* (not really relevant to the question). Two of the three special education teachers did not answer the question, either. Only one special education teacher pointed out that *inclusion is that both non-disabled and disabled pupils can benefit from each other, mainly, relationship and understanding between two different groups.* The special education teacher thought that, the advantage of inclusion focused on providing equal opportunities for all pupils; but on the contrary, it was also a risk that pupils with special educational needs might suffer stress or pressure from academic performance. Two legislators answered this question. One of them pointed out the advantage of inclusion. He thought that *inclusion is like the trigger and is also a bridge between different groups.* Another legislator provided her knowledge towards the advantages and disadvantages generated by inclusion. Inclusion could be seen as *unity*; and by using the EU as an example, this legislator pointed out that *the more countries join the EU, the more powerful it will become.* The legislator then proposed her ideas about the disadvantages generated by inclusion. She pointed out that *inclusion is also risky because human beings are selfish.*

### **Brief Summary**

The focus of this section was mainly on the advantages of inclusion and inclusive education. Education, according to the interviews, could be used as a powerful and effective way to change people's mind-set. From schooling, pupils are taught to respect and understand each other. Gradually, the notion of equality would spread to the whole society. All interviewees, especially those who worked within schools, believed that inclusive education could improve pupils' abilities, but these abilities were mainly related to aspects such as relationships and cooperation. Most interviewees (only the special education professor thought inclusive education 'should' make both normal and special children perform well in both academic and non-academic work) did not find that both

normal and special pupils could benefit or attain a higher achievement in academic work; but due to the lack of related information, this remains controversial. The way to breakdown the barrier varied, and all interviewees thought that barriers should, and could be solved or removed by sophisticated or well-designed policies. The main aim for inclusive education, from the interviews, laid on the progress of education system. Education should focus on all pupils, as a special education teacher argued, instead of the majority of students. But the way for promoting greater inclusion remained unsolved because all systems had defects (e.g. human beings are selfish), as a principal concluded:

*I believe inclusive schooling is good for all pupils and it can build a better society in the future. But I worry about the way how people are going to implement inclusive policies into schools because inclusion involves too many complicated linkages. I do not know how to do it, I really do not know.*

(Principal)

## CHAPTER EIGHT: OBSERVATIONS AND FOCUS GROUPS

### 8.1 The Observation

This research study has investigated the reality and implementation of inclusive education in Taiwan's elementary schools. The study focused on the southern part of Taiwan; namely, Tainan City and County, the fourth biggest defined geographic area in Taiwan<sup>1</sup>. Data were collected by using observation and focus group instruments.

With the interests of interaction among teachers (classroom teachers), non-disabled pupils and special educational needs pupils, the aim of the combination of the cases (pupils) and the observation in the research focused on vivid descriptions of the interactions. In order not to influence the process of learning and teaching within the classrooms, the researcher/observer sat at the back of the classroom and coded/noted the real situations/interactions/problems/problems-solving within the inclusive classrooms, in other words, a non-participant methodology. Disturbance of learning-teaching process was minimised during the observation because the researcher was interested in observing and recording the *multiple realities* (Stake, 1995) in ordinary classroom activities. In supplement of insufficiency of the focus groups<sup>2</sup>, two pupils with behavioural disorders were included.

#### 8.1.1 Observation Lists

In the process of the observation, the main focus was on:

- SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching—responses to the learning and teaching process.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Ministry of the Interior, Taiwan (<http://www.ris.gov.tw/ch4/static/st0-1-9604.xls> , April/2007), total population of Taiwan is 22,886,906 and the population in Tainan City and County is 1,867,498.

<sup>2</sup> Due to the agreement between school principals and special education teachers, no behavioural disorders pupil was included in the focus groups.

- Teachers' attention—if influenced by SEN pupils.
- Normal pupils' attention—disturbance caused by SEN pupils.
- SEN pupils' behavioural reactions during the class—any other significant different behaviours during the class.

### 8.1.2 The Cases and Observations<sup>1</sup>

#### *Case A: A female pupil (H) with hearing impairment, Grade 3, Tainan City.*

H was a pupil with intermediate/severe hearing difficulty. Her difficulty was on listening and speaking. Though she wore the ear trumpets, it was still difficult for her to pronounce and listen properly. Prior to the observation, the classroom teacher (not a special education teacher) pointed out that H was a good (not in academic subjects) student and rarely made trouble through the classes. *H, I think, is good in music and painting, but she needs more assistance from specialists.* Pupils in H's class knew her difficulty and would really like to offer help when H needed it. H did not have any behavioural problem and through the observation, there was only one time H made sounds and disturbed the class in mathematics class. However, after the class, the mathematics teacher mentioned that it never happened before. But the classroom teacher pointed out that H did make sounds in the classes and at home, *I guess she just want to get others' attention.*

In academic classes, H seemed that she did not have too many difficulties; however, when it came to pronunciation or speaking in Mandarin, H had difficulties because of hearing impairment. H liked nature/science and arts; and in these classes, H looked happier than other academic subjects. In the arts class, H raised her hand and tried to communicate with the art teacher; and the art teacher also encouraged H to demonstrate her ideas, by both speaking and drawing (when her speaking was too vague). In the nature and science class, H performed just as other non-disabled pupils. She followed everyone's steps and moves,

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<sup>1</sup> Detailed results of observations are provided in Appendix D

and seemed to be hyperactive. Through the one hour observation, the nature and science teacher even needed to calm her down by asking her behave. Through the five days observation, only in the nature and science class were other pupils much influenced by H's behaviours.

In H's class, pupils were friendly and helped H during the classes. When H did not understand what teachers said, she turned to the pupil who sat next to her, and sometimes she even turned back to the pupils who sat behind her. Pupils who sat around her offered their hospitalities and helped through the classes. H's best friend (according to the classroom teacher) sat in front of H and sometimes turned her head back to check if H needed any help. Only when H was hyperactive, her class felt annoyed and when seeing this, teachers would use stronger words such as "behave" or "silence" instead of "please". Before conducting the observation, the classroom teacher provided some background about H and thought that H was just like non-disabled pupils. The only difference between H and her peers lied on 'the ear trumpets', the classroom teacher said.

***Case B: A male pupil (W) with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Grade 6, Tainan City.***

Before conducting the observation of this pupil, the researcher had brief chats with two special education teachers and the principal of the school. "A hot potato in the bare hand" was the description of pupils with ADHD or behavioural problems.

According to the classroom teacher, W was an intelligent boy and very active and talkative in the classes. Through the whole weekday observation during one week, except one day he was absent, only mathematics and physical education classes was he be quiet. From the first morning of observation, W was not stable on his seat, he raised his hand frequently but when the subject teacher asked him to answer, his answers were about 50%

corresponded with the teacher's questions; W sometimes even did not know what the question was. Lack of concentration during the classes made subject teachers put more attention to W; however, at least two subject teachers ignored W's behavioural disorders and focused on teaching. Take Mandarin and physical education teachers as examples, the Mandarin teacher tried to ignore W's disturbances during class<sup>1</sup> and the PE teacher just kept an eye on him in prevention of injuries or disturbances<sup>2</sup>.

Pupils in W's class understood his difficulties and since they had been classmates for more than one year, non-disabled pupils were used to W's behaviours. Through the observations, only when W disturbed others or made strange move then other pupils would notice him or responded to his behaviours. Compared to the other two physical impairment pupils, teachers in W's class spent more time by asking W to behave, keeping their eyes on W or responding W's reactions.

It seemed that from the observations W was not so welcomed in the class; other pupils seldom had interactions with him although the classroom teacher indicated that he was active and talkative. W's syndrome made him sometimes aggressive and pupils, especially those who sat around him, were disturbed when W threw an eraser or tapped their heads. W was isolated in the class; even in PE class, no one played with him. In the classes, disturbances and interruptions caused by W could be regularly seen and non-disabled pupils were used to W's different/strange behaviours. Pupils in the class kept distance from W and they seemed to be afraid of W's behaviours. Some pupils were curious about W's behaviours and murmured "*so weird*". Non-disabled pupils in the class apparently did not know about W's syndrome and they could not do anything.

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<sup>1</sup> After the class, Mandarin teacher said "I had been patient and tolerated toward W before, but it seems that W should not be here. He needs more special care and professional treatments."

<sup>2</sup> The PE teacher even asked the class leader to help him keep an eye on W.

*Case C: A male pupil (C) with physical impairment<sup>1</sup>, Grade 3, Tainan County.*

Except his physical impairment, C was just like his non-disabled peers. According to the classroom teacher, C's academic performance was the top 10% of the class and he had good relationships with other pupils. So, some pupils with poorer academic performance were located around him by the classroom teacher.

Through five days observations, it seemed that C did not have too much trouble on school activities; both academic and non-academic (except physical education). C quietly sat on his seat and listened to teachers' teaching and also had responses (nodded his head) toward teachers' speaking. Through teaching and learning process, teachers also asked C to answer questions, just as other pupils. Teachers' attentions were not disturbed through five days observations.

Other non-disabled pupils were not disturbed as well through the five days observations. Only when C needed help, such as he dropped his eraser on the ground and could not reach it, he asked the pupil who sat in front of him to pick it up by gently tap on the back. Due to C's distinguished academic performance, the classroom teacher arranged other pupils whose attainments were not good sit around him; in one way, hoping being influenced by C and in another way; C could also help them with academic subjects. Through the observations, C did help other pupils who sat around him; the researcher could see C and other pupils had chats (due to the distance, the conversation was not clear and the researcher was not sure if they were discussing about class subject or others). However, there was once the researcher clearly heard C's talking about the solar system (sun-moon-earth) towards the pupil sat behind him in the Nature and Science class.

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<sup>1</sup> C is a wheelchair user.

Through the observations, only once C showed his impatience towards the class. On Wednesdays, C was unstable than other school days. Due to C's swimming activities after school every Wednesday, it seemed that he was eager to go home as soon as possible. According to C's classroom teacher, C was like this every week; but because he did not disturb other pupils (sometimes he packed his bookcase in advance or sometimes he did not pay attention to the subject teachers), the subject teachers (knew this situation) would not say anything.

Due to physical impairment, C could not attend all activities in physical education as his peers; however, C was active in his class. There were not so many differences between him and his classmates. In this case, not only was C a distinguished pupil but he and his peers had good relationships. The teachers, both subject teachers and the classroom teacher, praised him as a good pupil.

***Case D: A female pupil (C) with behavioural disorder, Grade 6, Tainan County.***

Due to family background, this female pupil had a long history of behavioural problems since entering primary school<sup>1</sup>. Through five days observations, C was not stable during teaching and learning processes. She constantly made noises during the class, except music class, and sometimes she was lack of attention towards teachers' teaching. Being as classmates for more than one year, other pupils knew C had problem<sup>2</sup> and were used to C's unstable conditions. C could not concentrate on teachers' teaching and according to the classroom teacher; she had difficulties towards learning and she was under-achievement.

When C was unstable, the teaching and learning process was interrupted and the subject teachers sometimes needed to ask her to behave. However, it seemed that subject teachers

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<sup>1</sup> The special education teacher also pointed out that C had already had behavioural problems when she was in nursery school (kindergarten).

<sup>2</sup> A pupil told the researcher and used "problem, crazy, frightened" as descriptions.

knew C was unable to control her will during teaching; they tended to ignore her behaviours if the class was not seriously disturbed. When the class was interrupted or if C was not tamed, teachers could ask C to stand in the position of attention outside the principal's office. After doing so, C could at least 'cool down' for the next class. According to the special education teacher, the agreement of standing in the position of attention was made with C's family members; and her family members understood C's situation and felt sorry for other pupils.

As teachers, pupils in C's class knew C did not disturb the class on purpose; and they could realise and understand her problems. Only when C was beyond their tolerance, some pupils would say "Could you please be silent!", "I will tell the teacher and make you stand in the position of attention outside the principal's office" or "shut up". C's behaviours sometimes frightened other pupils. C sometimes tapped pupils' heads, no matter during the classes or the class breaks, without any reason. Also, during the observations, C threw the ball to another female pupil without saying anything in advance. Pupils were frightened when C became aggressive. The classroom teacher pointed out that few parents were angry about their children being located in the same class with C.

C had a great number of "strange" movements, such as shaking the table and nodding her head, during the observations. If not influencing other pupils too much, the teachers and pupils in the class would try not to notice C. However, if the opposite happened, the teaching and learning process was interrupted. Interruptions and aggressions, as the classroom teacher mentioned, were the primary concerns of other pupils' parents and the school staff.

### 8.1.3 Discussions of the Cases and Observations

In the research, two cases had emotional disabilities and the other two had physical impairments. The reason of the observations focused on the differences and reactions when locating two different categories (mental/physical impairments) pupils with their peers and investigations on teachers and other pupils' responses.

From the observations, two different stories described how the teachers and pupils reacted toward pupils with mental/physical disabilities. The following are the descriptions about observations and feedback from teachers and disabled/non-disabled pupils jointed with ideas and opinions from other research instruments.

Pupils with physical impairments did not have too many difficulties when located in the inclusive classroom. They needed help from others (both teachers and peers); such as moving from one building to another (case C) or needed other pupils for hearing more clearly from teachers' speaking (case A). In learning and teaching process, pupils with physical disabilities did not need to have extra attention from teachers, the special education teacher also mentioned that *pupils with physical disabilities, in my school, need help from transportation and move; we do not need to pay extra attention to them.* From the observations, it was not difficult for physical impaired pupils to build good relationships with their peers; and non-disabled pupils also liked to offer help when the physical impairment pupils needed. A subject teacher supported inclusive setting very much and pointed out that *it is a good opportunity to let everyone know about love and share.*

From the observations, it seemed that most non-disabled pupils felt comfortable with physical impaired pupils. Non-disabled pupils generously offered their help towards physical impaired pupils. In non-disabled pupils' minds, pupils with physical impairments

were merely “inconvenient” of mobility, as one non-disabled pupil said *he just cannot walk but he is a good friend*. Pupils with physical impairment did not have difficulties in academic subjects, they needed help for carrying personal belongs, pushing the wheelchair to the gymnasium and/or other simple things. In the case A, a female pupil with hearing difficulty did not need further help from teachers and pupils, and it seemed that she might just need other people’s attention. In case C, a male pupil was a wheelchair user and he was a distinguished student in the class; he only asked for help when he could not accomplish things such as picking up the eraser from the ground. Only in PE class did this male pupil look unhappy/unpleasant/sad. Pupils, whom were used as models by teachers, with physical impairments were samples to other non-disabled pupils. Teachers used pupils with physical difficulties in one hand to encourage other non-disabled pupils and on the other hand, by doing so, the physical impairment pupils could improve their self-esteem. In the inclusive setting, both non-disabled and physical impairment pupils could complement each other. Besides, from parental questionnaires, there was no disagreement about locating pupils with physical difficulties in a traditional mainstream classroom. Some parents even thought that locating pupils with physical impairment was a good idea because non-disabled peers could learn and deem pupils with physical difficulties as examples.

Pupils with behavioural disorders or misconducts had a very different story. From the cases, it was not easy for both W (male pupil with ADHD) and C (female pupil with behavioural disorders) to focus on teachers’ teaching. These two pupils had difficulties on focusing what was happening during the class. Sometimes, they were unstable and did not pay attention to teachers’ teaching and sometimes they seemed they were interested in the teaching and learning process<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, W sometimes raised his hand during class and said something, both relevant and irrelevant to the subjects, and sometimes he just raised his hand without saying anything.

Compared to pupils with physical impairments, teachers needed to pay more attention to pupils with behavioural problems. Attention from classroom teachers and subject teachers was sometimes influenced/drawn by pupils with behavioural difficulties. From the observations, some teachers seemed to ignore pupils' mis-behaviours or misconducts<sup>1</sup>. Different teachers used different methods to cope with pupils' mis-behaviours. Some teachers used gentle tongues whilst others used firm and strict languages. However, if pupils were really beyond teachers' tolerance, punishments<sup>2</sup> would be given; taking pupil C as an example, the only punishment which was observed was seeing C stand in the position of attention in front of the principal's office<sup>3</sup>. Interestingly, from the observations, two different English teachers from two primary schools encouraged pupils with behavioural difficulties to speak<sup>4</sup>. Being in the same classroom with pupils with behavioural difficulties, it seemed that non-disabled pupils did not have too many interactions with pupils with behavioural disorders. The reason might be that pupils with behavioural disorders were unpredictable<sup>5</sup>. Through five days observations, the results indicated that interactions between pupils with behavioural problems and their non-disabled peers were few. Unlike the other two cases, non-disabled peers and pupils with physical impairment had good relationships and a great number of interactions were observed. It seemed that non-disabled pupils were "afraid" of pupils with behavioural disorders<sup>6</sup> and on purposely, kept distance from them. Also, from the parental questionnaires, 27 (2% of total questionnaire) copies of returned questionnaires<sup>7</sup> were

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<sup>1</sup> A subject teacher said "There are so many students in one class; I could not put my focus merely on one/two pupils who have mis-behaviours. I think my responsibility is to take care of the majority of pupils."

<sup>2</sup> No punishment was observed in W's case. The classroom teacher explained that the punishment made W more aggressive.

<sup>3</sup> The punishment of standing in the position of attention in front of the principal's office was agreed and approved with C's parents and the principle.

<sup>4</sup> One special education teacher had a different story. The special education teacher believed that the English teacher in the school was new and young. Once the English teacher has been teaching for more than five or ten years as other colleagues, "I don't think she will be as gentle as now".

<sup>5</sup> A pupil in C's class pointed out that few pupils in the class dared to get close to C because "she is unpredictable".

<sup>6</sup> A pupil even mentioned that "My parents ask me to keep distance from them".

<sup>7</sup> No sentence or word was found against pupils with physical impairments.

noted sentences, such as *I don't mind pupils with physical problems, but I DO mind pupils with behavioural difficulties*, or simply *no aggressive student, please*.

From the observations, it seemed that pupils with behavioural disorders or misconducts were easily excluded from his/her non-disabled peers; and sometimes even worse because of the lack of special education teachers' assistance, they were excluded from other teachers as well. A classroom teacher even mentioned that as a pupil's parents knew there would be a pupil with behavioural problems in their child's class, the parents insisted their child to be transferred to another class, and if they could not make it; they would transfer their child to another primary school.

## **8.2 Focus Groups**

### **8.2.1 The Aim**

The aim of the focus group was on the participants' (both non-disabled and disabled pupils) perceptions and their interactions with their peers. By providing a comfortable environment within the inclusive classroom, the participants could interact with their peers and share their information/feedback related to the research topic. In a short period of time (30-40 minutes), data were produced and gathered<sup>1</sup> by the researcher.

### **8.2.2 Themes for the Focus Groups**

Theme 1. General perceptions of non-disabled pupils about disabled pupils and disabled pupils' reactions of being located in an inclusive classroom.

Prompts: What do you think about disabled peers?

Disabled pupils' reactions about being located in an inclusive classroom. Your relationships?

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<sup>1</sup> Audio recorder was planned to be used throughout the focus group. However; without the consent from some of participants' parents, the researcher took notes and jotted down the conversation as much as possible.

Theme 2. Classroom activities.

Prompts: What do you think about putting disabled students in your class?

Can pupils with SEN catch up their peers' step?

What sort of things do you do together/separately?

Theme 3. Learning in the classroom.

Prompts: Do you progress in an inclusive setting?

Theme 4. Other school activities.

Prompts: What do you (non-disabled pupils) think putting disabled students in your school?

What do you (disabled pupils) think being put in the normal school?

When you take part in the school activities, what do you feel about non-disabled/disabled peers?

Do SEN pupils think school activities suitable for them?

Theme 5. Personal choice.

Prompts: In general, do you like inclusive education?

Do you feel comfortable in the inclusive setting?

If you can make decisions, would you choose the inclusive setting again?

### **8.2.3 Discussions of the Focus Groups**

#### **General perceptions of non-disabled pupils about disabled pupils and disabled pupils' reactions of being located in an inclusive classroom**

*What do you think about disabled peers?*

In general, non-disabled pupils from both 3 and 6 grades indicated that there was no huge/significant difference between non-disabled and disabled pupils; however, if pupils with behavioural disorders or misconducts, two non-disabled pupils from different focus

groups said that they did not want to be located with pupils who were aggressive. Prior to locating in an inclusive classroom, non-disabled pupils were informed that one (or two) of the classmate(s) were different from them. The classroom teachers and special education teachers provided some information about disabled pupils and asked the class to seize the opportunity to help those who need help. Non-disabled pupils thought that there was no difference when the disabled pupils were located in their class. However, one pupil from 6 Grade mentioned about parents' complain. The parents believed that with disabled pupil(s), especially those with *strange behaviours* in the class, less attention would be paid to non-disabled pupils. No disagreement was found toward pupils with physical impairments. Interestingly, non-disabled pupils felt comfortable in the inclusive classroom while being located with pupils with physical impairments; but they were '**curious**' about pupils with mental/behavioural difficulties<sup>1</sup>.

*Disabled pupils' reactions about being located in an inclusive classroom.*

Most disabled pupils liked to be located in the inclusive classrooms. Some pupils with physical impairments indicated that they knew the differences of their bodies and appearances between themselves and non-disabled pupils, but they felt comfortable when being located in the inclusive classrooms. Only one pupil with special educational needs did not like to be located in the inclusive classroom because Y was a physical impairment pupil and was difficult to attend all school activities.

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<sup>1</sup> A non-disabled pupil mentioned about a female pupil in the class was "strange"; other pupils, including this non-disabled pupil, did not have any idea about how and why this pupil is "strange". They just felt strange about this female pupil. The special education teacher explained that the "strange" pupil had been diagnosed as "abnormal chromosome". However, after seeing this pupil, the researcher could not see any difference, but her movements seemed a little strange (uncoordinated). Another non-disabled pupil mentioned about a pupil with cerebral palsy, and the classmates had curiosity about this pupil, but the classroom teacher did not talk too much about this syndrome. The special education teacher explained that due to the lack of personal background and knowledge, it was better for experts or specialists to demonstrate and explain to non-disabled pupils instead of the classroom teacher. The special education teacher was also astonished when the researcher mentioned about non-disabled pupils' curiosity, because the school policy was to make non-disabled pupils understand and realise the differences between non-disabled and disabled pupils. But it seemed that "we did not do enough for non-disabled pupils", the special education teacher said.

### *Your relationships?*

Some of the non-disabled pupils indicated that the relationships with pupils with special educational needs were good and they liked to share their works and help special educational needs pupils. However, two 6 Grade non-disabled pupils, from different classes, mentioned that in their classes, some non-disabled pupils did not like to be with pupils with additional support needs. One of the pupil even said *those who did not want to stay with SEN pupils were influenced (told) by their family members*. Pupils with physical difficulties believed that they could bridge good relationships with non-disabled peers, because teachers and school staff constantly emphasised the notions of “share” and “help” within schools; and more than half of the focus group disabled participants agreed that they had good/acceptable relationships with their non-disabled peers and felt happy to be located within the inclusive classroom.

### **Classroom activities**

#### *What do you think about putting disabled students in your class?*

Regardless of pupils with behavioural disorders, non-disabled pupils did not feel much difference when physically disabled pupils were located in their classrooms. Some non-disabled pupils even liked to play with disabled pupils and would like to help them. Most non-disabled pupils felt comfortable when located with pupils with disabilities; however, one pupil also mentioned about that *I knew one who doesn't like to be with him (a pupil with hearing and seeing difficulties) because XXX is a selfish person*<sup>1</sup>. In the inclusive classroom, disabled pupils were treated as their non-disabled peers and this made non-disabled pupils feel there was no difference between them and their disabled peers. A

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<sup>1</sup> After the focus group interview, the researcher talked with the classroom teacher; and the classroom teacher believed that XXX is the only son (grandson) of a big family, and his parents (grandparents) and most family members put the focus on this male pupil. According to the classroom teacher, maybe the boy “is just spoilt” and “does not learn how to respect others”.

female pupil even liked to talk and play with her classmate who had speaking and hearing difficulties<sup>1</sup>.

*Can pupils with SEN catch up their peers' step?*

In academic subjects such as Mandarin and mathematics, pupils with learning difficulties, taking mental retardation and Autism as examples, were difficult to catch up with non-disabled pupils<sup>2</sup>. But pupils with physical impairments did not have significant difference in their academic performance. One non-disabled pupil pointed out X was a distinguish student in academic performance but X could not run. Apparently, disabled pupils in some way had difficulties in either academic or non-academic subjects. Most non-disabled pupils agreed that pupils with physical impairments were doing “*ok*” or “*fine*”<sup>3</sup> in their classes. In the focus groups, three physical impairment pupils<sup>4</sup> believed that there was no difference in intelligence between them and their non-disabled pupils. One non-disabled pupil also mentioned that a pupil was hyperactive<sup>5</sup> in another class but this pupil was also the top 10% in academic performance. For non-academic subjects, pupils with physical impairments had difficulties in PE, but felt comfortable and “*ok*”<sup>6</sup> in music and arts. Two non-disabled pupils pointed out mental retarded pupils in their classes could not catch up with their non-disabled peers, either in academic or non-academic subjects.

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<sup>1</sup> “*I like her because she is polite, easy-going and likes to help others*”.

<sup>2</sup> Two non-disabled pupils pointed out that pupils with mental difficulties were ‘not good’ or ‘behind’. One of them used ‘idiot’ to describe his disabled classmate. After talking with the special education teacher, the special education teacher suggested the researcher using ‘mental retarded’ and ‘Autism’.

<sup>3</sup> Two non-disabled pupils from different classes mentioned that they did not have clear ideas (exam results) about academic performance or attainment towards their physical impairment pupils, because they (the disabled pupils) were just one of their classmates.

<sup>4</sup> Two pupils were incapable to walk; the other was weak of hearing.

<sup>5</sup> The pupil used the term “hyperactive”, but the researcher could not assure of this.

<sup>6</sup> Two pupils said they did not have difficulties with music and arts. But “big trouble” was the term they described themselves.

*What sort of things do you do together/separately?*

In the inclusive classroom, disabled pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and with low attainment or poor performance<sup>1</sup>, were divided and settled to another classroom for academic subjects, such as Mandarin and mathematics. On the contrary, pupils with physical impairments did not have too many differences from their non-disabled peers; the only difficulty for physical impairment pupils was physical education. One physical impairment pupil said *I really want to join the class, but because of my legs* (the pupil is a wheelchair user), *I cannot*. However, even pupils with physical difficulties still attended physical education activities, instead of joining; they sat beside the activity area or attended the activity with other's help (e.g. the pupil mentioned about attending swimming class with help from his parents and probationer special education teacher). Through the group interviews, the main difference of classroom activities was in the subjects, that is, in academic and non-academic subjects.

### **Learning in the classroom**

*Do you progress in an inclusive setting?*

In general, both non-disabled and disabled pupils did not think they progressed in the inclusive setting. Non-disabled pupils did not feel the difference in either academic performance nor human relationships or interactions between them and their disabled peers. However, three disabled pupils indicated that inclusive setting made them feel like normal children and they believed they had more friends<sup>2</sup>. Though non-disabled pupils did not feel too much progress in the inclusive setting, one pupil said there was physical impairment pupil in the class and X was a distinguished student in the classroom, and the classroom teacher used X as an example to encourage the class; and *some pupils really became better*,

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<sup>1</sup> Five non-disabled pupils in the focus groups pointed out that their disabled classmates were “*taken away*” due to their learning difficulties. However, due to the limitation of interview time and pupils’ knowledge, they could not specify (one mentioned about behavioural problems, but the researcher could not assure about this) what kinds of difficulties their disabled peers had.

<sup>2</sup> Two of the disabled pupils were in special units when they were in kindergartens.

*in both academic subjects and daily behaviours.* From the focus groups, pupils with physical impairment were modelled by teachers as examples of encouragement.

### **Other school activities**

*What do you (non-disabled pupils) think putting disabled students in your school? What do you (disabled pupils) think being put in the normal school?*

It seemed that both non-disabled and disabled pupils did not know about the real meaning of inclusion<sup>1</sup>. In the class, classroom teachers did not mention anything about inclusive education. One non-disabled pupil mentioned that in moral education the teacher said something about equality for all, but the pupil still had a vague idea about equality. In general, non-disabled pupils did not have any idea about putting disabled students in the same school, or even in the same class. However, one pupil mentioned *my parents did not want me have any interaction with disabled pupils, but I do not know what's wrong with disabled pupils!* Most pupils with learning difficulties liked to be located in the inclusive classroom, because for doing so, they felt like they were just like their non-disabled peers. Only one pupil (with severe mobile difficulty) did not like to be located in the inclusive school because it was hard for X to do every activity as other pupils.

*When you take part in the school activities, what do you feel about non-disabled/disabled peers?*

Non-disabled pupils knew that to some extent disabled pupils had difficulties in learning or daily life, and some disabled pupils knew there were differences between them and their non-disabled peers. Non-disabled pupils did not feel too many differences on school activities, because since disabled pupils were put in their class, disabled pupils had become the same as them and become one of them, *though X needs help, X is still one of us*, replied

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<sup>1</sup> According to two special education teachers and a principal (from the interview), inclusion was not a term for pupils, because pupils were too young. As a special education teacher mentioned “*it is daily life, the term is not important*”.

from one of the non-disabled pupils. Disabled pupils knew they had something different from their non-disabled peers, and realised that they eventually had difficulties in some measure. School activities were designed for the majority of pupils and some pupils with difficulties envied their non-disabled peers, as one disabled pupil pointed out *I really want to play baseball.*

*Do SEN pupils think school activities suitable for them?*

In general, SEN pupils were satisfied with the school activities. As mentioned above, the school activities were designed for the majority of pupils, sometimes it was hard to cover all range of pupils. X, who wanted to play baseball, was a wheelchair user and both of X's hands had shrunk due to muscular dystrophy. The activities in mainstream schools were multi-dimensional, and pupils with SEN needed time to get used to mainstream environment. When SEN pupils were used to the mainstream school environment, they realised their differences and tried to perform in other way<sup>1</sup>. One speaking impairment pupil said *I could not speak properly, but I could run faster than others*<sup>2</sup>. In the group interviews, SEN pupils seemed they were happy in the inclusive setting.

### **Personal choice**

*In general, do you like inclusive education?*

Most non-disabled pupils did not feel too much difference so that it was difficult for them to say they liked or disliked inclusive setting; one pupil replied *I really don't know, I just think we have a different classmate.* One 3 Grade non-disabled pupil pointed out that this was the first time engaging with disabled pupils, and *I did not think there is too much difference between us, I don't have any feeling.* For disabled pupils, especially for those who were in the segregation system prior to being located in the inclusive setting, they liked to be located in the inclusive setting. A 6 Grade disabled pupil said *I feel happy*

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<sup>1</sup> One pupil with hearing difficulty said *I could not hear clearly, but I could make a lot of friends.*

<sup>2</sup> The researcher had to ask this pupil to repeat his speaking several times during the focus group interview.

*because I can have so many friends, in the special school, I did not have so many friends.*

Only one disabled pupil disliked the inclusive setting due to severe physical impairment.

*Do you feel comfortable in the inclusive setting?*

In the focus groups, both non-disabled and disabled pupils felt all right<sup>1</sup> in the inclusive setting. However, the focus groups excluded pupils with emotional impairments such as ADHD syndrome, behavioural disorders/problems or pupils with Autism. Take one of the six focus groups as an example, one non-disabled pupil and one disabled pupil were classmates and they were good friends. They both pointed out that there was a pupil with behavioural disorders in the class, and they did not like the pupil at all, because the pupil was sometimes aggressive towards their classmates and disturbed teachers' teaching.

*If you can make decisions, would you choose the inclusive setting again?*

Most non-disabled pupils did not have too many opinions about this issue<sup>2</sup>. Nearly every one nodded when one pupil said *I don't mind if there is a special pupil or even five special pupils in my class*. Most disabled pupils would like to choose inclusive setting; only two would like to go back to segregation school. One of these two disabled pupil said *there are more people who are similar to us and in this school, I am too different*.

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<sup>1</sup> Pupils from the focus groups, both non-disabled and disabled, used "fine", "all right", "ok" or "not too bad" when answering this question.

<sup>2</sup> "I don't know" and "I have no opinion" were most heard from non-disabled pupils when asking this question.

## **CHAPTER NINE: SURVEY OF PARENTS**

### **9.1 Pilot Study**

Prior to the main survey, a pilot study was undertaken. The purpose of pilot study was on increasing the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire. Feedback from the respondents was valuable and taken into consideration for improvement of the questionnaire. Details were checked through the pilot study and opinions from the respondents added to the questionnaire, as Cohen *et al.* (2003) pointed out *everything about the questionnaire should be piloted; nothing should be excluded* (Cohen *et al.* 2003: 261). Six subjects were involved in the pilot study chosen by the researcher for ease of access. All six families (three from the City and three from the County) have at least one child who studies in primary schools. Defects and disadvantages were pointed out and improvements suggested by the respondents via notes, phone calls and conversations. Ambiguities were eliminated and the time taken to complete the questionnaire was noted.

### **9.2 The Questionnaire Distribution and Return**

In both Tainan City and County, pupils with special educational needs (or their parents) can choose their education settings, either mainstream or special schools. When conducting this study, the researcher found that in Taiwan, few or nothing (posters or propaganda) about inclusion/equality was seen within primary school campuses<sup>1</sup>; from the interview, a principal also mentioned about this. In Scottish primary schools, on the contrary, a great number of posters, propaganda and slogans can be seen within primary school campuses, for example, in Glasgow Springburn Academic, the posts of “Count Us In” from the Glasgow City Council can be found on the walls. This difference might be the main reason that nearly 60 percent of the respondents did not hear about inclusive education before, and the return rate was low. Even in the pilot studies, 3 respondents (6 in total) complained

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<sup>1</sup> The researcher visited friends when conducting the study and some friends worked in Taipei (north of Taiwan) and Taichung (middle of Taiwan)—See figure 1.2 on page 8.

about that they did not know about inclusive education. So, in each of the questionnaires, there was a note of explanation and a request for contacting the researcher freely if they needed more information about inclusive education and this research study. Details of the questionnaire distribution and return from the parental survey are provided in table 9.1.

**Table 9.1: Questionnaire distribution and return data**

Total number of questionnaire distributed: 2155
Total number of questionnaire returned: 1298
Total percentage return rate: 60.2%
Number of questionnaire distributed (City): 1025 (total pupil population: 60647)
Number of questionnaire returned (City): 753
Percentage return rate (city): 73.4%
Number of questionnaire distributed (County): 1130 (total pupil population: 81624)
Number of questionnaire returned (County): 545
Percentage return rate (County): 48.2%
Number of spoiled questionnaires (more than 4 questions or 1 section without response) returned + blank (for example: a class with 32 pupils and the researcher was required to distribute 35 copies by the class teacher just in case of losing or damaging by pupils): 857

### **9.3 Results from Parents**

#### **9.3.1 Section One: Basic Knowledge**

The first section focused on respondents' basic knowledge about inclusive education. A greater proportion of the questionnaires (73.4%) were returned from Tainan City, compared to the return rate of 48.2% from the County, which may be due to the higher

educational background of parents in the City. One major reason was that people (parents) from rural area may lack of the knowledge about the topic, for example: there were numbers of questionnaire returned with writing “*I don’t know what inclusive education is!!*” or “*Too difficult to answer*” and there was even a male respondent phoned the researcher and said “*What is this? Is this some kinds of joke?*” On the other hand, questionnaires returned from the City were much better, and a number of them returned with respondents’ own suggestions or comments towards inclusive education.

The majority of respondents (59.7%) had not heard the term “inclusive education”. As mentioned in “analysis of the questionnaire return rate”, the main reason for this was the lack of information, from both the government and the school, being given to parents. As an interviewed principal pointed out *all staff should have heard and known about inclusion, but this is only within campuses in which provide inclusive education. I think, even not all teachers know or have heard about it.* Though less than half respondents had not heard about inclusive education, their reaction toward the idea of inclusion was positive. Less than half of the respondents (17.9%) were negatively disposed.

Based on the previous question, of those respondents whose reactions to inclusive education was positive, the majority of the respondents (59.7%) agreed that inclusive education provided equal opportunities for both non-disabled and disabled pupils and greater opportunity for human interaction. Almost half (49.1%) of respondents thought that inclusive education provided better opportunities for children to form good human relationships and that normal pupils could offer their abilities to SEN pupils. Few (5.7%) thought that inclusion would lead to better academic performance. The majority of respondents (64.6%) thought that putting non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same learning environment would improve co-operation and collaboration. On Question 4, more respondents supported positive reasons to inclusion, such as multi-dimensional learning

setting and atmosphere and learning from each other, rather than negative reasons, such as natural selection and the law of the jungle.

### **9.3.2 Section Two: Perspectives on Pupils**

Less than half of the respondents (47.3%) believed that inclusive education was beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils; and few respondents (11.3%) thought that inclusive education was a better choice for normal pupils. While exploring on pupils' responses to inclusive education, less than half of the respondents (39.8%) found their children felt comfortable in the inclusive setting, and few respondents (9.1%) thought that their children would like to be located in the inclusive setting. One fifth respondents (20.0%) found that their children preferred traditional segregation system. If pupils had the chance to choose their educational setting again, less than half of the pupils (47.2%) did not know about this. 19.6% of respondents would choose traditional segregation setting. Compared to the previous question, 20% respondents found that their children preferred traditional segregation system, the result was similar. When asking about whom a child's learning achievement should compete with, almost all the respondents (93.4%) thought that children's learning achievement should compete with him/herself or should not compete with others. Few respondents (14.6%) believed that a child's learning achievement should compete with others and his/her siblings.

### **9.3.3 Section Three: Parental Perspectives**

The focus of this section was on parental perspectives towards inclusive education. The majority of the respondents (67.2%) basically supported inclusive education; and more than one fifth (22.2%) strongly supported it. Only few respondents (10.3%) would give no support on inclusive education. It is important to mention that, many who did not give support included parents who noted that if their children were located in a classroom with physically impairment they would not mind their children's education setting. In one of the

questionnaires, a respondent wrote *if my child is in the same class with pupils with behavioural disorder, especially whose behaviours are unacceptable or violent, I would absolutely not let my child enter that class*. Also, some respondents with the answer “support somewhat” pointed out that if the class had pupils with social or behavioural misconducts, they would not support inclusion.

Parents thought that the importance of the inclusive classroom was based on collaboration and sharing (50.5%), teachers could instruct correct attitudes to both non-disabled and disabled pupils (40.0%), equal opportunities (38.1%) and both non-disabled and disabled pupils could learn from each other (36.6%). Only 7.1% of the respondents thought that pupils’ academic performance was important and 2.3% believed that the learning environment was improved. Few respondents (10.7%) never thought of the importance of inclusive classroom. The majority of the respondents (51.1%) were concerned that inclusive classroom could not provide the quality of education; and pupils’ academic performance was also their concern (45.6%). Compared to the traditional segregation schooling, parents focused on quality and academic achievement rather than justice and egalitarianism (21.3%). The main targeting group in the inclusive classroom, according to the respondents, was both non-disabled and disabled pupils. The majority of the respondents (52.5%) agreed that normal and disabled pupils are of the same importance in an inclusive setting. 21.1% respondents thought that the targeting group should depend on the subject or the aim of the learning content. Few respondents put their focus on either normal pupils (8.8%) or special educational needs pupils (5.6%). Interestingly, the percentage on ‘no idea’ (9.2%) was higher than ‘normal pupils’ and ‘special educational needs pupils’.

### **9.3.4 Section Four: Future Expectations and Conclusions**

If the respondents have a child in an inclusive classroom, when they have another child who is ready to start school, the majority of them (56.3%) would choose the inclusive setting (including ‘the same school and the same inclusive setting’ and ‘different school, but in the inclusive setting’); and 41.3% of the respondents would prefer traditional segregation system to inclusive system. The majority of the respondents (61.7%) thought that the curriculum and the content in the inclusive school should be the same as other mainstream schools but with own supportive curricula and contents. 31.4% of the respondents believed that the curriculum and the content in the inclusive school should be the same as other mainstream schools. Only 5.8% of the respondents felt that the curriculum and the content should be different from other mainstream schools. When mentioning about activities in the inclusive school, less than half of the respondents (47.5%) thought that the activity provided in the inclusive school could be undertaken by both non-disabled and disabled pupils themselves. 34.6% of the respondents thought that the activity should be the same as other mainstream schools but with own supportive activities. 22.8% of the respondents believed that there should be more opportunities for parental participation. Only few respondents (1.4%) thought that the activity in an inclusive school should be different from other mainstream schools and 1.2% thought that it was better not to have any activity. Except the missing data (0.6%), the majority of the respondents (67.2%) thought that inclusive education would be the trend in the future and the rest of respondents (33.2%) did not think that inclusive education would be based on mainstreaming in the future.

## **9.4 Analysis of the Quantitative Data**

### **Introduction**

For the purpose of analysis, the questionnaire data were entered into an SPSS file. The first part of the analysis of the data from the questionnaire focused on descriptive statistics (See

Appendix G). Each individual variable was analysed using descriptive statistics, namely, frequencies. Secondly, in order to analyse inter-relationships among different variables, crosstabulation was used and values of  $\chi^2$  calculated to establish inferential statistics. The purpose of using crosstabulation was to investigate the relationships between variables. The Chi-Square test is used to test the row and column variables, namely, the row and column variables are independent or unrelated to one another (Muijs, 2004). The statistics significance level, known as p-value, is the index of two different variables. Each of the variables is compared to others so that detailed results can be derived from the SPSS. The questionnaire was divided into four main sections and so the results were also divided into four main sections in accordance with the variables. However, to compare every single item in the research was not necessary due to the non-similarity or non-relationship. Therefore, based on the research questions, the independent variable and one item relevant to the research question as the dependant variable were chosen.

The method of using Chi-Square focuses on testing hypothesis; however, as moving into deeper understanding of parental survey, the researcher's attitudes towards inclusion, particularly educational inclusion in primary schooling in Taiwan, were positive and then gradually shifted to uncertain. A great number of statistical significances and trends were found during the process of study. Detailed statistical significances and trends are provided in Appendix H.

### **Summary of Findings from Statistics**

Though less than half of the respondents had heard about inclusive education, 78.3% of the total respondents was positive toward inclusive education and thought that inclusive education was worthwhile; and there was no statistically significance between "location" and "heard about inclusive education". However, respondents in the City tended to be more positive towards inclusive education than respondents in the County. The majority of

respondents who believed inclusion were either excellent idea or worthwhile thought that inclusion could provide greater opportunity for human interaction, bridge good relationships between non-disabled and disabled pupils and offer non-disabled children chances to help their disabled peers.

The majority of the respondents, whether have heard about inclusion or not, believed that inclusive education provided equal opportunities to both non-disabled and disabled pupils. Though the majority of respondents were positive toward inclusion, from the statistical result, respondents who had heard inclusive education were more positive than those who had not heard about inclusion. The statistical results, taking 'location' and 'learning from each other' as the example, also showed that there existed statistical difference between City and County respondents, that is, respondents from City had a more positive view than respondents from County.

The main point of putting non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same learning environment was to enable learning from each other. The statistical results also revealed that more respondents from the City had heard about inclusive education than those in the County who had not heard about inclusive education. Nearly half of all respondents, from both City and County, believed that their children felt comfortable in an inclusive setting; but from pupils' own opinions, nearly half of all respondents pointed out that their children<sup>1</sup> did not know about or never thought of choosing their own educational setting even if these children had chances to choose their own educational environment.

Regardless of whether they had heard of inclusion or not, the majority of respondents believed that inclusion provided equal opportunities for both non-disabled and disabled pupils; however, less than half of respondents thought that inclusion promoted the notion

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<sup>1</sup> The questionnaire was designed for parents, and the researcher could not identify whether respondents (parents) really asked their children or just answered in accordance with their own opinions.

of justice and egalitarianism. In general, reactions of respondents from both City and County towards inclusive education were positive. However, it is important to point out that parents were also concerned that inclusive education could not promote their children's academic achievement and provide the necessary quality of education.

Nearly half of respondents believed that putting non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same learning environment was to provide a multi-dimensional learning setting and atmosphere and they thought the main point in this kind of setting was to promote cooperation and collaboration. The majority of all the respondents would 'support somewhat' inclusion.

If the parents have a child in an inclusive classroom, when they have another child who has ready to start school, the majority of them would choose the inclusive setting; however, nearly half of the respondents would also prefer traditional segregation system to inclusive system. The majority of respondents believed that in the future inclusive education would be the trend.

## **PART FOUR: DISCUSSION**

### **CHAPTER TEN: RESPONSES TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This chapter draws together the findings from the investigation into the implementation of inclusive education in Tainan region in Taiwan and interprets them in the context of the literature. The chapter addresses the substantive issue in the study, that is, how can inclusive education be best used as a means of improving Taiwanese society? In this research, much attention is drawn to address and listen to the voices from relevant key stakeholders. However, as Ainscow *et al.* (2006) pointed out that *one person's view of an improving institution may be another's vision of educational hell* (p.11). So, trying to find the 'golden mean', in other words, a traditional Chinese thinking between two sides of one thing, is one of the researcher's main purposes so that both non-disabled and disabled pupils can benefit.

#### ***RQ 1. What do policy makers and educational professionals understand by the term 'social inclusion' in Taiwan?***

Both policy makers and education professionals deemed social inclusion as 'a way to equality', because the notion of inclusion provides all citizens with a concept that all human beings are equal; and to some extent, pupils who grow up under inclusive setting would realise that all human beings are equal so that appropriate attitudes can be cultivated through inclusive education. Educational professionals (Principals and teachers) in Taiwan also believed that an inclusive concept cultivated in early stage of school life has its advantages, as Carrington and Robinson's (2006) belief which maintained that *inclusive education can also promote and direct social inclusion in society* (p.329) or Corbett's (1997) view which stated that inclusion in schools paves the way to long lasting social inclusion that determines the quality of life and social status (p.60). In short, social

inclusion is linked with ‘participation’, ‘equality’, ‘respect’ and ‘sharing’; and by using Lloyd’s (2008) word, it can be concluded that *social inclusion agenda is concerned with ensuring access to the mainstream of activity in society and with preventing alienation and dissatisfaction* (p.226).

The social work professor and the selected national legislators in Taiwan believed social inclusion and exclusion had a close link with economics and the distribution of the wealth. The main idea derived from the social work professor and legislators focused on economic exclusion and family factors. Similarities on social exclusion among countries in the world can be found from researches and reports. For example, in Scotland:

*A wide variety of inter-related events and characteristics shape the extent to which individuals feel included or excluded from participating in society, and a multiplicity of physical, social, economic and attitudinal barriers impede the full involvement of individuals in society.*

(The Scottish Government, 1999

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/1999/11/3328630f-78ac-4e7e-824e-0e27038bb031> access date:31/Oct/2007)

and in Taiwan:

*With the coming of globalisation and knowledge economics, the main aim of 2015 Economical Development Plan focuses on Taiwan’s prosperity, equity, equality, justice and continuous development.*

(Executive Yuan, 2006,

<http://www.ey.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=26252&ctNode=484&mp=1> access date: 31/Oct/2007)

Though inclusive policies in both Taiwan and Scotland focus on full participation and equal access to society, there still remains one crucial question, that is, ‘which group would be a priority?’ which reflects Nilholm’s (2006) questions of ‘*Who is going to decide?*’ and ‘*What is the right thing to decide?*’, with regard to issues such as inclusion (p.441). Through interviews and parental questionnaires, each respondent had his/her opinion; so there is no single agreed answer to this question.

Several interviewees, including legislators and professors, believed that the notion of inclusion has long existed in people’s minds. From early resistance of the Dutch, Spanish and Japanese’s occupancy to anti-authoritarianism in the 1960’s-1970’s, people in Taiwan had been seeking autonomy for more than two hundred years. Giddens (1998, 2000) in his books on *The Third Way* advocates a fairer society in which every single citizen should and could have the rights to be treated equally. However, social exclusion has its serious and complex nature as the Social Exclusion Unit (2001) indicated that social inclusion is the ‘*condition*’ brought about when people or area suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown (p.10). In Taiwan, as well as in Scotland, discrimination caused by economic, social and political inequalities is highlighted; and *being seen as or treated as different appeared to have significant implications for how people viewed themselves, in relation to the rest of society* (Scottish Executive, 1999, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/1999/11/3328630f-78ac-4e7e-824e-0e27038bb03> 1 access date: 05/11/2007). Nowadays, the Taiwanese Government has exerted a great deal of effort in fighting social exclusion (such as welfares towards aboriginal and disabled people) and trying to build a better and fairer society.

Some interviewees thought that policies and practices aimed at diminishing exclusion are sometimes deemed as propaganda. A school principal and two legislators believed that the

notion of inclusion was ideologically sound and should be put into practice. However, the principal complained about the policies whilst the legislators worried about inclusion being used as an election strategy. The principal's concerns, as well as those of the social work professor, towards inclusive policies were focused mainly on social policies and practices being nothing more than lip service. The principal argued that social policies became the tools and propaganda for politicians who wanted to win the election, and after the election, no one remembered the issue due to concerns of raising the class conflicts, such as aboriginal people or foreign wives' rights. A legislator focused on the pension system whilst another legislator used woman's rights as examples. Both legislators used "a bad check" to describe some policies and practices that are not going to be fulfilled intentionally. To the same extent as the principal, these interviewees had concerns about inclusive policies and practices being nothing more than lip-service.

Policy makers and professionals maintained that inclusive policies and practices required financial input, in other words, national/local expenditure. According to Tainan City, the education expenditure<sup>1</sup> in 2004 was 35.47% in total City's general budget (Tainan City Government, Account Office, <http://www.tnecg.gov.tw/warehouse/030G/9509edu.pdf> access date: 05/11/2007). However, in the discussion with the special education professor, the Chief of Special and Pre-School Section from Education Bureau in Tainan City, special education teachers and two principals, no one was satisfied with the budget distribution without providing too much information; and as the argument of the social work professor and the Chief of Special and Pre-School Section, each department or authority wanted more financial aid from annual expenditure. The special education

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Constitution Law, No. 164, *The expenditure of education, science and culture in central government level should not be less than 15% of total general budget...in local government level, should not be less than 35%* (Office of the President, [http://www.president.gov.tw/1\\_roc\\_intro/law\\_roc.html](http://www.president.gov.tw/1_roc_intro/law_roc.html) access date:05/11/2007). The 2000 Constitution Amendment, No. 10, *Education, Science and Culture budgets, particularly citizen basic education has priority to be budgeted and is not limited by the Constitution* Law, No. 164 (Office of President, [http://www.president.gov.tw/1\\_roc\\_intro/law\\_add\\_89.html](http://www.president.gov.tw/1_roc_intro/law_add_89.html) access date:05/11/2007)

professor complained that the budget and resources from local government were inadequate, and the majority of the money and resources came from charities, industries and the private sector, and it was really difficult to raise money and resources<sup>1</sup>. The Chief pointed out that finance was a crucial factor and because non-disabled pupils were the majority and the focus was and should be on non-disabled pupils. Two principals complained about lacking facilities and special education teachers, professionals or expertise; and conclusions derived from one of the principals was that money was the key and money was always needed to improve facilities and to recruit special education teachers/related professionals. A special education teacher felt exhausted because there were not enough sufficient resources and help; however, as a legislator and the Chief believed that money was for everyone, not for a particular group. The expenditure on education in Taiwan, according to a principal, was enough and investments for infrastructures were also all right. This principal believed that old primary schools needed to refurbish hard wares, it was not difficult to do so; the difficulty and the main issue was on parents from non-disabled pupils who thought that if the school put too much money on minority disabled pupils, it was unfair. One of the principals worked in a newly built, no more than two years, campus, believed that not so many primary schools, especially for those more than twenty or thirty-year-old schools have enough capabilities to re-build a building or buildings for just a dozen disabled pupils. Instead of constructing new buildings in those old schools, it is better to recruit new professional personnel because changing a campus is easier than changing a person's minds and concepts. When it came to the issue of resources, it was inevitably sensitive. The special education professor and the special education teachers argued that they did not have enough resources; on the contrary, the Chief, principals and legislators pointed out that resources could not only be offered to particular groups, and the focus of resources should be on the majority people/pupils.

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<sup>1</sup> Some money was donated from companies and people; and hard wares, desks and stationeries for example, were collected from local schools (from primary schools to colleges or universities) with permissions.

When pursuing the relationship between education and social inclusion/exclusion, the majority of interviewees, especially those who worked within schools, discussed the importance of education that could be used to tackling exclusion. Much research evidence also showed that education, particularly in the early stage of education, can be used as a means of tackling social exclusion; for example, Kane *et al.* (2004) suggested that targets, such as ending child poverty and increasing the educational attainment of school leavers, were aimed to achieve the progress towards social inclusion (p.69), Panayiotopoulos and Kerfoot (2007) believed that *by using education as the starting point for reducing social exclusion and promoting social inclusion* (p.64), and Ainscow (2007) pointed out that *the aim of inclusive education is to eliminate social exclusion* (p.3). Also, research evidence; for example, Rouse and Florian (1997), Mannion (2003) and Zhou *et al.* (2005), showed that school exclusion is a major factor leading to social exclusion.

Inclusion and exclusion have their own profound cause and effect; and inclusion and exclusion should not only be the matter of ‘good’ or ‘bad’, the focus of inclusion/exclusion should lie upon morality, that is, the notion of all human beings are equal. To sum up, the former British Prime Minister (1997-2007), Tony Blair’s famous ‘Education, Education, Education’ had deep influence on British education and social policies. However, the arguments of finance and the priority groups are always controversial. The researcher simply used ‘education, education, education’ vs ‘money, money, money’ as the conclusion, and the researcher also believed that the conflict of the focus of a particular group and financial distribution would remain.

***RQ 2. How do parents regard the phenomenon of mainstreaming pupils with disability in primary schools in Taiwan?***

There is little doubt that the importance of parental involvement in children’s education is becoming more apparent. For example, the Salamanca Statement (1994) indicated that

parents must be the centre of the inclusive education movement for their children and for others; and Wilson *et al.* (2000) pointed out that over the past two decades; widespread attempts have been made across European countries to increase parents' involvement in the education of their children (p.217). Not only has the importance of parental involvement been paid close attention to in the Western world, but it also has been gradually becoming the focus in Taiwan. The special education professor, a principal and two special education teachers also mentioned about the importance of parental involvement; however, the involvement of parents might have two extremes, that is, for and against inclusion; such as Parsons *et al.*'s (2009) research on parents' satisfaction with educational provision for children with SEN/disabilities or Rix (2003) who faced with conflicting insights, beliefs, needs and hopes when thinking of his son's education. In his writing, as a father of a Down syndrome child, Rix (2003) wished for his son to have the best possible life because he believed his son should grow up within society in which his son stays and should have a strong self-identity and a clear place that reflected his identity so that when he himself passes away, everything would seem like nothing out of the ordinary to his son.

More than half of parents regarded putting non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same learning environment, that is inclusion, will in future be mainstreaming; however, only forty percent of parents had heard about inclusion and they might not have a clear view of inclusion<sup>1</sup>. One of the key issues towards inclusive education in Taiwan focuses on parents' voices. A principal pointed out that parents' voices were often neglected in rural areas because many parents in these areas were less educated than those in the cities, and teachers or educators were regarded as authorities; and this resulted in the voice from parents was often *marginalised* (Busher, 2005); so promoting more opportunities for parents to voice their opinions, ideas and feedback is a critical factor. However, involving

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<sup>1</sup> The special education professor, two principals and two special education teachers mentioned this.

parents' voice may result in confrontations among different stakeholders, as Wilson *et al.* (2000) argued that the nature of involvement (parents) may conflict with one another (p.217) and the definition of parental involvement may be vague (Nutbrown and Clough, 2004), or even worse, *parents as problems* (Fylling and Sandvin 1999: 146).

From the parental questionnaires, some parents<sup>1</sup> jotted down or commented on their opinions in the blank spaces in questionnaires. After reading parents' comments, it was clear that nearly all of whom wrote their opinions was against inclusion<sup>2</sup> or had negative point of view towards inclusion. The majority of these respondents, mainly against pupils with aggressive or bad behaviours which corresponds to Panayiotopoulos and Kerfoot's (2007) research towards the most common reasons<sup>3</sup> leading to school and social exclusion, had bad experiences when their children were located in the inclusive classroom. Influenced by pupils with behavioural disorders, these parents were afraid their children's learning process was jeopardized; and surprisingly, some words were used in their languages such as demons and devastators. None of these parents was against, or saying anything about pupils with physical impairments. Therefore, arguments towards inclusion, especially including pupils with behavioural disorders in the mainstream classroom, as a good or bad innovation remains controversial, as the conclusion of Parsons *et al.* (2009):

*Whilst there is clearly continued room for improvement in provision, especially for those with behavioural difficulties,...in the highly contentious debate on where and how additional support for children and young people with LDD (learning difficulties and disabilities) take place.*

(Parson *et al.* 2009: 43-44)

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<sup>1</sup> 47 copies of 1298 were found hand-writing comments.

<sup>2</sup> Though the majority of them believed inclusion will be the future trend, they were still anti-inclusion.

<sup>3</sup> The most common reasons leading to school and social exclusion are related to: (1) *emotional and behavioural problems such as aggressive/disruptive behaviour*, (2) *family and social problems which include family breakdown, poverty, and* (3) *stretched educational resources or lack of investment such as inadequate training of teachers on behavioural management* (Panayiotopoulos and Kerfoot 2007: 63).

Though it is difficult to judge inclusive classroom as a good or bad policy, the majority of parents who responded to the questionnaires believed that inclusion is a step into an equal future; and inclusive education is a system in which all learners, non-disabled and disabled, are offered a *comparable education* (Dyson and Millward, 2000) and are located in the same environment in which the curriculum is adjusted *in accordance with individuals' differences* (Wu, 2003). The notion derived from inclusion provides a paramount aim, that is, all human beings are equal. More than half of respondents believed that inclusive education will in future be mainstreaming whilst one third of respondents did not agree inclusive education will be future trend. Two third of respondents somewhat supported their children to be located in the inclusive setting, and nearly half of the respondents thought that inclusive education was beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils. Inclusion, from the researches, provides equal opportunities for both non-disabled and disabled pupils; and its "*person-centred planning*" is *the way forward, with the needs of the individual being of paramount importance* (Boys 2003: 72). More than half of respondents from the parental questionnaires believed that inclusive education provided equal opportunities to both non-disabled and disabled pupils; but only about one fifth of respondents thought that inclusive education promoted the notion of justice and egalitarianism. The main complainant from parents, according to the special education professor, principals and special education teachers was mainly on both teachers' attention and time being drawn and the disturbance caused by disabled (particularly behavioural disorders) pupils. Complainants towards pupils with physical impairment or from different races were few.

In the past, some pupils have been regarded as uneducable or having problems (Sikes *et al.*, 2007) with their learning process. To analyse the reasons why a pupil is uneducable or has learning difficulties needs to encompass a broad range of categories, such as personal background or external influences. The role of parents in the inclusive setting, according to

Wu (2004), can be deemed as *participants who take part in school's activities, decision-making and teaching-learning* (p.511), also, Fyelling and Sandvin (1999) maintained that extensive empirical evidence to support the claim the importance of parents' involvement in their children's education on the improvement in academic achievement can be found; therefore, the voice from parents is vital and it plays an important role in inclusive education. It can be concluded that promoting the concept of being educated equally towards parents or grand-parents is crucial. The special education professor, two principals and two special education teachers specifically mentioned about the involvement of parents or grand-parents. A principal pointed out that though some pupils' mothers were from Vietnam or China, these pupils did not have any problem in the school; and native Taiwanese parents did not have too much complainant. However, with reference to pupils with special educational needs, it became a different story. Pupils with special educational needs easily became the focus of school teachers, non-disabled peers and even themselves due to their differences, behaviours, external impairment/appearance and so forth; and parents of non-disabled pupils were afraid that too much attention and time was spent towards SEN pupils, so non-disabled pupils' parents thought that it would be unfair if much time and attention was paid to SEN pupils. The principal's concern corresponded to the social work professor, that is, when the authority wants to provide greater inclusion/attention towards one particular group, it is risky that it becomes another form of exclusion to another group.

All stakeholders agreed 'all pupils are the same'. However, parents' concerns on quality of education (51.1%) and academic achievement (45.6%) are much higher than moral education (17.7) and an ability to form good human relationships (25.5%). Nearly half of parents concerned pupils' academic performance. So, it can be concluded that the majority of Taiwanese parents are still grade-oriented. As Lim and Tan's (1999) argument: *education is described as a consumer product, with parents being encouraged to shop*

*around for the best school* (p.341), the special education professor, a principal and a special education teacher's concern was on that people are all living in a competitive world so parents' primary concern is the grade (academic performance).

**RQ 3. *What are the differences between urban and rural locations when implementing inclusive education in primary schools in Taiwan?***

From the questionnaires, the difference in the return rate between urban (73.4%) and rural (48.2%) locations is obvious. Before delivering questionnaires in one of the chosen primary school in Tainan County, the Chief of the Consulting Office in this chosen school suggested the researcher not to have too high an expectation about the return of questionnaires. Not only the parents from rural locations lacked motivation to fill in the questionnaire<sup>1</sup>, but the pupils also did not care about taking the questionnaires home, as a rural classroom teacher pointed out the difference between urban and rural pupils, pupils in rural areas seem to be more *untamed*.

Not only people (parents and children) are different between urban and rural areas, the hardware also differs between urban and rural primary schools. The resources provided to urban and rural primary schools differ. A principal pointed out that a great number of primary schools in the mountainous areas received more funding<sup>2</sup> than the schools located in cities. Taking this principal's school as an example, the primary school is located between Tainan City and Kaohsiung City<sup>3</sup>, *grey area* was the term used by the principal as the description of being cared by no one or being forgotten. The hardware, such as school buildings and constructions, in mountainous areas, as the principal argued, is much better than his school and some rural mountainous primary schools even have bus services from school to inhabitations of the tribes.

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<sup>1</sup> Parents in rural areas often work as labour worker, farmers or fishermen. They may not have time or they just have little knowledge about inclusion and so they would unwillingly fill in the questionnaires.

<sup>2</sup> Both from central and local governments due to special funding towards remote rural mountainous areas.

<sup>3</sup> The second biggest city in Taiwan.

The school personnel also had differences. The main focus on personnel difference lies on professionals' expertise. The special education professor pointed out that schools in rural areas found it difficult to find proper special education teachers<sup>1</sup> and also believed there was not sufficient resource for rural primary schools to identify pupils with minor learning difficulties. A legislator believed that rural exclusion was mainly due to the *voice not being heard*, which is similar to Scottish situation, that is, *social exclusion is as much a problem for rural communities as it is for the urban people whose problems receive more attention* (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2000/06/d77c1aed-f3a9-4bbf-a7b4-683f01a0b9b> f access date: 25/Nov/2007). One of the factors which causes the voice not being heard is the lack of professionals and expertise. Wang<sup>2</sup> (2006) pointed out that the main difficulty in rural primary schools was little information spread through the countryside and there were several causes; first, little information was provided; secondly, lack of personnel resources within schools, namely, lack of teachers or staff who were familiar with or who knew how to deal with pupils with special educational needs (the special education professor, a principal and special education teachers had the same points); thirdly, little communication between schools and families<sup>3</sup>. Mr Wang's wish was that there should be a communicator between schools and pupils' families. However, according to one principal, this results in increasing burden on school expenditure (extra teacher or staff) or personal duty (who, if the communicator is a school teacher or staff, will take the responsibility of bridging communications between the school and pupils' families?). Lacking support and help from professionals and expertise results in poor communication<sup>4</sup> between schools and parents and accreditation of pupils with special educational needs. As in two returned copies of the questionnaire, parents noted that it was *hard* to believe that classroom

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<sup>1</sup> From the professor's field studies.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Wang was chosen for the pilot study. He is the Chief of Personnel Affair and Administration of a rural primary school. Also seen in Chapter 1.2, 2.2 and 7.4.

<sup>3</sup> Though regularly home visits are made, classroom teachers still may not know/judge/understand pupils' learning disabilities.

<sup>4</sup> For example, an inclusive policy coordinator can bridge school-school and school-parent relationships.

teachers were capable to identify pupils with special educational needs and to deal with SEN pupils because they were neither special education teachers nor professionals.

The concept of inclusion differs amongst the group of school teachers. As Sikes *et al.* (2007) argued that teachers and teaching assistants in England are required to implement inclusion, but in the absence of any universal definition of what the term means, the way in which they enact it varies depending on their understanding of this concept (p.355); a special education teacher also pointed out that the risk of misunderstanding, or even worse, against, towards inclusion can often be seen/heard between senior and junior teachers because of senior teachers' entrenched notion that special children can obtain better care and education in special schools. The principal from the rural area and another special education teacher in a rural primary school had the same point. The principal even pointed out that some new ideas on pedagogy, curriculum and inclusion were brought by the probationer teachers<sup>1</sup> and after serving one year in the schools, the ideas disappeared when the probationer teachers left.

Though not many differences between urban and rural parents' ideology towards inclusion were found<sup>2</sup>, there still existed differences between rural and urban primary schools in Taiwan. Research reports from different countries (Leeman and Volman, 2001; Zoniou-Sideri and Vlachou, 2006 and Kalyanpur, 2008) also showed that differences, such as school practices, teachers' beliefs, parents' choice and resources, in rural and urban locations, can be seen. It can be concluded that differences do exist between rural and urban locations when implementing inclusive education in primary schools in Taiwan. Through the interviews (both professors, three legislators, a principal, the Chief and two special education teachers), it was believed that promoting greater inclusion should start

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<sup>1</sup> After graduating from teacher's universities, a student becomes a probationer teacher for one year.

<sup>2</sup> Though more parents in rural locations tended to be anti-inclusion; however, according to special education professor, two legislators, a principal, a special education teacher and Mr. Wang, this situation is also changing.

from governmental systems because both central and local governments had *power* to put inclusion into practice. According to the Legislator Yuan Education and Culture Committee Report (2000), the central government should have thoroughly considerations, that is, from ideological level—such as changing people’s minds to practical level—such as relocating resource, towards people with physical and mental impairments, so that disabled people could have their potentials developed and have decent and fairer lives (MOE,[http://www.edu.tw/EDU\\_WEB/EDU\\_MGT/E0001/EDUION001/menu01/sub04/01040006b.htm#L21](http://www.edu.tw/EDU_WEB/EDU_MGT/E0001/EDUION001/menu01/sub04/01040006b.htm#L21) access date:26/Nov/2007). The publications and reports from the Executive Yuan, the Legislator Yuan and Ministry of Education also addressed the current trend of inclusion in global and national agendas and indicated that exclusion from education resulted in incompatibility of society and so exclusion in whatever form should be avoided. Education is deemed as a driving force of social progress and it is the Government’s responsibility to assure education is for all. From both central and local governments’ publications on current progress of inclusion seemed satisfactory; however, responses and findings from practical level were not as positive. The special education professor, a special education teacher and a principal (from urban area) argued that current school policies towards pupils with special educational needs mainly focused on accommodating SEN pupils within the school; and this kind of accommodation was similar to integration, in other words, putting SEN pupils in mainstream schools, (Ainscow, 1999; Wu, 2003 and Skidmore, 2004) instead of inclusion; and this principal also indicated that the priority on which the local and central government should focus was on changing people’s thoughts and minds, especially adults in rural areas, because this principal believed that the toughest obstacle was generated from people.

**RQ 4. To what extent do policy makers/professionals/parents equate inclusive education with being educated equally?**

To a certain extent, policy makers, professionals and parents (except those whose children had bad experience in inclusive settings) equated inclusive education with being educated equally because educational inclusion features *equal opportunities for all pupils, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, attainment and background* (OFSTED 2000: 4) and *starts from the assumption that all children have a right to attend their neighbourhood school* (Ainscow 1997: 5). Peters *et al.* (2005) also believed that *the philosophy of inclusive education is based on the right of all individuals to a quality education with equal opportunity* (p.142), and pointed out that inclusive education had four assumptions as follows:

1. *All students come to school with diverse needs and abilities, so no students are fundamentally different.*
2. *It is the responsibility of the general educational system to be responsive to all students.*
3. *A responsive general education system provides high expectations and standards, quality academic curriculum and instruction that is flexible and relevant, an accessible environment, and teachers who are well prepared to address the educational needs of all students.*
4. *Progress in general education is a process evidenced by schools and communities working together to create citizens for an inclusive society who are educated to enjoy the full benefits, rights, and experiences of societal life.*

(Peters *et al.* 2005: 142-143)

Broadly speaking, the responses and findings from interviewees and parental questionnaires show that the notion of inclusive education does imply being educated equally. The Salamanca Statement (UN, 1994) clearly indicated that every child has a

fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain acceptable level of learning and inclusive orientation within regular schools is the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all (p.10). Furthermore, inclusion is deemed as celebrating diversity of needs of all different learners *through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education* (UNESCO 2004: 12). A great number of educationists and education psychologists agreed that inclusive education does provide an environment that embraces diversity for pupils with different background and shift people's view towards disadvantaged groups. Inclusive education, therefore, can be deemed and regarded as the notion of being educated equally.

Inclusive education, from interviewees' responses and the parental questionnaires, is identified with the notion of being educated equally. However, few parents thought that pupils with disabilities should be located in special institutions or units because they believed special education provision would better fit SEN pupils. So, it can be argued that inclusive education, according to different pupils' needs, can be divided into three broad categories, that is, first, general inclusive education towards pupils with physical impairment; secondly, inclusive education towards minor learning disabilities which would not interfere with classroom teaching and learning too much; such as Autism or cerebral palsy; and thirdly, inclusive education with pupils with behaviours difficulties, for example, emotional impairment or ADHD which could interrupt classroom learning for all pupils. Pupils from the first and second categories could survive more easily than pupils with behavioural problems, according to the special education professor, a principal and special education teachers, because these pupils would not interrupt learning process and rarely had menace towards non-disabled pupils. Pupils with behavioural problems, a principal argued, would be difficult to get involved in the inclusive setting, on one hand was that

non-disabled pupils were afraid or avoided to interact with pupils with behavioural problems, and on the other hand, was the resistance from non-disabled pupils' parents whose concerns on aggressive or violent behaviours. However, does categorise pupils into three different level means labelling? The researcher believes that to some extent it is.

Both interview and questionnaire results showed that, theoretically, inclusive education implies being educated equally; but practically, the current situation is far from inclusion. Similar to Sikes *et al.*'s (2007) research journal, interview responses towards inclusive education were; as a principal's reply: *yes, inclusion is good, but we do not have enough professionals*; the social work professor's reply: *yes, inclusion means justice but it might also result in another form of exclusion*; or hand-writings from parental questionnaire: *yes, inclusive education will be the future trend but how about if my child is bullied in the classroom?* The current inclusive education in Taiwan seems satisfactory; however, the special education professor, two principals and special education teachers agreed that full inclusive education implementation had difficulties or is impossible. School policies have enormous impact on multi-dimensional factors and stakeholders, inclusive policy is no exception. Each stakeholder has concerns towards inclusion and the issues of the aim and quality of education also remain controversial. More than half of parents were concerned with the quality of education and some teachers<sup>1</sup> believed that if inclusive education could assure the quality of education, more parents and people would support inclusive education.

According to Lipsky and Gartner (1999), inclusive education is to meet the needs of a changing society and it is a unitary system that has educational benefits for both

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<sup>1</sup> Through the period of doing this research, a number of primary school teachers and probationer teachers, both known or not well-known (such as colleagues from researcher's friends who work in schools) by the researcher, indicated that it is difficult to find a perfect balance between traditional segregation schooling and inclusive education. The conversations between the researcher and these teachers are not included in the research; however, some opinions and views were used as supplementary sources and information.

non-disabled and disabled students; and they also believed that inclusive education is *a system that provides quality for all children* (p.15); however, the BBC reported in 2000 that educational psychologists said it was “virtually impossible” for schools to marry high achievement for most pupils, with inclusive education (BBC, 2000, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/594707.stm> access date: 26/Nov/2007). In its conclusive paragraph, *total inclusion should be about meeting the needs of all pupils effectively* (Ibid) provided a new thinking towards the term ‘all pupils’ which has a complicated background. Generally, it is agreed that pupils’ voice should be heard and taken into consideration. But how do people know where and how a pupil’s voice does come from and form? Besides, others’ voice, such as parents and school teachers, should be listened to and taken into consideration as well as pupils’ voice.

The term, diversity, is often heard and used in inclusive education. From the New Oxford dictionary, ‘diversity’ also has the meaning of unlikeness and variety. Inclusive education tends to embrace diversity and promotes greater opportunity for both non-disabled and disabled pupils to interact and understand each other; however, different issues arise, as Topping and Maloney (2005) stated in their introductory phrase *what exactly does it mean?...How do you know when you have created it?* (p.1); or Dyson and Millward (2000) argued that when different decision is made, different resolution or a particular dilemma also arises.

From the parental questionnaire, nearly one third of parents thought that inclusive education can be regarded as a product of a compromise system between integration and segregation; and it was believed by interviewees that inclusion could be deemed as a synonym of justice, equality and equity. But there remain problems unsolved, for example, the lack of professionals and expertise in schools<sup>1</sup>, parents’ concerns towards quality of

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<sup>1</sup> Interview results from special education professor, principals, legislators and special education teachers.

education<sup>1</sup> and uncertainty whether inclusion will become another form of exclusion<sup>2</sup>. From the focus groups, most non-disabled and disabled pupils were satisfied and happy with inclusive education<sup>3</sup>, only one disabled pupil would like to attend special school, partly because of his impairment of movement and partly because he was so different in the class<sup>4</sup>. From the observations, pupils with physical impairment did not seem to have too many problems, that is, interactions, communications and relationships, with non-disabled pupils. However, pupils with behavioural problems seemed lonely and being isolated by other peers and lack of interactions with their non-disabled peers. Inclusion, the researcher believed that it is a notion that implies being educated equally; however, is it really a good/perfect system towards all pupils? The researcher believed there still has more to be done, as Lindsay (2003) maintained that *we need to ensure that there is a dual approach focusing on both the rights of children and the effectiveness of their education* (p.10).

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<sup>1</sup> From parental questionnaires.

<sup>2</sup> Both principals and the social work professor mentioned this issue.

<sup>3</sup> Focus groups excluded pupils with behavioural problems.

<sup>4</sup> This pupil is a wheelchair user.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL REFLECTIONS

Investigating exclusion/inclusion in Taiwan and writing this research thesis has provided the researcher great opportunities to reflect further on inclusive education concepts and ideas. Confucius said “Yu Gio Wu Le”<sup>1</sup> and also maintained that “Zen Len Hun Tao” which can be translated into “people can carry forward Tao”<sup>2</sup>. The notion of inclusion, which can be regarded as Tao, promotes in people an appropriate attitude towards different groups within society; however, controversial issues and different attitudes towards inclusion/exclusion among groups emerge. We, as human beings, are socialised animals and cannot live without others; but the difficulty and problem is how the government and related stakeholders make inclusion happen!!

### 11.1 Conclusions

- With regard to the substantive issue of inclusion in Taiwan, the notion of inclusion requires a sense of equality which has been suppressed by Taiwanese traditional bureaucratic governance under different foreign powers and successive Taiwanese governments since 1949. With the opportunities of global information sharing, people from all social strata in Taiwan are paying attention to their own rights.

The primary concern of inclusion focuses on a variety of perspectives, from personal perspectives—such as disabled people’s rights, to national—such as foreign wives’ rights. In order to prevent inclusive policies being used as propaganda or slogans, a number of stakeholders in Taiwan have maintained that both central and local governments should provide more concrete policies, though some thought that central and local governments have paid a great deal of attention to, and effort on, issues of equality and justice. However, legislators and the Chief of Special and Pre-School Sector also admitted that it was difficult

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to Chapter 2.1.

<sup>2</sup> Tao does not merely mean Taoism; it also implies truths, beliefs and correct attitudes.

to *cover/include* all ranges of needs. The difficulty lies on the resources, or be more precisely, financial support from governments. Social exclusion and school exclusion have their profound cause-effect factors which need to be demolished. The notion of individuality has been developed in western societies for centuries, on the contrary, in Taiwan, it has not. Shifting people's minds and educating people that all human beings are equal is a huge challenge to and responsibility for the government of Taiwan.

- Through the study and relevant researches, it can be concluded that inclusive education, an innovative education system which focuses on all pupils' needs, is recognised by its characteristics which provide mutual respect and understanding among different groups of people. But nearly half of respondents from the parental questionnaire pointed out that their children did not know, or had little knowledge, whether traditional or inclusive education they would choose if these pupils can make their own decisions. People who work within schools, such as the special education professor<sup>1</sup>, principals and special education teachers, believed that inclusive setting does bridge a better understanding between non-disabled and disabled pupils. However, some disabled pupils still liked to stay in special units because within an inclusive setting, they felt "different"—by themselves or non-disabled pupils. There exists another important issue, which will inevitably be argued by a number of people and remain controversial, that is, should education aim to develop pupils as whole people or should education aim to fulfill pupils' competences for a better future. This issue remains unsolved.

- More than half of parents believed that inclusive education will in future be mainstreaming. Inclusive education provides greater opportunities for both non-disabled and disabled pupils to understand the real world and bridges relationships among different

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<sup>1</sup> In the special education professor's Inclusive Centre, pupil's age is from 6 to 12, that is grade 1 to grade 6 in normal mainstream schools.

groups. However, some parents, including professionals interviewed in this research, maintained their concerns towards quality of education and pupils' academic achievement. Due to the compromise with disabled pupils' special needs, some parents thought that the curriculum was/or might be too easy for non-disabled pupils and this situation could not simply be changed with IEPs, as a principal argued; after all, people cannot always compare to themselves. Without doubt, the notion derived from inclusive education is to create an equal and fairer society; however, will it be too utopian or surreal? From the post-positivist's point of view, human knowledge is conjectural, so will inclusive education be future trend is also controversial.

- This research study identified that there were differences between urban and rural areas with regard to parents and children's personal backgrounds, that is, parents and children in rural areas had less information on inclusion and they did not know, or had little information, what kind of source they could obtain. Different resources between rural and urban primary schools, such as school services and budgets, can be seen. Also, different professionals' expertise in the school personnel and different concepts among school teachers were found through the study.

- The term inclusion, is used to describe *a group or organisation which tries to include many different types of people and treat them all fairly and equally* (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary); it is also *the act of making something a part of something else and allowing everyone or everything to be part of, making no exceptions* (Newbury House Dictionary of American English) and *the act of including it, or the fact it is included* (Chambers Essential English Dictionary). Inclusive education, through this research study and other research evidence, can be deemed and regarded as the notion of being educated equally; however, from the discussion in Chapter 10, controversial issues still exist.

## 11.2 Final Reflections

In the Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907), Han Yu<sup>1</sup> once said “In old time, students<sup>2</sup> must have teachers<sup>3</sup>. Teachers are, passing on the notion of tao<sup>4</sup>/courses, lecturing and instructing knowledge and solving difficulties/problems/confuses”. As a teacher and researcher, this research study has been undertaken towards improving current inclusive implementation in Taiwan.

Before the mid-1960s, the focus of philosophical thinking towards segregated institutions was on the special provision that focused on pupils’ disabilities. This kind of institution was deemed as a shelter for disadvantaged groups. The trend was criticised by inclusion pioneers such as Goffman (1968) who believed that such segregated institutions in fact operated merely as society’s storage dump. It was believed that traditional special education was to meet the needs of children who, both mentally and physically, were exceptional from others. However, Christoplos and Renz (1969) argued that exceptionality was defined by the nature of society, not by the nature of individuals; so as long as any type of individual is segregated, the majority group avoids familiar interaction with it, thus avoiding having to make changes in its value (in Thomas and Vaughan, 2004). Special education, therefore, can be deemed as a sub-system which caters special educational needs students who are different from the majority of the normal mainstream education; and this results in a conflict, that is, labelling or stigmatization which is now regarded as inappropriate because all children should be seen as equal and should have the right to be educated in the least restrictive environment in their neighbouring communities.

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<sup>1</sup> A famous poet and an essayist in Tang Dynasty, Han Yu (A.D. 768-824) was a herald and precursor of Neo-Confucianism and had great influence in Chinese literary tradition. In the Classical Prose Movement, Han Yu advocated and believed that writing should be in a clear and concise style.

<sup>2</sup> In Han Yu’s philosophical opinion, students mean all kinds of people who like to learn from others. Students do not need to be people who are in schools.

<sup>3</sup> Same as students, teachers mean all kinds of people. Teachers do not merely mean school teachers.

<sup>4</sup> As Confucius’ tao, the word ‘tao’ does not merely mean Taoism. It is the proper and appropriate way, attitude and knowledge of life.

An important argument towards inclusive education; however, through this research study, can be simplified and summarised as ‘Is inclusion a good idea and future mainstreaming?’. Unfortunately, this research study and a great number of research results cannot provide a straight forward and clear answer, as Thomas and Loxley (2001) argued that *inclusion cannot be effected simply on the basis of the way that teachers and academics conceptualise; it is part of a complex wider picture* (p.88). Also, the data gathered from the policy makers, educational professionals and parents<sup>1</sup> told a story which is similar to the issues identified in Scottish research and reports<sup>2</sup>. Though no clear positive or negative answer can be offered to mainstreaming, it is no doubt that inclusion is a moral issue rather than a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ question. The focus of inclusion/mainstreaming is on the concern of values and attitudes from both non-disabled and disabled groups. Inclusive primary education, therefore, focuses on children’s individualities and celebrates diversity instead of an argument as a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ system.

The Taiwanese Government has now paid much attention to issues of anti-discrimination and civil rights, such as people with disabilities or other difficulties. The implication of exclusion/inclusion, from the Government’s publications, is to care for the disadvantaged groups, to fulfill social rightfulness/equality and to increase participation (Executive Yuan, 2006, <http://www.ey.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=26250&ctNode=1054&mp=1>, access date: 03/03/2008) and one important point is on diminishing the differences between rural and urban areas and the differences between the rich and the poor (Ibid). In education system, according to the Ministry of Education, the Educational Reform (2001) in Taiwan also aimed to fulfill the inclusion/mainstreaming idea (Ministry of Education, 2001,

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<sup>1</sup> For example, a parent wrote “If there is a pupil with HIV positive and may bite others in your child’s classroom, what would you do?”. The researcher also asked friends (not only school teachers but also others) this question through conducting this research. The majority of answer was ‘of course not’ and few replied ‘well, this is difficult to decide’.

<sup>2</sup> In this report, Riddell (2006/2007) argued that the way and location about SEN pupils’ learning and the issues surrounding how and where children with special educational needs are educated continue to spark debate(<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/inclusiveeducation/aboutinclusiveeducation/researchandreports/approacheininclusiveeducation.asp>, access date: 31/Oct/2007).

[http://www.edu.tw/EDU\\_WEB/EDU\\_MGT/E0001/EDUION001/menu03/sub02/content\\_020201/03020201\\_0308.htm](http://www.edu.tw/EDU_WEB/EDU_MGT/E0001/EDUION001/menu03/sub02/content_020201/03020201_0308.htm), access date:03/03/2008). However, from the research results, reaching inclusion is a difficult journey because inclusion must be supported by money and resources with other issues generated from different stakeholders. Besides, issues of inclusive education are also often involved with beliefs and values. Since money and resources are not easy to obtain and the relocation may be unbalanced, so, as some interviewees believed, the best way which authorities could consider is shifting and changing people's minds and thoughts through daily life. Disadvantaged groups' rights and values should be recognised by other citizens and these groups should not be treated as different or merely recipients of other people's good will and so it is important for Taiwanese Government to educate people, especially those with prejudice towards disadvantaged groups, with the notion that all human beings are equal. Although it is also believed that competitiveness is one of the aims of education, the Government should also seek the balance between the issues of equality and competitiveness in education.

Issues on the relocation of resources and financial support are controversial. One of the main aims of social inclusion and inclusive education is on promoting greater opportunity among different groups, and the Government should be aware that when providing resources and financial support towards one particular group, it should try not to make this allocation of resources and financial support become another form of exclusion in other groups. Inclusion, both social inclusion and inclusive education, is to create a fairer society and to prevent disadvantaged people being discriminated or marginalised by other people. Social policies are crucial driven forces for shifting people's minds and thoughts, and the notion/implementation of inclusion should be carried out from central government to local government and then towards every member in society. The central and local governments' responsibilities are to inform all citizens about inclusion and to be models for the public, and it is also the central and local governments' duties to educate people

that inclusion is not only taking care or providing extra helps to disadvantaged groups; it is all citizens who should have appropriate morality towards others.

Education is *a process of teaching and learning in a school or college, or the knowledge you get from this* (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary); it is also *the teaching or the training of mind and character* (Longman Active Study English-Chinese Dictionary) and *the development of a person's knowledge* (Chambers Essential English Dictionary). In Chinese characters, the word 'education' can be divided into two characters which are 'jiao' and 'yu'. In *Shuowen Jiezi*<sup>1</sup>, jiao means 'giving from the top, followed by the down' and 'yu' means 'to cultivate a person in order to make him/her good and righteousness'. Therefore, the implication for education, not only in primary education but also in all other sectors of education, in promoting greater social inclusion, should focus on educating people with the appropriate attitudes towards different groups in society. Education has a powerful role to play in instilling the notion that all human being are equal and all people should have the same right. Inclusive implementation within schools, especially in primary education or even in pre-primary education stage, therefore, can provide greater opportunity for both non-disabled and disabled pupils to understand, interact and respect with each other; so that all pupils, even those who were influenced by anti-inclusion family members, can have a learning environment that encompasses different peers and can share and live with each other. Through education, changing adults' minds and thoughts might not be easy, but education professionals and education psychologists believed that changing young students' minds is easier. Inclusive education, as well as education, therefore, can be used as a means of shifting pupils' minds towards different groups; and hopefully, by this way pupils can bring inclusive notion to family members and as pupils grow up, they bring this notion to the whole society.

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<sup>1</sup> An ancient Chinese character dictionary, compiled by Xu Shen (A.D. 58-147), which can be traced back to the Han Dynasty (202 B.C.-A.D. 220).

Young school pupils are similar to pure white paper, and absorb colours from parents and others. With the establishment of inclusive environment, those young people are educated with the notion of equity, equality, justice and respect. Schools are the first places in which those young pupils step out their families, and schools are also the very first places where those young pupils have broader interactions with others. Although it is inevitable for the competitiveness brought from the notion of marketisation within schools, the notion of all human beings are equal still needs to be instilled into pupils' minds through education. The researcher believed that the tripartite motto of French Revolution, *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, can be deemed as synonyms of inclusion and it is still the pursuit of the majority of people in the world.

*Ten years for planting a tree, and one hundred years for cultivating people* is an old Chinese proverb used to describe the process of educating a person is a long journey. For years, in both Western and Eastern countries, people have been fighting to strive for being treated equally in society. Inclusion, either social inclusion or inclusive education, is not an easy task and the journey is also long. The aim of inclusive education is fundamentally based on a presumption, that is, all human beings are equal, which is regarded as the paramount goal of educational and social systems. The immorality resulting from traditional segregation is a product that should be modified and demolished because disadvantaged groups, eventually, will be living in a world in which all individuals are different.

A motto says 'you may lose a battle but still win the war'. Through the period of conducting this research, as well as the progress of inclusion, the challenges and obstacles emerge and hinder the process; but still, the pursuit of all human beings are equal will continue.

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## Appendix A

### Plain language statement



**UNIVERSITY**  
*of*  
**GLASGOW**

Name of Researcher: **Wang, Hung-Ming**

Course Title: **Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education**

**Title of Project:** Ph. D in Educational Studies

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Dear Participants:

The researcher is currently a postgraduate (Doctor of Philosophy) student in the University of Glasgow in Scotland in the United Kingdom. By doing the research in the Faculty of Education, it is compulsory for the researcher providing the basic background and information to the participants engaged in the research.

The title of the research is: Inclusive education in Taiwanese primary schooling—with particular references to children with special educational needs and in relation to Scottish system. The research is supervised by Prof. J. E. Wilkinson (contact information can be found via Departmental staff list).

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

The purpose of this research is to identify the current issues, the nature of provision and parents' and others feedback about children with special educational needs who are located in mainstream primary schools; and to find out the current situations about inclusion within

primary schools. 1:1 interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders and focus groups undertaken with small groups of children.

Participants are randomly chosen, mainly parents whose children (non-disabled and disabled) are located in mainstream primary schools. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

The researcher will provide you a list of questionnaires (six A4 pages). It takes about 15 to 20 minutes for completing the questionnaires. You just simply put a “X” in the relevant box of each question.

All information, which is collected, about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will be identified by an ID number and any information about you will have your name and address (if involved) removed so that you cannot be recognised from it.

The results of the research study will be used in the researcher’s thesis and maybe publications or journals afterwards. The thesis may be published on July, 2007. Participants involved in this research will not be identified in any of the report, publication and the thesis.

The research is not funded by any academic institution, internal or external funding bodies or any organisation.

If you have any inquiry, please do not feel hesitation to contact with the researcher.

Sincerely yours.

Wang, Hung-Ming  
BA, Diploma, M.Phil.

Tel: (home) (mobile)

Add:

## **Appendix B**

### **Interview Schedule**

University of Glasgow

Faculty of Education

## **Issues of Social Inclusion in Education in Taiwan**

### **Interview Schedule for Policy Stakeholders**

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 1: Awareness and Interpretations**

1. Have you heard of the term ‘social inclusion’? If yes, where did you first hear of it?

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If no, go to question 3.

2. When you first heard of the term ‘social inclusion’. What ideas or thoughts first came to your mind?

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3. Many people have different interpretations of the term ‘social inclusion’. How would you describe in your own words what you think the term means?

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4. Do you think that social inclusion is desirable? Why?

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5. Do you think social inclusion is applied to one particular group (e.g. aboriginal people or disadvantaged people) or can it be applied to a variety of groups? If so, why?

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**Section 2: A Policy Priority**

6. What do you see as the social policy implications of the term social inclusion?

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7. We suppose social policy is always important for improving the quality of life. What would you see as the first step that the policy could take to promote more inclusion?

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8. What obstacles do you envisage in implementing social inclusion policies?

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9. What do you see as the role for central government in promoting social inclusion?

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10. What do you see as the role for the local government?

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**Section 3: Educational Implication**

11. What are the implications for education in promoting social inclusion?

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12. Do you think that a higher level of attainment can be achieved through social inclusion, or does the opposite apply?

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13. On the assumption that education should provide equal opportunities for all, which groups in society should education promote greater opportunity than at present?

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14. Do you think that our schools provide enough programmes for improving inclusion? If yes, please indicate. If no, please identify where this should be improved?

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15. The main purpose of education is to develop pupils as whole people. Does inclusion play a role in this? If yes, please specify.

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16. Does inclusion really imply the notion of equality? If yes, please specifically indicate. If no, why?

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**Section 4: Obstacles to Reform**

17. Do you think it is difficult or easy to promote greater inclusion? Why?

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18. If the Government's budgets for promoting greater inclusion could be increased, what do you think should be the priority for targeting the additional resources?

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19. Thinking about appropriate learning environments/settings, would you wish to change the present learning environment for pupils with learning difficulties?

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20. If you (or your children) had severe difficulties in learning, what kind of system would you choose – mainstream or special education? Why?

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21. What other obstacles or difficulties could you think of when we refer to inclusion?

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**Section 5: Impact of Policy on the Work of the Interviewee**

22. To what extent is social inclusion part of your professional responsibility?

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23. Do you feel sufficiently supported?

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24. To what extent do you think that the authority can do for inclusion?

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25. When we emphasise inclusion, does it mean that we should try to avoid exclusion in whatever form?

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26. Do you think that policies in social inclusion take only some certain groups' (people's) account or take everyone's needs into consideration?

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27. By what criteria should inclusion be measured and by whom?

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**Section 6: The Way Ahead**

28. In your opinion, how important is it to promote whole inclusive education in the future?

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29. From research, inclusion can improve pupils' abilities, for example, relationships between peers. How can we best use inclusion in education as a means of improving our society?

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30. Should inclusion also need to be levelled according to pupils' difficulties, for example, pupils with severe learning difficulties may need extra help, or we just put them all in the same classroom?

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31. The barriers generated by people are always complicated. How can we breakdown the barriers?

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32. If you could think of other advantages or disadvantages which are generated by inclusion, please give details.

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**Thank You for Your Time and Cooperation**

## Appendix C

### Consent letter to parents<sup>1</sup>

Parents' name

Address

Dear

I am currently a postgraduate student from the University of Glasgow in Scotland in the United Kingdom engaged in a research project looking at the current implementation of inclusive education within primary schools in Taiwan, with a specific focus on Tainan City and County. I am writing to seek your help with my research.

One of the aims of this research is to seek parental opinions and feedback from those children who are located in mainstream primary schools and educated in an inclusive setting/environment.

Needless to say any information gathered would be treated in strict confidence and at no point would individual teachers or students be identified to anyone other than myself and my supervisor, Prof. J.E. Wilkinson. All the documents would be kept secure in the researcher's safety place, either in personal computers or in the Educational Studies Department of the University of Glasgow. In addition, this is not the assessment for pupils in the schools and no one could be given access to any information collected.

I would appreciate your responses to the questions in the attached questionnaire. I understand the questionnaire may take time to response, but it is valuable feedback from the teaching and learning of the children in your care and may help shape future policy to education in Taiwan

Bearing this in mind I would be keen to be contacted by telephone or other methods in order I may answer any inquire that you may have as to the nature and/or purpose of the research. When finishing the questionnaire, could you please give it to your child and the questionnaire would be delivered to classroom teacher.

Sincerely yours

Wang, Hung-Ming

BA, Diploma, M.Phil

Tel: Researcher's telephone number (Home)

Researcher's telephone number (Mobile)

Add: Researcher's home address.

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<sup>1</sup> This letter was translated into Chinese.

## Appendix D

### Results of observations

#### Case A: A female pupil (H) with hearing impairment, Grade 3, Tainan City.

Date: Monday (Morning)

Subject: Mandarin

Duration: 09:30-10:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching <sup>1</sup>	3	H could not understand fully and raised hands twice.
Teachers' attention <sup>2</sup>	2	The teacher asked if H could understand the context.
Normal pupils' attention <sup>3</sup>	3	Only pupils who sat around H were influenced because H asked them questions.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions <sup>4</sup>	0	

Date: Monday (afternoon)

Subject: Physically Education (PE)

Duration: 15:10-15:50

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	1	Asked H if he could cope with the activities.
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	Sometimes H was isolated.

<sup>1</sup> SEN pupils' responses, such as raising hands, making sounds and even standing up.

<sup>2</sup> To observe if the teachers' teaching was interrupted or drawn away because of SEN pupils.

<sup>3</sup> Other pupils' reactions toward their SEN peer during the class.

<sup>4</sup> To observe any strange (spontaneous behaviours due to their disabilities) or disturbing (interrupt the teacher or other pupils) behaviours.

Date: Tuesday (Morning)

Subject: Mathematics

Duration: 08:40-09:20

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	1	H suddenly made sounds during the class, but did not say anything.
Teachers' attention	1	Asked why H made sounds but H did not say anything.
Normal pupils' attention	1	They just glanced at H.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	After asking classroom teacher, H seldom made sounds either in the class or at home, but the teacher said the sound does not bother at all.

Date: Tuesday (Afternoon)

Subject: Arts

Duration: 14:20-15:00

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	3	H raised hands three times and said vague words.
Teachers' attention	2	The teacher encouraged H to speak.
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	2	H seemed very excited during the class.

Date: Wednesday (Morning)

Subject: Music

Duration: 10:30-11:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

Note: H just sat on the chair or stood (when all the class stood) with mouth opening. Could not see if H sang or not sing. But H looked like (smile on face and shook with rhyme) pretty happy.

Date: Thursday (Morning)

Subject: Society and moral education

Duration: 09:30-10:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	H did not pay too much attention to the class. (The class teacher said the situation was rare.)
Teachers' attention	2	The class teacher called H's name.
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	H drew on the table during the class.

Date: Thursday (Afternoon)

Subject: Nature and Science

Duration: 13:30-14:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	7	Very active. H loves the subject.
Teachers' attention	2	Once the teacher needed to 'cool' H down.
Normal pupils' attention	2	Some pupils seemed like they did not feel comfortable with H's attitudes.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	4	

Date: Friday (Morning)

Subject: Mandarin

Duration: 11:20-11:50

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	2	H tried to pronounce correctly.
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	1	A pupil said "H's pronunciation is wrong".
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

Date: Friday (Afternoon)

Subject: Nature and Science

Duration: 14:20-15:00

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	2	H did not focus on the class.
Teachers' attention	1	The teacher asked H to pay attention.
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	It seemed that H really wanted to go home (H packed the schoolbag during the class).

PS. The classroom teacher said that H is more unstable on Fridays.

**Case B: A male pupil (W) with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD),  
Grade 6, Tainan City.**

Date: Monday (Morning)

Subject: English

Duration: 10:30-11:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	11	Raised hands and sometimes said something, both relevant and irrelevant to the subjects, and sometimes did not.
Teachers' attention	3	The teacher needed to ask W to behave.
Normal pupils' attention	0 <sup>1</sup>	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	5	Unstable.

Date: Monday (afternoon)

Subject: Mandarin

Duration: 13:30-14:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	8	W did not focus on the class.
Teachers' attention	0	The teacher seemed to get used to W's syndrome.
Normal pupils' attention	1	W grabbed a peer's pencil and the pupil called the teacher.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	Except grabbing other's pen once, W seemed to be pretty calm.

---

<sup>1</sup> The classroom teacher said that W is a SEN pupil with ADHD. W's peers are used to W's behaviours.

Date: Tuesday (Morning)

Subject: Mathematics

Duration: 08:40-09:20

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	2	Very quiet. But it seemed that W was not interested in Math at all.
Teachers' attention	1 <sup>1</sup>	W suddenly knocked the table but the teacher did not say anything.
Normal pupils' attention	1	The peers just looked at W without saying anything.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	Shaking body.

Date: Tuesday (Afternoon)

Subject: Nature and Science

Duration: 13:30-14:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	6	Very different from the morning class.
Teachers' attention	2	The teacher was "a little" upset with W's interruptions.
Normal pupils' attention	2	Some pupils asked W to be quiet.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	When pupils asked W to be quite, W seemed to become aggressive <sup>2</sup> .

---

<sup>1</sup> The Math teacher said that if W is quite no matter in what class, then the subject teachers thank God!!

<sup>2</sup> W's face changed when other pupils gently asked W to keep silence.

Date: Wednesday (Morning)

Subject: Physical education

Duration: 09:30-10:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	4	The teacher kept an eye on W.
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

PS. The PE class for the day was basketball. W just bounced the basketball by self. The PE teacher did not say anything when seeing W playing by himself and asked the class leader to kept an eye on W as well.

Date: Thursday (Morning)<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Music

Duration: 11:20-11:50

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching		
Teachers' attention		
Normal pupils' attention		
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions		

Date: Thursday (Afternoon)<sup>2</sup>

Subject: Nature and Science

Duration: 14:20-15:00

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching		
Teachers' attention		
Normal pupils' attention		
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions		

---

<sup>1</sup> W was absent due to sick (W's mother phoned the classroom teacher and did not specify the disease). The classroom teacher pointed out that when W was really unstable before coming school, his mother would keep W home.

<sup>2</sup> W was absent.

Date: Friday (Morning)

Subject: Society and moral education

Duration: 10:30-11:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	5	Raised hands and asked questions. Tapped peer's head who sat in front of W.
Teachers' attention	1	The teacher gently asked W to stop tapping others.
Normal pupils' attention	1	Other pupils were laughing.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1 <sup>1</sup>	It seemed that W just wanted to catch other's attention.

Date: Friday (Afternoon)

Subject: English

Duration: 13:30-14:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	3	W raised his hand (once <sup>2</sup> ) but not even knew what the question was!
Teachers' attention	2	The teacher asked W to speak slowly so that every one could understand.
Normal pupils' attention	1	Tried to understand what he was speaking.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

---

<sup>1</sup> The classroom teacher said that W was more aggressive when younger.

<sup>2</sup> W raised hands three times. But when the teacher asked W to answer the question, W did not even know what the question about! After the class, the English teacher said that W was rarely called up to answer the question because W often raised hands but when called up, W did not even know what the questions were!

**Case C: A male pupil (C) with physical impairment<sup>1</sup>, Grade 3, Tainan County.**

Date: Monday (Morning)

Subject: Mathematics

Duration: 10:30-11:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	1	A pupil sat next C helped to pick the eraser from the ground.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

Date: Monday (afternoon)

Subject: Society and moral education

Duration: 13:30-14:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

---

<sup>1</sup> C is a wheelchair user.

Date: Tuesday (Morning)

Subject: Mandarin

Duration: 08:40-09:20

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

Date: Tuesday (Afternoon)

Subject: Nature and Science

Duration: 13:30-14:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	Turned back and gave instructions to the pupil who sat behind him.

Date: Wednesday (Morning)

Subject: Mandarin

Duration: 11:20-11:50

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	2	C seemed quite eager for the class ending <sup>1</sup> , and packed his bookcase in advance.

---

<sup>1</sup> The classroom teacher explained that C has swimming activities (therapy provided by voluntary workers—often held by mothers whose children are physical impairment) every Wednesday afternoon and C often looks forward it because he cannot play as many activities as his peers during school PE classes.

Date: Thursday (Morning)

Subject: Arts

Duration: 11:20-11:50

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

Date: Thursday (Afternoon)

Subject: Physical education<sup>1</sup>

Duration: 15:10-15:50

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

---

<sup>1</sup> Due to physical impairment, C is not convenient for most activities. However, C's physical education teacher said that C was an active pupil and would like to take part in all kinds of activities and C's classmates also liked to play with C.

Date: Friday (Morning)

Subject: Mandarin

Duration: 08:40-09:20

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

Date: Friday (Afternoon)

Subject: Music

Duration: 13:30-14:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	0	

**Case D: A female pupil (C<sup>1</sup>) with behavioural disorder<sup>2</sup>, Grade 6, Tainan County.**

Date: Monday (Morning)

Subject: Nature and science

Duration: 11:20-11:50

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	6	C made noise and pushed the table once.
Teachers' attention	1	The teacher asked C to behave.
Normal pupils' attention	1	The class was interrupted when C pushing the table.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	C pushed the table without saying anything.

Date: Monday (afternoon)

Subject: Music

Duration: 15:10-15:50

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	0	
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	C shook body with the rhythm <sup>3</sup> .

<sup>1</sup> C is the abbreviation of pupils' surname. She has a different surname from case C.

<sup>2</sup> The special education teacher indicated that C had problems when she was young, but through the examination from the psychologists and doctors, C's syndrome could not be identified. According to the special education teacher, C might be an ADHD pupil and with behavioural problems. The special education teachers and other teachers in this school believed that C was behavioural misconduct.

<sup>3</sup> C's classroom teacher pointed out that C might be musical talented. But when C's parents took C for further examination in another primary school which provided dancing and music classes for talented pupils, the report from the school indicated that C's performance in the music class was over-estimated. C's parents are still trying to seek for further consultations.

Date: Tuesday (Morning)

Subject: Mathematics

Duration: 09:30-10:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	3	C even seldom lifted up her head to the blackboard.
Teachers' attention	0	
Normal pupils' attention	0	
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	2	C constantly nodded head <sup>1</sup> .

Date: Tuesday (Afternoon)

Subject: Physical education

Duration: 14:20-15:00

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	1	No response toward teacher's instructions.
Teachers' attention	1	Refer to footnote <sup>2</sup>
Normal pupils' attention	1	Some pupils were afraid.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	Refer to footnote 2

---

<sup>1</sup> The researcher could not tell if C understood the class contents or if C just nodded for nothing.

<sup>2</sup> After the teacher's instructions (doggy ball), before the formal activity, C picked up the ball and threw it to a female pupil's head without warning and sign. The teacher asked C why doing so, C laughed without saying anything. The teacher asked C to stand in the position of attention outside the principle's office as the punishment. The teacher explained this punishment was agreed and approved with C's parents and the principal.

Date: Wednesday (Morning)

Subject: Mandarin

Duration: 08:40-09:20

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	8	C constantly made noise (murmured and yelled).
Teachers' attention	2	Disturbed twice and asked C not to make noise
Normal pupils' attention	2	C tapped the head of a pupil who sat in front of her. C's classmates asked C to be silent and behave.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	Upset (unhappy) appearance showed once on C's face.

Date: Thursday (Morning)<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Mandarin

Duration:

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching		
Teachers' attention		
Normal pupils' attention		
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions		

Date: Thursday (Afternoon)

Subject: Arts

Duration: 13:30-14:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	4	C screamed <sup>2</sup> and made noise.
Teachers' attention	3	The teacher had to ask C to stop making noise so that the class could keep going.
Normal pupils' attention	2	Some pupils <sup>3</sup> were upset about C's interruption.
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	See footnote <sup>4</sup> .

---

<sup>1</sup> C was absent because C's mother took C to the hospital for psychiatric treatment.

<sup>2</sup> The researcher could not tell if C's scream was due happiness or unhappiness, but C's face looked like normal.

<sup>3</sup> Two pupils shut at C and the class leader said "If you make a sound again, I will tell the classroom teacher and make you stand in front of the principle's office".

<sup>4</sup> C became more emotional unstable after what the class leader said so.

Date: Friday (Morning)<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Mathematics

Duration:

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching		
Teachers' attention		
Normal pupils' attention		
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions		

Date: Friday (Afternoon)

Subject: English

Duration: 13:30-14:10

	Tally marks	Any responses (teachers/pupils)
SEN pupils' reactions toward teachers' teaching	4	C made noise <sup>2</sup> .
Teachers' attention	2	Asked and encouraged C to speak clearly
Normal pupils' attention	2	See footnote <sup>3</sup> .
SEN pupils' behavioural reactions	1	It seemed that C was exciting during the class.

---

<sup>1</sup> C stood in the position of attention in front of the principle's office because C did not do the morning cleaning job. In the middle of the class, the classroom teacher (mathematical teacher) asked the class leader to call C back. C was quite after coming back. According to C's classroom teacher, C's behaviours in mathematics were better than other classes. This is due to the classroom teacher was the mathematical teacher. From observations, C was less disturbed in mathematics class.

<sup>2</sup> During the English class, some of the noise C made was like C spoke English. But both the researcher and the class teacher could not understand.

<sup>3</sup> Once some pupils were laughing and once some pupils yelled at C because of the noise C made was too huge.

## **Appendix E**

### **Themes for focus groups**

Theme 1. General perceptions of non-disabled pupils about disabled pupils and disabled pupils' reactions of being located in an inclusive classroom.

Prompts: What do you think about disabled peers?

Disabled pupils' reactions about being located in an inclusive classroom. Your relationships?

Theme 2. Classroom activities.

Prompts: What do you think about putting disabled students in your class?

Can pupils with SEN catch up their peers' step?

What sort of things do you do together/separately?

Theme 3. Learning in the classroom.

Prompts: Do you progress in an inclusive setting?

Theme 4. Other school activities.

Prompts: What do you (non-disabled pupils) think putting disabled students in your school?

What do you (disabled pupils) think being put in the normal school?

When you take part in the school activities, what do you feel about non-disabled/disabled peers?

Do SEN pupils think school activities suitable for them?

Theme 5. Personal choice.

Prompts: In general, do you like inclusive education?

Do you feel comfortable in the inclusive setting?

If you can make decisions, would you choose the inclusive setting again?



These questionnaires are designed for parents whose children are currently studying in mainstream primary schools (from Tainan City and County) that provide inclusive setting. The respondents DO NOT need to provide any personal detail or information. The result is used only for a Ph.D research conducted by the researcher, Mr. Wang, Hung-Ming, and published in the researcher's thesis and may be published in other academic articles.

Please try to answer each question indicating your choice with a 'X' or a 'V' in the relevant box.

Please indicate your location.

- Tainan City       Tainan County

## **SECTION 1. BASIC KNOWLEDGE**

Q1. Have you heard about the term 'inclusive education' (that is, admitting children with a disability into mainstream primary schools)?

- YES       NO

If 'YES', go to Question 2. If 'NO', go to Question 4.

Q2. What is your reaction to the teaching of children with a disability in mainstream primary schools, that is, inclusive education, in general?

- It is an excellent idea.  
 On the whole, it is worthwhile in a few special cases.  
 It could be damaging for non-disabled children.  
 It is a bad idea.

If you ticked boxes '1' or '2', please go to Question 3.

If you ticked boxes '3' or '4', please go to Question 4.

Q3. Why do think inclusive education for children with a disability is worthwhile? Please tick as many reasons as you think appropriate:

- It provides equal opportunities for both non-disabled and disabled pupils.  
 It promotes the notion of justice and egalitarianism.  
 It promotes a better learning environment than a segregated system.  
 It provides greater opportunity for human interaction.  
 It provides better opportunities to form good human relationships.  
 Better performance in academic subjects.  
 Special educational needs pupils can participate in learning spontaneously.  
 Normal pupils can offer their abilities to special educational needs pupils.  
 The idea of an inclusive setting is good to the future generation.

- The curriculum can accord with pupils with different needs.

Q4. What is the main point you think that putting non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same learning environment? Tick as many as you think.

- Competition.
- Natural selection.
- Law of the jungle.
- Multi-dimensional learning setting and atmosphere.
- Co-operation and collaboration.
- Learning from each other.

## **SECTION 2. PERSPECTIVES ON PUPILS**

Q5. For non-disabled pupils, what do you think about the role of inclusive education?

- It is sacrifice and devotion.
- It is a better choice for normal pupils.
- It is a compromise system from integration and segregation.
- It is beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils.

Q6. What are pupils' responses to inclusive education?

- They can learn better.
- They do not feel too much difference.
- They like to be located in inclusive setting.
- They prefer traditional segregation system.
- They feel comfortable in the inclusive setting.

Q7. What are pupils' responses if they had the chance to choose their educational setting again?

- Traditional segregation schooling.
- Inclusive schooling.
- They do not know about this. (Never think of it.)

Q8. A child's learning achievement should compete with?

- Him/Her Self.
- Others.
- His/Her siblings.
- Do not need to compete with others.

### **SECTION 3. PARENTAL PERSPECTIVES**

Q9. Would you support your child to be located in an inclusive setting? I would:

- Strongly support.
- Support somewhat.
- Give no support.

Q10. In the inclusive classroom, which of the following you think is important for both non-disabled and disabled pupils? Please tick as many as you could think of:

- To provide the equality of learning and teaching.
- Progress in the inclusive classroom through collaboration and sharing.
- Pupils' academic performance.
- To foster the accurate order or principle within the classroom.
- Teachers can instruct correct attitudes to both non-disabled and disabled pupils.
- The learning environment is improved.
- Within the same class, pupils can learn from each other.
- Never think of this question.

Q11. Compared with a traditional segregation system, what do you think the inclusive classroom CANNOT provide? Tick as many as you can think of:

- Moral education.
- Ability to form good human relationships.
- Academic achievement.
- Quality of education.

Q12. Who is the main targeting group in the inclusive classroom?

- Normal pupils.
- Special educational needs pupils.
- Both non-disabled and disabled pupils.
- It depends on the subject or the aim of the learning contents.
- No idea.

## **SECTION 4. FUTURE EXPECTATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

Q13. If you have a child in an inclusive classroom, what kind of environment would you choose if you had another child who has ready to start school?

- Inclusive setting.
- Segregation system.
- The same school, but not in an inclusive classroom.
- The same school, and the same inclusive setting.
- Different school, but in the inclusive setting.
- Different school and not in the inclusive setting.

Q14. What kinds of curriculum/content do you think should be provided in the inclusive school?

- The same as other mainstream schools.
- The same as other mainstream schools but with own curriculum.
- Different from other mainstream schools.

Q15. What kinds of activities do you think should be provided in the inclusive school?

- The same as other mainstream schools.
- To provide parents opportunities for participating children's learning.
- The activity that both non-disabled and disabled pupils can complete by themselves.
- The same as other mainstream schools but with own supportive activities.
- Different from other mainstream schools.
- It is better NOT to have any activity.

Q16. Do you think that inclusive education will be the mainstream in the future?

- Strongly agree.
- Agree.
- Disagree.
- Strongly disagree.

Thank you very much for your time and patience.

## Appendix G

### Results from Parents Questionnaires

#### Section 1. Basic Knowledge

	Answer	% response	
<b>Location</b>	City	58.0	
	County	42.0	
<b>Q1. Have you heard about the term ‘inclusive education’ (that is, admitting children with a disability into mainstream primary schools)?</b>	Yes	40.0	
	No	59.7	
<b>Q2. What is your reaction to the teaching of children with a disability in mainstream primary schools, that is, inclusive education, in general?</b>	Excellent.	12.9	
	Worthwhile.	65.4	
	Damaging.	11.4	
	Bad idea.	6.5	
<b>Q3. Why do think inclusive education for children with a disability is worthwhile? Please tick as many reasons as you think appropriate:</b>			
	It provides equal opportunities for both non-disabled and disabled pupils.	Agreement	59.7
	It promotes the notion of justice and egalitarianism.	Agreement	21.3
	It promotes a better learning environment than a segregated system.	Agreement	14.9
	It provides greater opportunity for human interaction.	Agreement	51.1
	It provides better opportunities to form good human relationships.	Agreement	49.1

Better performance in academic subjects.	Agreement	5.7
Special educational needs pupils can participate in learning spontaneously.	Agreement	29.4
Normal pupils can offer their abilities to special educational needs pupils.	Agreement	49.8
The idea of an inclusive setting is good to the future generation.	Agreement	19.4
The curriculum can accord with pupils with different needs.	Agreement	18.1
<b>Q4. What is the main point you think that putting able and disabled pupils in the same learning environment? Tick as many as you think.</b>		
Competition.	Agreement	26.7
Natural selection.	Agreement	27.6
Law of the jungle.	Agreement	11.8
Multi-dimensional learning setting and atmosphere.	Agreement	46.5
Co-operation and collaboration.	Agreement	64.6
Learning from each other.	Agreement	48.8

See footnotes<sup>1 2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In case when the total of the percentage fall short of 100, this is due to missing data, that is, the parent did not respond to the question.

<sup>2</sup> In question 3 and 4, only the percentage of “tick” is shown. Detailed frequency is provided in Appendix.

## Section 2. Perspectives on Pupils

	Answer	% response
<b>Q5. For non-disabled pupils, what do you think about the role of inclusive education?</b>		
It is sacrifice and devotion.	Agreement	22.4
It is a better choice for normal pupils.	Agreement	11.3
It is a compromise system from integration and segregation.	Agreement	32.9
It is beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils.	Agreement	47.3
<b>Q6. What are pupils' responses to inclusive education?</b>		
They can learn better.	Agreement	14.0
They do not feel too much difference.	Agreement	26.9
They like to be located in inclusive setting.	Agreement	9.1
They prefer traditional segregation system.	Agreement	20.0
They feel comfortable in the inclusive setting.	Agreement	39.8
<b>Q7. What are pupils' responses if they had the chance to choose their educational setting again?</b>		
	<b>Traditional segregation setting.</b>	<b>19.6</b>
	Inclusion schooling.	32.7
	<b>They do not know about this.</b>	<b>47.2</b>

<b>Q8. A child's learning achievement should compete with?</b>		
Him/Her Self.	Agreement	61.3
Others.	Agreement	12.6
His/Her siblings.	Agreement	2.0
Do not need to compete with other.	Agreement	31.1

See footnotes<sup>1 2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In case when the total of the percentage fall short of 100, this is due to missing data, that is, the parent did not respond to the question.

<sup>2</sup> In question 5, 6 and 8, only the percentage of "tick" is shown. Detailed frequency is provided in Appendix.

### Section 3. Parental Perspectives

	Answer	% response
<b>Q9. Would you support your child to be located in an inclusive setting? I would:</b>	<b>Strongly support.</b>	<b>22.2</b>
	Support somewhat.	67.2
	<b>Give no support.</b>	<b>10.3</b>
<b>Q10. In the inclusive classroom, which of the following you think is important for both non-disabled and disabled pupils? Please tick as many as you could think of:</b>		
To provide the equality of learning and teaching.	Agreement	38.1
Progress in the inclusive classroom through collaboration and sharing.	Agreement	50.5
Pupils' academic performance.	Agreement	7.1
To foster the accurate order or principle within the classroom.	Agreement	21.3
Teachers can instruct correct attitudes to both non-disabled and disabled pupils.	Agreement	40.0
The learning environment is improved.	Agreement	2.3
Within the same class, pupils can learn from each other.	Agreement	36.6
Never think of this question.	Agreement	10.7

<b>Q11. Compared with a traditional segregation system, what do you think the inclusive classroom CANNOT provide? Tick as many as you can think of:</b>		
Moral education.	Agreement	17.7
Ability to form good human relationships.	Agreement	25.5
Academic achievement.	Agreement	45.6
Quality of education.	Agreement	51.1
<b>Q12. Who is the main targeting group in the inclusive classroom?</b>		
	<b>Normal pupils.</b>	<b>8.8</b>
	Special educational needs pupils.	5.6
	<b>Both able and disabled pupils.</b>	<b>52.5</b>
	It depends on the subject or the aim of the learning contents.	21.1
	<b>No idea.</b>	<b>9.2</b>

See footnotes <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In case when the total of the percentage fall short of 100, this is due to missing data, that is, the parent did not respond to the question.

<sup>2</sup> In question 10 and 11, only the percentage of “tick” is shown. Detailed frequency is provided in Appendix.

#### Section 4. Future Expectations and Conclusions

	Answer	% response
<b>Q13. If you have a child in an inclusive classroom, what kind of environment would you choose if you had another child who has ready to start school?</b>	<b>Inclusive setting.</b>	<b>27.3</b>
	Segregation system.	13.7
	<b>The same school, but not in an inclusive classroom.</b>	<b>25.1</b>
	The same school, and the same inclusive setting.	27.4
	<b>Different school, but in the inclusive setting.</b>	<b>1.6</b>
	Different school and not in the inclusive setting.	2.5
<b>Q14. What kinds of curriculum/content do you think should be provided in the inclusive school?</b>	<b>The same as other mainstream schools.</b>	<b>31.4</b>
	The same as other mainstream schools but with own curriculum.	61.7
	<b>Different from other mainstream schools.</b>	<b>5.8</b>

<b>Q15. What kinds of activities do you think should be provided in the inclusive school?</b>		
The same as other mainstream schools.	Agreement	17.4
To provide parents opportunities for participating children's learning.	Agreement	22.8
The activity that both non-disabled and disabled pupils can complete by themselves.	Agreement	47.5
The same as other mainstream schools but with own supportive activities.	Agreement	34.6
Different from other mainstream schools.	Agreement	1.4
It is better NOT to have any activity.	Agreement	1.2
<b>Q16. Do you think that inclusive education will be the mainstream in the future?</b>	<b>Strongly agree.</b>	<b>7.6</b>
	Agree.	58.6
	<b>Disagree.</b>	<b>30.0</b>
	Strongly disagree.	3.2

See footnotes<sup>1 2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In case when the total of the percentage fall short of 100, this is due to missing data, that is, the parent did not respond to the question.

<sup>2</sup> In question 15, only the percentage of "tick" is shown. Detailed frequency is provided in Appendix.

## Appendix H

### Statistical Significances and Trends Related to the Research Questions

The focus of section one in the questionnaire was on respondents' basic knowledge of inclusive education. Starting with 'location', a  $\chi^2$  analysis was undertaken with 'location' of the respondent as the independent variable and one item relevant to the research question being considered as the dependent variable.

No statistically significant difference was found in the location of respondents to the item of "heard about inclusive education", that is, no relationship was found between whether the respondents lived in urban or rural areas as to whether they had heard about inclusive education. More than half of the respondents had not heard about inclusive education; however, from the  $\chi^2$  analysis, 'location' was related to respondents' "main point about locating non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same learning environment"<sup>1</sup> and respondents' ideas about "role of inclusive education" in the following four items:

- main point toward inclusion, competition (p=0.006),
- main point toward inclusion, natural selection (p=0.000),
- main point toward inclusion, learning from each other (p=0.019),
- it is beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils (p=0.045).

There was a statistically significance between those respondents who regarded the value of inclusive education as promoting competition (p=0.006), natural selection (p=0.000) and learning from each other (p=0.019). There was no difference between City and County respondents who regarded inclusion as promoting competition or natural selection; however, more respondents in the City compared to the County saw the value of inclusive education as facilitating children's learning from each other. Less than half of the respondents from both City and County with more respondents in the City compared to the

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<sup>1</sup> In the questionnaire, in order to provide basic information about inclusive education, brief explanations of inclusive education were written in the questionnaire so that parents who did not hear about inclusion before could have some basic ideas about inclusion.

County, thought that the role inclusive education was beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils ( $p=0.045$ ). From the statistics, though the  $\chi^2$  ( $p=0.062$ ) was not statistically significant, the majority of the respondents would choose an inclusive setting if they had another child who was to start school. The crosstabulation result also showed that even more respondents in the City would choose the inclusive setting; however, the number of the respondents from the City who chose the 'segregation system' was also nearly double than respondents from County.

The majority of all the respondents, whether they had heard about inclusive education or not, thought that on the whole, inclusive education was worthwhile ( $p=0.000$ ). Referring to the research question, it can be argued that inclusive education may be used as a mean of improving society because it has the characteristics as following:

Taking the item of 'why do you think inclusive education for children with a disability is worthwhile?' as the dependent variable, inclusion is worthwhile because:

- it provides equal opportunities to both non-disabled and disabled pupils ( $p=0.000$ ),
- it provides greater opportunity for human interaction ( $p=0.009$ ),
- it provides better opportunities to form good relationships ( $p=0.006$ ).

Though the majority of the respondents in both City and County had not heard inclusive education, the crosstabulation result showed that there was no difference between respondents who had heard about inclusive education and those who had not heard about inclusive education, the respondents believed that inclusive education was worthwhile because it provided equal opportunities to both non-disabled and disabled pupils ( $p=0.000$ ). Nearly half of the all respondents, the majority of the respondents from the 'heard about inclusive education' and less than half of the respondents from 'not heard about inclusive education'; and with a difference that the respondents who heard about inclusive education compared to whom had not heard about inclusive education, thought that inclusive

education was worthwhile because it provided greater opportunity for human interaction ( $p=0.009$ ). Near half of all respondents, the majority of the respondents in the City and less than half in the County; and with a difference that the respondents who heard about inclusive education compared to whom had not heard about inclusive education, agreed that inclusive education was worthwhile because it provided better opportunities to form good relationships ( $p=0.006$ ).

Taking ‘what is the main point you think that putting non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same learning environment?’ as the dependent variable; inclusion can also be referred to the respondents’ main point because:

- inclusion is learning from each other ( $p=0.000$ ).

Nearly half of all respondents, the majority of the respondents in the City and less than half in the County and with a difference of more respondents who had heard about inclusive education compared to those who had not heard about inclusive education, believed that the main point for putting non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same learning environment was learning from each other ( $p=0.000$ ).

The majority of respondents, whether they had heard about inclusive education or not, agreed that inclusion was important for non-disabled and disabled pupils because:

- the progress through collaboration and sharing ( $p=0.000$ ),
- inclusion fosters accurate orders and principles ( $p=0.004$ ),
- teachers can instruct correct attitudes ( $p=0.014$ ),
- pupils can learn from each other ( $p=0.000$ ).

The majority of all respondents, the majority in the City and less than half in the County with a difference of more respondents who had heard about inclusive education than those who had not, thought that inclusion was important because of the progress through collaboration and sharing ( $p=0.000$ ). In both City and County, less than half of the

respondents without a difference between respondents who had heard about inclusive education and those who had not, believed that inclusion fostered the accurate orders and principles ( $p=0.004$ ). Also in both City and County, less than half of the respondents without a difference between respondents who had heard about inclusive education and those who had not, thought that teachers could instruct correct attitudes was important for both non-disabled and disabled pupils ( $p=0.014$ ). Less than half of all respondents, without a difference between respondents who had heard about inclusive education or not, believed that inclusion was important because pupils could learn from each other ( $p=0.000$ ). Though there was no difference between City and County areas, a higher rate of respondents who had heard about inclusive education with the comparison of those who had not heard about inclusive education could be found. From the statistical results, more respondents from the City thought that the inclusion classroom provided pupils an environment with the atmosphere of collaboration and sharing; however, less respondents from both City and County thought that pupils could also be cultivated with proper attitudes toward pupils who were different from them. The main ideas derived from the above statistical results mainly focused on the notion of equal opportunities for both non-disabled and disabled pupils; and the results also showed the difference between City and County areas. The majority respondents from the City were positive toward inclusive education whilst the majority of the respondents from the County tended to be negative. The difference between City and County might lie on the respondents' personal background such as education and information resources.

The following issue focused on whether inclusive education can benefit both non-disabled and disabled pupils. Regardless where the locations were, nearly half of the respondents from both City and County with a higher rate from urban respondents than rural respondents, agreed that the role of inclusive education was beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils; and the statistical significance was 0.045. Though more

than half of the respondents had not heard about inclusive education, with a difference of the majority of the respondents from the City and less than half from the County, they thought that the main point of putting non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same learning environment was learning from each other ( $p=0.000$ ); and more than half of all respondents with a difference of the majority of respondents from the City and less than half from the County believed that there would be progress through collaboration and sharing ( $p=0.000$ ).

Taking 'reaction' as the independent variable and other items as dependent variables, the results are listed as follow: Inclusive education was worthwhile because

- it provided greater opportunity for human interactions ( $p=0.000$ ),
- it provided better opportunities to form good relationships ( $p=0.000$ ),
- normal pupils can offer their abilities to SEN pupils ( $p=0.000$ ),

The majority of the respondents who thought inclusion was either an excellent idea or worthwhile believed that inclusion provided 'greater opportunity for human interaction', 'to form good relationships' and 'normal pupils could offer their abilities to SEN pupils', the  $\chi^2$  for these items were 0.000; and there was no difference between respondents who regarded inclusive education as 'an excellent idea' or 'worthwhile'. These three items could be deemed as important factors which addressed on the issue of how does inclusive education influence on both 'normal' and 'special' pupils. When mentioning about parents' regards of the phenomenon of mainstreaming; most respondents from the City and the majority of the respondents from the County, without a statistical difference, disagreed that the main point of inclusion were competition ( $p=0.006$ ) and natural selection ( $p=0.000$ ). Nearly half of all respondents, with a difference that the majority of the respondents form the City and less than half from the County, thought that the main point of inclusion was pupils' learning from each other ( $p=0.019$ ). The respondents, slightly less than half (47.3%)

of all respondents from both City and County without a difference, thought that the role of inclusion was beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils ( $p=0.045$ ).

Taking 'reaction' as the independent variable and "the main point of putting non-disabled and disabled pupils in the same environment" as dependent variables, the  $\chi^2$  showed that

- the main point was the law of jungle ( $p=0.000$ ),
- the main point was multi-dimensional learning setting and atmosphere ( $p=0.000$ ),
- the main point was cooperation and collaboration ( $p=0.000$ ),
- the main point was learning from each other ( $p=0.000$ ).

From all respondents, almost all of the respondents whose reaction toward inclusion was 'excellent idea' or 'worthwhile' and the majority of the respondents who chose 'damaging idea' or 'bad idea', disagreed that the main point of inclusion was the law of the jungle; and there was no difference among these four items. However, there was a difference among respondents whose reactions were 'excellent idea' and whose reactions were 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea'; and nearly half of all respondents (46.5%); the majority of the respondents whose reaction was 'excellent idea', less than half from 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea', believed that the main point of inclusion was multi-dimensional learning setting and atmosphere. The majority of all respondents (64.5%); majority from 'excellent idea', 'worthwhile' and 'damaging' and less than half from 'bad idea', thought that the main point was cooperation and collaboration; and there was a difference among respondents whose reactions were 'excellent idea', 'worthwhile' and 'damaging' and respondents whose reactions were 'bad idea'. With a difference between respondents whose reactions were 'excellent idea' and 'worthwhile' and respondents whose reactions were 'damaging' and 'bad idea', nearly half of all respondents (48.7%); majority from 'excellent idea' and 'worthwhile' and less than half from 'damaging' and 'bad idea' addressed their main point on both non-disabled and disabled pupils could learn from each other.

Taking 'reaction' as the independent variable and 'for non-disabled pupils, what do you think about the role of inclusive education?' as the dependent variable, three items were statistically significant:

- the role was sacrifice and devotion ( $p=0.000$ ),
- the role was a compromise system ( $p=0.001$ ),
- the role was beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils ( $p=0.000$ ).

Without differences, less than half from all respondents (22.4%); few from 'excellent idea' and less than half from 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea' thought that the role of inclusion was sacrifice and devotion. Less than half of all respondents (32.8%); less than half from 'excellent idea', 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea', believed that the role of inclusive education was a compromise system; and there was no difference in comparison of one with another. Nearly half of all respondents (47.3%); majority from 'excellent idea' and less than half from 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea', believed that the role of inclusive education was beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils; however, there was a difference that respondents with 'excellent idea' towards inclusive education had a higher rate compared to those whose reactions were 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea'.

The respondents also considered about pupils' academic achievement and the quality of education. Though the majority of the respondents thought that inclusive education was worthwhile; academic performance and the quality of education were also their concerns. Taking 'reaction' as the independent variable to the item of 'compared with a traditional segregation system, what do you think the inclusive classroom cannot provide?', the statistical results, without differences in four options, showed that the nearly half of all respondents; less than half from 'excellent idea', 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea', concerned about pupils' academic performance ( $p=0.010$ ). It is also important to point out that according to crosstabulation, the ratio from the respondents who chose 'excellent idea'

and 'worthwhile' was about 10% higher than 'damaging' and 'bad idea'. In other words, the respondents who deemed inclusion as 'an excellent idea' or 'worthwhile' concerned pupils' academic performance more than those who deemed inclusion as 'damaging' or a 'bad idea'. Slightly more than half of the total respondents concerned about quality of education; and interestingly, the respondents thought inclusion was 'damaging' (70.9%) or a 'bad idea' (67.9%) were highly concerned about the quality of education rather than the respondents from 'excellent idea' (39.2%) and 'worthwhile' (48.1%); and the  $\chi^2$  of 'reaction' and 'inclusive classroom cannot provide quality of education' was 0.000 with a difference between respondents whose reactions were 'excellent idea' and 'worthwhile' and respondents whose reactions were 'damaging' and 'bad idea'.

The following issue focused on pupils' responses to inclusive education. Without difference, nearly half of all respondents thought that pupils' responses were comfortable; however, respondents who had not heard about inclusive education had a lower rate than respondents who had heard about inclusive education and the  $\chi^2$  was 0.000. Taking 'reaction' as independent variable and 'what are pupils' responses to inclusive education' as dependent variable, the statistical results are listed as following

- they (pupils) can learn better (p=0.000),
- they do not feel too much difference (p=0.034),
- they prefer traditional system (p=0.000),
- they feel comfortable in the inclusive setting (p=0.000).

Without difference, less than half of all respondents, less than half from choosing 'excellent idea' and few from 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea', thought that pupils could learn better in an inclusive setting. Without statistical difference, 26.8% of total respondents thought that pupils did not feel too much difference; 19.6% from 'excellent idea', 29.5% from 'worthwhile', 20.9% from 'damaging' and 25% from 'bad idea; that is, nearly most of total respondents who answered this question thought pupils did not feel too

much difference in an inclusive setting. But there was a difference between the respondents who thought inclusion was ‘an excellent idea’ or ‘worthwhile’ and who chose ‘damaging’ or ‘bad idea’; and less than half of all respondents, few from ‘excellent idea’ and ‘worthwhile’, less than half from ‘damaging’ and majority from ‘bad idea’, thought pupils preferred traditional system. Less than half of total respondents, nearly half from ‘excellent idea’ (47%) and ‘worthwhile’ (43%) and less than half from ‘damaging’ (22%) and few from ‘bad idea’ (13%), thought that pupils felt comfortable in the inclusive setting; and there was no difference among the four options. However, the questionnaire was designed for parents whose children were primary school pupils, only one question was given to focus on pupils’ own opinion; and that was ‘what are pupils’ responses if they had the chance to choose their educational setting again?’. The statistical frequencies showed that less than half of the pupils would choose either ‘traditional segregation schooling’ (19.6%) or ‘inclusive schooling’ (32.7%) or ‘they (pupils) do not know about this/never think of it’ (47.2%). But it was important to point out the researcher could not identify whether the respondents (parents) really asked their children or just responded with their own opinions. For supplementing the defect, 6 focus groups from primary school pupils were conducted.

The following focus in the research question was on the relationship between inclusive education and the notion of equality. Taking “heard about inclusive education’ as the independent variable and ‘why do you think inclusive education for children with a disability is worthwhile?’ as the dependent variable, the statistical results showed:

- it provides equal opportunities for both non-disabled and disabled pupils ( $p=0.000$ ),
- it promotes the notion of justice and egalitarianism ( $p=0.013$ )
- it provides greater opportunities for human interaction ( $p=0.009$ ),
- special educational needs pupils can participate in learning spontaneously ( $p=0.001$ ).

The majority of the respondents believed that inclusive education provided equal opportunities for both non-disabled and disabled pupils and there was no difference

between respondents whether they had heard about inclusive education or not. Without difference, less than half of total respondents, 25.4% from respondents who had heard about inclusive education and 18.5% from the respondents who had not heard about inclusive education, thought that inclusive education promoted the notion of justice and egalitarianism; that is, most respondents did not agree that inclusive education promoted the notion of justice and egalitarianism. The majority or all respondents, with a difference of the majority respondents from heard about inclusive education and less than half respondents from not heard about inclusive education, believed that inclusive education provided greater opportunities for human interaction. Although the majority of total respondents believed that inclusive education provided greater opportunities for human interaction; only less than half of all respondents, 34.8% from whom had heard inclusive education and 25.8% from whom had not heard about inclusive education, agreed that special educational needs pupils could participate in learning spontaneously; and there was no difference between respondents who had heard about inclusive education or not.

Taking 'reaction' as the independent variable and other items as dependent variables, evidence related to the research question about the relationship between inclusive education and the notion of equality could be found as follows:

Taking 'why do you think inclusive education for children with a disability is worthwhile?' as the dependent variable:

- Worthwhile, it (inclusive education) provides equal opportunities to both non-disabled and disabled pupils ( $p=0.000$ ),
- Worthwhile, it promotes the notion of justice and egalitarianism ( $p=0.000$ ),
- Worthwhile, it provides greater opportunity for human interaction ( $p=0.000$ ),
- Worthwhile, special educational needs pupils can participate in learning spontaneously ( $p=0.000$ )

Without difference between respondents whose reactions were ‘excellent idea’ and ‘worthwhile’, the majority of total respondents, most from whom thought inclusive education was an excellent idea and majority from worthwhile<sup>1</sup>, believed that inclusive education was worthwhile because it provided equal opportunities to both non-disabled and disabled pupils. Without difference from respondents whose reactions toward inclusive education, less than half of total respondents, 32.7% from ‘excellent idea’ and 24.6% from ‘worthwhile’<sup>2</sup>, thought that inclusive education was worthwhile for promoting notion of justice and egalitarianism. The majority of all respondents, 63.6% from ‘excellent idea’ and 61.6% from ‘worthwhile’<sup>3</sup>, thought inclusive education provided greater opportunity for human interaction; and there was no difference between respondents who regarded inclusive education as either an ‘excellent idea’ or ‘worthwhile’. Without difference, less than half of total respondents, 39.2% from ‘excellent idea’ and 35.2% from ‘worthwhile’<sup>4</sup> believed that special educational needs pupils could participate in learning spontaneously.

Taking ‘reaction’ as the independent variable and ‘in the inclusive classroom, which of the following you think is important for both non-disabled and disabled pupils?’ as the dependent variable; less than half of total respondents, majority from ‘excellent idea’ (52.9%) and less than half from ‘worthwhile’ (38.8%), ‘damaging’ (27.7%) and ‘bad idea’ (21.4%) thought that providing the equality of learning and teaching for both non-disabled and disabled pupils were important; and there was a difference between respondents whose reactions were ‘excellent idea’ and those whose reactions were ‘worthwhile’, ‘damaging’ and ‘bad idea’ ( $p=0.000$ ). Without difference, only 2.3% of total respondents thought that ‘the learning environment is improved’ ( $p=0.038$ ) was important for both non-disabled and disabled pupils. From the statistics, almost all of (97.6%) the respondents did not think that inclusive setting is important due to environmental improvement. Furthermore, taking

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<sup>1</sup> Respondents whose reactions were ‘damaging’ and ‘bad idea’ did not need to answer this part.

<sup>2</sup> As above.

<sup>3</sup> As above.

<sup>4</sup> Respondents whose reactions were ‘damaging’ and ‘bad idea’ did not need to answer this part.

‘who is the main targeting group in the inclusive classroom’ as the independent variable and ‘in the inclusive classroom, which of the following you think is important for both non-disabled and disabled pupils?’ as the dependent variable, the statistics showed a trend that almost all (97.6%) respondents that was the same as ‘reaction’ disagreed inclusive classroom is important because learning environment was improved ( $p=0.085$ ); and there was no difference among respondents who ticked ‘normal pupils’, ‘SEN pupils’, ‘both non-disabled and disabled pupils’ and ‘depends on the subject or the aim of contents’.

### **Other Statistical Significances and Trends**

Throughout the questionnaire, except the topic related to the research questions in the previous part, there existed other statistical significances and trends which provided valuable information about parents’ opinions. Detailed statistical significances and trends were provided as follows.

Taking ‘heard about inclusive education’ as the independent variable and the items from ‘why do you think inclusive education for children with a disability is worthwhile?’ as dependent variables, the statistical significance results showed that nearly half of all respondents (49.7%), the majority from respondents who had heard inclusive education and less than half from respondents who had not heard about inclusive education, believed that normal pupils could offer abilities to special educational needs pupils. There was a difference between respondents who had heard about inclusive education and those who had not; and the  $\chi^2$  was 0.003. Though the majority of respondents thought that inclusive education was worthwhile, only 19.4% of total respondents believed that inclusive education was good to future generation; less than half from respondents who heard about inclusion and few from respondents who had not heard about inclusion; and there was no difference between whether had heard inclusive education or not respondents ( $p=0.000$ ).

Taking 'reaction' as the independent variable and 'why do you think inclusive education for children with a disability is worthwhile?' as dependent variable; except items discussed in previous part, two items were listed as follow:

- it is good to future generation ( $p=0.000$ ),
- the curriculum can accord both non-disabled and disabled pupils ( $p=0.000$ ).

Though the majority of respondents (65.4%)<sup>1</sup> thought that inclusive education was worthwhile, less than half of them, 35.1% from 'excellent idea' and 20.2% from 'worthwhile' thought that inclusive education was good to future generation. Besides, only 26.7% from 'excellent idea' and 20.2% from 'worthwhile' thought that inclusive curriculum could accord both non-disabled and disabled pupil. Neither did the majority of respondents agree that inclusive education was good to future generation nor curriculum could accord both non-disabled and disabled pupils; and there was no difference between 'excellent idea' and 'worthwhile' respondents.

Taking 'reaction' as the independent variable and 'a child's learning achievement should compete with?' as the dependent variable, the majority of respondents agreed that a child's learning achievement should compete with him/her self. The statistical result showed that the majority of respondents from 'excellent idea', 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea' agreed that a child's learning achievement should compete with him/her self ( $p=0.009$ ); and no statistical difference was found among these four kinds of respondents.

Taking 'reaction' as the independent variable and 'what kinds of activities do you think should be provided in the inclusive school?' as the dependent variable; interestingly, without statistical difference among 'excellent idea', 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea', only 17.4% of total respondents, 22.0% from 'excellent idea', 15.6% from 'worthwhile', 19.5% from 'damaging' and 14.2% from 'bad idea' thought that inclusive

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<sup>1</sup> Respondents whose reaction were 'damaging' and 'bad idea' did not need to answer this part, so respondents whose 'reaction' were 'damaging' and 'bad idea' were excluded.

should provide 'the same activities as the mainstream schools' ( $p=0.024$ ). Only 22.8% of the respondents, less than half from 'excellent idea', 'worthwhile' and 'bad idea' and few from 'damaging' believed inclusion should provide 'parents opportunities for participating children's learning' ( $p=0.002$ ); and there was no difference among these four kinds of respondents. 34.5% of total respondents, less than half from 'excellent idea', 'worthwhile', 'damaging' and 'bad idea' believed that inclusive school should provide 'the same activities as other mainstream schools with own supportive activities' ( $p=0.032$ ); no statistical difference was found among these four kinds of respondents. Although the statistical result ( $p=0.170$ ) was not statistically significant in the item of inclusive school should provide 'activities that both non-disabled and disabled pupils can complete by themselves'; compared to other items, the ratio in this item was the highest, that is, 47.4% of total respondents agreed that the inclusive school should provide 'activities that both non-disabled and disabled pupils can complete by themselves'.

The parents, however, were also concerned about their children's academic achievement and the quality of education. The statistical significance showed that though the majority of the respondents' reactions toward inclusion was positive, the respondents still thought that 'inclusion cannot provide academic achievement' ( $p=0.010$ )<sup>1</sup> and 'inclusion cannot provide the quality of education' ( $p=0.000$ )<sup>2</sup>. Although the respondents concerned pupils' academic achievement and the quality of education, the majority (58.6%) of respondents' future expectation toward inclusive education was positive, the  $\chi^2$  derived from 'reaction' as independent variable and 'inclusive education will be the mainstream in the future' as dependent variable was 0.000. However, there was a difference between 'excellent idea' & 'worthwhile' and 'damaging' & 'bad idea' respondents. Respondents whose reactions were 'excellent idea' or 'worthwhile' toward inclusive education either strongly agreed or

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<sup>1</sup> Taking 'reaction' as the independent variable and 'compared with a traditional segregation system, what do you think the inclusive classroom cannot provide?' as dependent variable had been mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> Taking 'reaction' as the independent variable and 'compared with a traditional segregation system, what do you think the inclusive classroom cannot provide?' as dependent variable had been mentioned.

agreed that inclusive education would become future mainstream whilst respondents whose reactions were 'damaging' and 'bad idea' disagreed or strongly disagreed that inclusive education would become future mainstream.

Taking 'who is the main targeting group in the inclusive classroom?' as independent variable and 'for non-disabled pupils, what do you think about the role of inclusive education?' as dependent variable; the results showed:

- a better choice for normal pupils ( $p=0.001$ ),
- a compromise system from integration and segregation ( $p=0.013$ )
- beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils' ( $p=0.000$ ).

Only few of total respondents (11.3%) thought the role of inclusion is 'a better choice for normal pupils' and less than half of total respondents (32.8%) thought it as 'a compromise system from integration and segregation'; and there was no difference among respondents no matter what their decisions were. Nearly half of total respondents (47.3%) thought that the role of inclusion was beneficial for both non-disabled and disabled pupils; and a difference was found between 'normal pupils', 'SEN pupils', 'depends on the subject or the aim of contents', 'no idea' and 'both non-disabled and disabled pupils'. Except the statistical significances, there was a trend toward 'the role of inclusive education is sacrifice and devotion' ( $p=0.059$ ) and no difference was found among the five kinds of respondents.

Taking 'who is the main targeting group in the inclusive classroom?' as independent variable and 'what are pupils' responses to inclusive education?' as the dependent variable, the statistical results showed:

- they (pupils) can learn better ( $p=0.001$ ),
- they (pupils) like to be located in the inclusive setting ( $p=0.004$ ),
- they (pupils) prefer traditional segregation system ( $p=0.000$ ),

- they (pupils) feel comfortable in the inclusive setting ( $p=0.000$ ).

Few from the total respondents (14.0%) thought that pupils could learn better; few from the total respondents (9.0%) thought that pupils liked to be located in the inclusive setting; less than half from total respondents (20.0%) thought pupils preferred traditional segregation system and less than half of total respondents (39.7%) thought that pupils felt comfortable in the inclusive setting. In the above four items, no difference was found in each item's five kinds of respondents.

Taking 'who is the main targeting group in the inclusive classroom?' as independent variable and 'what are pupils' responses if they had the chance to choose their educational setting again?' as the dependent variable, the statistical result showed that although parents' attitudes toward inclusion was positive; pupils themselves (47.2%), however, do not know about it/never think of it ( $p=0.000$ ).

Taking 'who is the main targeting group in the inclusive classroom?' as independent variable and 'a child's learning achievement should compete with?' as the dependent variable, less than half of total respondents (31.1%) thought that pupils' achievements do not need to compete with others ( $p=0.030$ ); and there was no difference among 'normal pupils', 'SEN pupils', 'both non-disabled and disabled pupils', 'depends on the subject or the aim of contents' and 'no idea'.

Taking 'who is the main targeting group in the inclusive classroom?' as independent variable and 'compared with a traditional segregation system, what do you think the inclusive classroom CANNOT provide?' as the dependent variable, the results showed:

- moral education ( $p=0.013$ ),
- academic achievement ( $p=0.003$ )
- quality of education ( $p=0.017$ ).

17.7% of total respondents thought that inclusive classroom could not provide moral education and there was no difference among five kinds of respondents. Less than half of total respondents (45.6%) thought that inclusive classroom could not provide academic achievement and there was a difference between 'normal pupils', 'SEN pupils', 'both non-disabled and disabled pupils', 'no idea' respondents and 'depends on the subject or the aim of contents' respondents. The majority of total respondents (51.0%) thought that inclusive classroom could no provide quality of education; and there were differences among 'normal pupils', 'depends on the subject or the aim of contents', 'no idea' respondents and 'SEN pupils', 'both non-disabled and disabled pupils' respondents.

Taking 'if you have a child in an inclusive classroom, what kind of environment would you choose if you had another child who has ready to start school?' as the independent variable and 'why do think inclusive education for children with a disability is worthwhile?' as the dependent variable, the  $\chi^2$  showed that all the items in this category were statistical significance<sup>1</sup>. 59.7% of total respondents thought that inclusion was worthwhile because it provided equal opportunities; but there were differences among 'inclusive setting' & 'same school, and same inclusive setting' & 'different school, but in the inclusive setting' respondents and 'segregation system' & 'same school, but not in inclusive setting' & 'different school, and not in the inclusive setting' respondents. Few from total respondents (14.8%) thought that inclusion was worthwhile because it was a better environment and there was no difference among those six kinds of respondents. The majority of total respondents (51.0%) thought that inclusion was worthwhile because it promoted greater human interaction; and there were differences among 'inclusive setting' & 'same school, same inclusive setting' respondents and 'segregation system' & 'same school, but not in inclusive setting' & 'different school, but in the inclusive setting' & 'different school and not in inclusive setting' respondents. Nearly half of total respondents (49.0%) thought that

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<sup>1</sup> The  $\chi^2=0.000$ .

inclusion was worthwhile because it provided greater opportunity for human interaction; and there were differences among 'inclusive setting' & 'same school, and same inclusive setting' respondents and 'segregation system' & 'same school, but not in inclusive setting' & 'different school, but in inclusive setting' & 'different school, and not in the inclusive setting' respondents. Only 5.7% of total respondents thought that inclusion was worthwhile because of better performance in academic subjects and no difference was found in the six kinds of respondents. Less than half of total respondents (29.3%) thought that inclusion was worthwhile because SEN pupils could participate in learning and there was no difference in each of categorised respondents. Nearly half of total respondents (49.7%) thought that inclusion was worthwhile because normal pupils could offer their abilities; and there were differences among 'inclusive setting' & 'same school, same inclusive setting' respondents and 'segregation system' & 'same school, but not in inclusive setting' & 'different school, but in the inclusive setting' & 'different school, and not in the inclusive setting' respondents. 19.4% of total respondents thought that inclusion was worthwhile because it was good to future generation and 18.1% of total respondents thought that inclusion was worthwhile because the curriculum could accord both non-disabled and disabled pupils; and there was no difference in the six kinds of respondents in above two items.

Taking 'if you have a child in an inclusive classroom, what kind of environment would you choose if you had another child who has ready to start school?' as the independent variable and 'would you support your child to be located in an inclusive setting? I would:' as the dependent variable; the majority of the respondents (67.1%) supported their children to be located in inclusive setting; and the statistical significance was 0.000. However, from the crosstabulation, it was obvious that respondents whose choice was inclusion had overwhelming counts on *strongly support* than segregation. On the contrary, respondents

whose choice were ‘segregation system’, ‘same school, but not in the inclusive classroom’, ‘different school, and not in the inclusive setting’ tended to give no support.

Taking ‘if you have a child in an inclusive classroom, what kind of environment would you choose if you had another child who has ready to start school?’ as the independent variable and ‘in the inclusive classroom, which of the following you think is important for both non-disabled and disabled pupils?’ as the dependent variable, the statistical resulted showed that except two<sup>1</sup> items in this category, all the other items were 0.000. Less than half of total respondents (38.1%) thought that inclusion was important; and a difference was found in ‘inclusive setting’ respondents. 50.4% of total respondents thought that inclusion was important because of the progress in inclusive classroom; and there were differences between ‘inclusive setting’, ‘same school, same inclusive setting’ respondents and ‘segregation system’, ‘same school, but not in inclusive classroom’, ‘different school, but in the inclusive setting’, ‘different school, and not in the inclusive setting’ respondents (p=0.000). Few of total respondents (7.0%) believed that inclusion was important because of pupil’s academic performance (p=0.000) and less than half of total respondents (21.3%) thought that inclusion was important because it fostered the accurate orders or principles within the classroom (p=0.001) and less than half of the respondents (39.9%) thought that inclusion was important because teachers could instruct correct attitudes (p=0.000); and no difference was found among the six kinds of respondents in these three items. Less than half of total respondents (36.5%) thought that inclusion was important because pupils could learn from each other (p=0.000) and a difference was found in ‘same school, and same inclusive setting’ respondents.

Taking ‘if you have a child in an inclusive classroom, what kind of environment would you choose if you had another child who has ready to start school?’ as the independent variable

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<sup>1</sup> The  $\chi^2$  of ‘Inclusion is important because it fosters accurate orders and principles’ is 0.001, and the  $\chi^2$  of ‘inclusion is important because pupils can learn from each other’ is 0.119 (not significant).

and ‘compared with a traditional segregation system, what do you think the inclusive classroom cannot provide?’ as dependent variable; 25.5% of total respondents thought that inclusive classroom could not provide the ability to form good relationship ( $p=0.044$ ) and no difference was found among the six kinds of respondents. The majority of total respondents (51.0%) thought that inclusive classroom could not provide quality of education ( $p=0.000$ ); and a difference was found between ‘inclusive setting’ & ‘same school, same inclusive setting’ & ‘different school, but in the inclusive setting’ respondents and ‘segregation system’ & ‘same school, but not in the inclusive setting’ & ‘different school, and not in the inclusive setting’ respondents.

Taking ‘if you have a child in an inclusive classroom, what kind of environment would you choose if you had another child who has ready to start school?’ as the independent variable and ‘do you think inclusive education will be the mainstream in the future?’ as the dependent variable; the majority<sup>1</sup> of the respondents thought that inclusive education will be the mainstream in the future and the statistical significance was 0.000. However, the crosstabulation showed that respondents who chose inclusion, including ‘same school, same inclusive setting’ or ‘different school but in the inclusive setting’, generally agreed or strongly agreed that inclusion will be future mainstream whilst respondents who had opposite opinions disagreed or strongly disagreed inclusion will be future mainstream.

The final part of the questionnaire focused on the respondents’ opinion about whether inclusive education would be future mainstream or not. Taking ‘do you think that inclusive education will be the mainstream in the future’ as the independent variable and ‘would you support your child to be located in an inclusive setting?’ as the dependent variable, the  $\chi^2=0.000$  indicated that the majority of total respondents (67.1%) who agreed inclusive education would be future mainstream somewhat supported their children to be located in

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<sup>1</sup> It included respondents who ticked “Inclusive setting”, “The same school, and the same inclusive setting” and “Different school, but in the inclusive setting”.

an inclusive setting. Differences could be found that respondents who strongly agreed that inclusion will be future mainstream all ‘strongly supported’ or ‘supported somewhat’ their children to be located in an inclusive setting whilst 69.0% of respondents who strongly disagreed that inclusion will be future mainstream would give no support to their children to be located in an inclusive setting.

Taking ‘do you think that inclusive education will be the mainstream in the future’ as the independent variable and ‘compared with a traditional segregation system, what do you think the inclusive classroom cannot provide?’ as dependent variable; the statistical results showed: inclusive classroom cannot provide:

- moral education (p=0.006)
- ability to form good relationship (p=0.000),
- quality of education (p=0.000)

Less than half of total respondents (17.7% and 25.5%) thought that inclusive classroom could provide either moral education or ability to form good relationship; and no difference was found among the four kinds of respondents in these two items. The majority of total respondents (51.0%) thought that inclusive classroom could not provide quality of education and a difference was found between ‘strongly agree’ & ‘agree’ respondents and ‘disagree’ & ‘strongly disagree’ respondents.

Taking ‘do you think that inclusive education will be the mainstream in the future’ as the independent variable and ‘what kinds of activities do you think should be provided in the inclusive school?’ as the dependent variable; the statistical results showed that inclusive school should provide:

- parents opportunities for participating children’s learning (p=0.000)
- the same activities as other mainstream schools but with own supportive activities (p=0.041)

- activities different from other mainstream schools ( $p=0.000$ ),
- not to have any activity ( $p=0.000$ ).

22.8% of total respondents thought that inclusive schools should provide parents opportunities for participating children's learning; 34.5% of total respondents thought that inclusive schools should provide the same activities as other mainstream schools but with own supportive activities; and only few of total respondents (1.3%) thought that inclusive schools should provide activities different from other mainstream schools; and no difference was found among the four kinds of respondents in these three items. Only 1.2% of total respondents thought that inclusive school should not have any activity; and these respondents were from only 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' categories.