

## Perspective towards Inclusive Education in Macao

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**Abstract:** Inclusive education has become one of the major concerns of education policy in every part of world nowadays. This paper is written to investigate the implementation of inclusion education in Macao. Data collection is done through conducting telephone interviews and giving out questionnaires, and targets of the questionnaires include administrative staff and teachers in schools where inclusive education are implemented and parents of students with special needs. Telephone interviews are made mainly with school principals. Findings show that inclusive education in Macao is still at the developing stage and the main reasons are the inadequacy in teacher training and the lacking of professionals in particular fields. In accordance with the problems found, suggestions for reference and improvement are raised towards the end of the paper. Hope inclusive Education in Macao will have a better development in the future.

**Key words:** inclusive education; special education; Macao

### 1. Introduction

“Inclusive Education” means to integrate students with special needs into mainstream schools. These students include mainly those with physical disability, those who are blind or deaf, mild retarded, those with learning disabilities as well as those with normal intelligence but with dereism. It emphasizes at providing a non-segregating classroom environment for students with special needs, enables them to study and play together with ordinary students and therefore they can obtain benefits from education. This is an inevitable trend for current education development.

In recent years, many western countries are progressively carrying out the idea of inclusive education. Asian regions like Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and others are implementing inclusive education in various degrees. In Macao, with the promotion of the idea of inclusive education in the society, ordinary class teachers have a greater opportunity to gain contact with students with special needs. Nonetheless, most teachers do not have correlation training in the field of special education. Then, what problems do they encounter in the actual teaching? How do they deal with them? What attitude do they hold when facing inclusive students? How do principals view inclusive education? What difficulties do they face when implementing inclusive education in schools? Do parents of students with special needs agree on having their children enter mainstream schools? Do inclusive students truly integrate in community life? How well do they get along with ordinary students? How do other parents respond to the implementation of inclusive education?

This research investigated how school principals, teachers and parents of students with special needs view the implementation of Inclusive Education and thus gain an access of the current situation of the implementation of Macao Inclusive Education. With the findings, we understand the difficulties encountered and any inadequacy experienced during the course of implementing of inclusive education. We propose corresponding measures and

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hope the current situation of Macao inclusive education will be improved in the future.

## **2. The History of Inclusive Education in Macao**

The development of special education in Macao is comparatively slower than regions nearby, but the pace of inclusive education is not slow. In the year 1990 to 1991, the DSEJ (the Education Department) had already started implementing inclusive education in government schools.

In July 1996, the Macao government officially promulgated the 33/96/M law. In law No. 10 “Special Education”, it emphasized that no matter in public or private schools, students with special needs should be provided an opportunity for well-rounded development so as to enable them to gradually integrate into the normal educational system, and thus, get prepared for integrating into the society in future (Chiuho So, 2001). The establishment of this law greatly impelled the development of Macao Inclusive Education

In the scholastic year 2003/2004, there was altogether of 12 schools implementing inclusive education. Among which, 4 of them were kindergartens, 6 of them were primary schools and 2 of them were secondary schools (“Handbook for Parents of Students with Special Needs”, 2003).

Students studying in inclusive classes are mainly those who need special help in learning, sensation (e.g. sight or hearing) or physical movements. The government stipulates that inclusive classes should not have more than 25 students, and there can only be 2 or 3 students with special needs in an inclusive class. The study contents of students with special needs are similar to those of the rest of the class. They use normal textbooks but teachers will cater their needs accordingly and make suitable adjustments. For example, teachers will provide them with individual teaching designs, which enhance their learning efficiency. The schools will also make arrangements and put them into different classes according to their learning abilities. After a certain period of time, the schools and the special education assessment group will come together to discuss and evaluate the inclusive students and rearrange them to study in higher or lower level classes according to their learning abilities.

Apart from attending classes together with ordinary students every day, inclusive students need to receive individual counseling according to their special needs. The special education working team, including psychological instructors, social workers, physical therapists, functional therapists, language therapists (or language instructors) and other special education workers, working together as a team, pay visit tours to schools and carries out evaluations, individual counseling and other teaching correlated services to students with special needs so as to improve and develop their abilities to cope with their everyday life and their learning. (Sources: DSEJ Centre of Educational Psychology Counseling and Special Education, <http://www.dsej.gov.mo/cappee/index-c.htm>, 2003)

## **3. Objectives**

The main objective of this research is to understand the influences of Inclusive education on both ordinary students and students with special needs through the experience of schools which are currently implementing Inclusive Education. And, to discuss problems concerning administration allocation and actual teaching so as to offer Macao’s Inclusive Education some practical suggestions and provide references for schools that will implement Inclusive Education in the future.

Simultaneously, this research hopes to draw attentions of the government and other organizations to provide schools that have been implementing Inclusive Education and their teachers with more supports, so as to enhance

the development of Inclusive Education in Macao.

## 4. Research Methods

### 4.1 Interviewees

This research is mainly conducted through questionnaires and telephone interviews. The interviewees of the questionnaires were from Macao schools that are implementing inclusive education. These include kindergartens, primary and secondary schools. Questionnaires are distributed among 10 government schools. The questionnaires are distributed to the administrative staff (including the principals, vice principals and advisors, etc.), teachers who have been teaching inclusive classes (including class advisors and subject teachers) as well as parents of students of special needs. Totally there are 251 questionnaires being distributed. 24 of them are sent to administrative staff, 149 to teachers and 78 to parents. 192 questionnaires are returned, including 22 from administrative staff, 116 from teachers and 54 from parents. The percentage of returned questionnaires is 76%.

We have conducted telephone interviews with 5 government schools principals. The interviews are about the implementation of inclusive education in schools and more in-depth investigations on the situation.

### 4.2 Research tools

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part covers the personal information of the interviewees, including their positions in schools, the levels they are teaching (or the levels that the children are attending), as well as aspects in which the students need. The second part is multiple choice questions. There are 17 questions in total and some of them are given a variety of choices. The questions are designed to reveal their perspective on inclusive education.

## 5. Research Findings and Further Discussions

### 5.1 Findings Obtained from Questionnaire Analysis:

#### 5.1.1. Part One: Participant's Information

Of all the participants, 40.9% out of all administrative staff are principals, 18.2% are advisors, 40.9% are subject advisors (or subject co-coordinators). For teachers, 51.7% are class advisors and 48.3% are subject teachers.

**Table 1 Teaching Levels of Participants or Education Levels of Children of Participants**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=22	%	N=116	%	N=54	%
Kindergarten	4	18.2	17	14.7	11	20.4
Primary schools	7	31.8	54	46.6	30	55.6
Secondary schools	11	50.0	45	38.7	13	24.0

\*All data are rounded off to the nearest 0.1 digits.

From questionnaires collected, we got to know that inclusive students in Macao are mainly needed in these special aspects: physical disability, learning disabilities, blind or deaf and those with dereism. Comparatively speaking, those who are mildly retarded and those who are blink take up the least fraction. (Sees Table2)

**Table 2 Conditions of Students with Special Needs in Macao**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=22	%	N=116	%	N=54	%
Learning disabilities	15	68.2	80	69.0	30	55.6
Dereism	17	77.3	51	44.0	11	20.4

**Perspective towards Inclusive Education in Macao**

Mildly retarded	9	40.9	33	28.4	7	13.0
Deaf	14	63.6	57	49.1	12	22.2
Blind	1	4.5	11	9.5	5	9.3
Physical disabled	17	77.3	78	67.2	10	18.5
ADHD/Emotional problems	1	4.5	7	6.0	0	0
Others: Verbal problems	0	0	1	0.9	2	3.7
Developmental problems	0	0	1	0.9	0	0
No comment	0	0	2	1.7	5	9.3

5.1.2. Part Two: Participants' Perspective towards Inclusive Education

Regarding the concept of inclusive education, administrative staff, teachers and parents hold almost the same view. They all agree that the basic concept of inclusive education is “Human are born equal and everyone should be respected”. This accounts for 86.4%, 79.3% and 72.2% respectively. The other ones are “Teaches should teach without discrimination and in accordance with students’ abilities” and “To enhance students’ acceptance of others”. (Sees table 3)

In addition, 1.7% of teachers suggest that inclusive education can slow the entire teaching progress. They hoped to obtain more help from other external supports.

**Table 3 Participants' View towards Inclusive Education (More options are allowed where appropriate)**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=22	%	N=116	%	N=54	%
Teaches should teach without discrimination and in accordance with students’ abilities	17	77.3	89	76.7	27	50.0
Human are born equal and everyone should be respected	19	86.4	92	79.3	39	72.2
Eliminating discrimination in the society	16	72.7	75	64.7	25	46.3
To provide students a “least constrained learning environment”	10	45.5	56	48.3	20	37.0
To enhance students’ acceptance of others	17	77.3	87	75.0	28	51.9
Others: Enhancing mutual love among students	0	0	1	0.9	1	1.9
Enhancing the integratemnt of inclusive students in the society	1	4.5	1	0.9	0	0
Slowing down the entire teaching progress	0	0	2	1.7	0	0
No comment	0	0	1	0.9	1	1.9

From Table 4, we see that over 80% of the participants show approval towards the implementation of Inclusive Education in Macao. This is clearly shown in the indicator of parents of students with special needs which accounts for 88.9%.

**Table 4 Should Inclusive Education Be Implemented in Macao**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=22	%	N=116	%	N=54	%
Yes	18	81.8	93	80.2	48	88.8
No	3	13.6	19	16.4	3	5.6
No comment	1	4.6	4	3.4	3	5.6

All the three parties agree that the reasons why Macao should implement Inclusive Education are that it brings benefits to both students with special needs as well as ordinary students and enhance their mutual love and acceptance. Regarding administrative staff and teachers, from the perspective of education, it is a major trend in

educational development. As for parents of students with special needs, through Inclusive Education, they hope their children will learn to take care of themselves, become more adaptable to the society, and thus lessen the burden of the family and bring hope to the family. (Sees Table 5)

**Table 5 Reasons for the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Macao (More options are allowed where appropriate)**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=18	%	N=93	%	N=48	%
It is a major trend in educational development	15	83.3	62	66.7	24	50.0
It brings benefits to both students with special needs as well as ordinary students	15	83.3	68	73.1	35	72.9
It lessens the burden of society in the long run	13	72.2	45	48.4	27	56.3
Others: It lessens the burden of parents and decrease family disputes	0	0	1	1.1	2	4.2
Others: It gives ordinary students a chance to become familiar with people with special needs since they are young	1	5.6	1	1.1	1	2.1
Others: It is a part of universal education that we should treat each student equally	0	0	1	1.1	0	0
No comment	0	0	0	0	0	0

Over 95% of the administrative staff and parents think that having students with special needs study in mainstream schools is beneficial to certain degree. However, there are only 72.4% of teachers approving this view. (Sees Table 6)

**Table 6 Whether It Is Helpful for Inclusive Students to Study in Mainstream Schools**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=22	%	N=116	%	N=54	%
Yes	19	86.4	84	72.4	48	88.9
No	1	4.5	24	20.7	3	5.6
No comment	2	9.1	8	6.9	3	5.6

All three groups of participants think that inclusive education can enhance inclusive students' involvement in the society. The percentages are 94.7%, 85.7% and 73.3% respectively. They all think that inclusive students can interact with other classmates and the percentages showing this are 89.5%, 77.4% and 55.6% respectively. Indeed, inclusive education can help students with special needs to get along with ordinary students and enables them to gain acceptance by the society. Thus, they are no longer isolated and helpless group. (Sees Table 7)

**Table 7 Reasons Why Participants Think the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Macao Is Beneficial (More options are allowed where appropriate)**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=19	%	N=84	%	N=48	%
A great improvement in the cognitive development of inclusive students	11	57.9	37	44	23	51.1
The interaction between inclusive students and ordinary students	17	89.5	65	77.4	25	55.6
Inclusive integrate more effectively in the society	18	94.7	72	85.7	33	73.3
Others: The benefits of individual teaching design on inclusive students	1	5.3	0	0	0	0
Others: Uplifting confidence and self-esteem of inclusive students	0	0	1	1.2	0	0
No comment	0	0	0	0	0	0

However, there are also some who think Inclusive Education does not really help students with special needs and among this group; teachers are the majority, which accounts for 20.7%. 83.3% of the teachers think that inclusive students are not able to catch up with school work and this creates the students frustration. More, 66.7% of them find that inclusive students suffer from discrimination. There are also 58.3% of the teachers think that they lack experience in the field and have not been able to provide inclusive students with suitable guidance and care. (Sees Table 8)

**Table 8 Reasons Why Participants Think the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Macao Is Not Beneficial**  
(More options are allowed where appropriate)

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=1	%	N=24	%	N=3	%
Teachers lack experience and are not able to provide inclusive students with suitable care	0	0	14	58.3	3	100.0
Inclusive students are not able to catch up with school work and thus feel frustrated	1	100.0	20	83.3	3	100.0
Inclusive student suffers from discrimination	1	100.0	16	66.7	3	100.0
Others: Inclusive students need special counseling	0	0	1	4.2	0	0
Others: Ordinary students tend to pay particular attention towards inclusive students and inclusive students thus self abase themselves	0	0	1	4.2	0	0
No comment	0	0	0	0	0	0

All three parties think that the ideal number of inclusive students in a class is 2. This accounts for 59.1%. Obviously the majority of participants are willing to accept inclusive students, but there should not be too many inclusive students in a class, if not, teachers will not be able to give them enough care. (Sees Table 9)

**Table 9 The Suitable Number of Inclusive Students in a Normal Class According to Participants**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=22	%	N=116	%	N=54	%
1 at most	1	4.5	21	18.1	8	14.8
2 at most	13	59.1	69	59.5	32	59.3
3 or more	7	31.8	16	13.8	7	13.0
None	1	4.5	8	6.9	1	1.9
No comment	0	0	2	1.7	6	11.1

Participants all indicate schools have utilized methods to enhance the learning effectiveness of inclusive students. The main one is tailoring suitably curriculum according to the students' abilities. From administrative staff to parents, that accounts for 72.7%, 67.2% and 59.3% respectively. Apart from that, schools design individual teaching plans for inclusive students. That accounts for 72.7%, 50.9% and 31.5% respectively. In addition, some participants expressed the hope that a resource teacher may be appointed to assist the main teacher in class. This accounts for 22.7%, 40.5% and 37% respectively. (Sees Table 10)

**Table 10 Methods that Schools Employ to Enhance the Learning Effectiveness of Inclusive Students**  
(More options are allowed where appropriate)

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=22	%	N=116	%	N=54	%
To design individual teaching plans for inclusive students	16	72.7	59	50.9	17	31.5

**Perspective towards Inclusive Education in Macao**

To tailor suitably curriculum according to the students' abilities	16	72.7	78	67.2	32	59.3
To appoint a resource teacher to assist teaching in class	5	22.7	47	40.5	20	37.0
Others:						
To provide individual counseling service by the counseling group	3	13.6	0	0	0	0
To provide special attention to inclusive students	0	0	2	1.7	0	0
To bring in suitable equipment	1	4.5	0	0	0	0
To cut down the number of students	0	0	1	0.9	0	0
No comment	0	0	2	1.7	7	13.0

90% of the administrative staff and teachers think that the implementation of Inclusive Education brings heavy burden for teachers, and 72.2% of the parents also think so. (Sees Table 11)

**Table 11 Whether the Implementation of Inclusive Education will Bring Teachers Heavy Burden**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=22	%	N=116	%	N=54	%
Yes	19	86.4	99	85.3	39	72.2
No	2	9.1	11	9.5	10	18.5
No comment	1	4.5	6	5.2	5	9.3

Administrative staff and teachers express that the main source of pressure comes from the incredible amount of time allocated to design for the inclusive students individual teaching. That accounts for 94.7% and 81.8% respectively. As for parents, they believe the source of pressure come mainly from spending extra time on (self development) training on the related area apart from lesson preparation. This accounts for 74.4%. The majority of them believe that the classroom management is not a major problem. Only 31.6% of the administrative staff, 47.5% of the teachers and 38.5% of the parents think inclusive students will make the class difficult to manage. (Sees Table 12)

**Table 12 Reasons Why the Implementation of Inclusive Education will Bring Heavier Burden to Teachers (More options are allowed where appropriate)**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=19	%	N=99	%	N=39	%
Spending time to design individual teaching plans for inclusive students	18	94.7	81	81.8	25	64.1
Class are difficult to manage	6	31.6	47	47.5	15	38.5
Spending extra time on self development training on the related area apart from teaching	15	78.9	58	58.9	29	74.4
Others:						
Some students need special follow ups	0	0	1	1	0	0
Need to provide inclusive students with special guidance and care, causing a negligence towards ordinary students	1	5.3	4	4	0	0
Teachers need to explore teaching methods by themselves without the help from specialists	1	5.3	0	0	0	0
Vast differentiation among students	0	0	1	1	0	0
No comment	0	0	0	0	0	0

80.2% of the teachers expressed that other students usually take the initiative to help inclusive students to deal with learning problems encountered, 72.5% of them think that other students are willing to play with inclusive students. As for appointing inclusive students for classroom duties, only 56.3% of the administrative staff, 37.4% of the teachers and 31.9% of the parents think other students will be happy to let inclusive student hold any post. (Sees Table 13)

**Table 13 Aspects Which Show Inclusive Students Are Accepted by Ordinary Students**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=16	%	N=91	%	N=41	%
Taking the initiative to help dealing with learning problems encountered	13	81.3	73	80.2	24	58.5
Willing to play with inclusive students	13	81.3	66	72.5	28	68.3
Willing to let inclusive student hold any post concerning classroom duties	9	56.3	34	37.4	15	36.6
Others						
Ordinary students do not discriminate inclusive students and they get along well	0	0	2	2.2	2.4	2.1
Ordinary students take initiative to get to know inclusive students	0	0	1	1.1	0	0
No comment	0	0	0	0	0	0

Most administrative staff thinks the major problem of the current condition of Macao's inclusive education is the lacking of teachers. In addition, teachers lack experience and therefore are not able to teach inclusive students effectively. That accounts for 77.3%. Teachers and parents, on the other hand, think that the vast difference among individual students is the main cause of hindering learning progress. This accounts for 87.1% and 48.1% respectively. (Sees table 14)

**Table 14 Problems Encountered in the Implementation of Inclusive Education**  
(More options are allowed where appropriate)

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=22	%	N=116	%	N=54	%
Teachers are insufficient and they lack experience	17	77.3	72	62.1	17	31.5
There are vast differences among individual students and that hinder the learning progress	15	68.2	101	87.1	26	48.1
There is no clear instruction from the government	9	40.9	39	33.6	13	24.1
Others						
Lacking of specialists	1	4.5	1	0.9	0	0
Lacking of backing up force when inclusive students go on to secondary school	0	0	1	0.9	0	0
There are too many types of inclusive students and that require a variety of teaching methods	0	0	1	0.9	0	0
Teaching loads of teachers are too heavy	0	0	1	0.9	0	0
Some students are not willing to get along with inclusive students	1	4.5	0	0	0	0
Other parents do not have a good understanding towards the situation	0	0	0	0	1	1.9
No big problem encountered for the time being	1	4.5	0	0	0	0
No comment	1	4.5	2	1.7	9	16.7

The majority express satisfaction towards the learning condition of inclusive students and among which,



most of them are administrative staff. However, there are less than 10% think inclusive students do not have big improvement and the progresses are far too slow.

Although most participants express that the government has supported the schools but they add that the support is not enough. Over 80% of the administrative staff and teachers believe that the government should give schools more support. As shown in Table 5.2.14, administrative staffs think the major problem now is lack of teachers. 68.2% of them think that the government should organize more training programmes, seminars and workshops so that teachers can learn more. Teachers and parents, on the other hand, think that the government and schools should devote more in the promotion of inclusive education. That accounts for 40.5% and 61.1% respectively. (Sees Table 15)

**Table 15 Aspects that Inclusive Education Should Improve (More options are allowed where appropriate)**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=22	%	N=116	%	N=54	%
More training programmes, seminars and workshops organized by the government	15	68.2	44	37.9	25	46.3
More support from the government	18	81.8	96	82.8	34	63.0
More promotions of inclusive education from the government and schools	14	63.6	47	40.5	33	61.1
Lessening the ratio of teacher and students	0	0	2	1.7	0.0	0
More teacher training	0	0	0	0	1	1.9
No more than two inclusive students in a class	0	0	1	0.9	0	0
Others: More support should be given to teachers from schools so as to lessen their burden	1	4.5	4	3.4	0	0
Letting teachers know they will be teaching an inclusive class as early as possible so as to allow enough time for preparation	0	0	2	1.7	0	0
No comment	0	0	2	1.7	5	9.3

All administrative staffs and 90% of the teachers think that the present vigorous promotion of small class pace the road for the implementation of inclusive education. And therefore, to implement inclusive education throughout Macao will soon be done in the near future. Principals think that teachers have great enthusiasm towards inclusive education and thus, 70.3% of them believe that inclusive education can sure be implemented in Macao. (Sees Table 16)

**Table 16 Reasons Why Inclusive Education Can Be Implemented in Macao (More options are allowed where appropriate)**

	Administrative staff		Teachers		Parents	
	N=14	%	N=71	%	N=37	%
Considerable promotion and sufficient support from the government	10	71.4	45	63.4	25	67.6
The present vigorous promotion of small class provides an advantage towards the implementation of inclusive education	14	100	66	93	20	54.1
Principals and teachers are enthusiastic towards inclusive education	10	71.4	40	56.3	26	70.3
Others Government legislation	0	0	1	1.4	0	0
No comment	0	0	0	0	0	0

### **5.2 Telephone interviews general analysis:**

(1) All five principals being interviewed indicate that when arranging teachers for inclusive classes, the first concern is the teachers' correlation experience and whether they have received related trainings or not. They all make it very clear to teachers that they accept inclusive students before they assume duty, therefore they generally all do not will feel frustrated.

(2) They also state that since inclusive education is implemented early in the kindergarten stage so other students and parents are already adapted to this. Some parents welcome the idea of having their children learning in inclusive classes as the sizes of these classes are usually smaller. They believe inclusive students do not disturb the class and so their children will be better taken care of in every aspect.

(3) Principals express that they tailor individual education plans for inclusive students and make suitable adjustments towards their demands on inclusive students. For example, when other students are required to run during the physical education lesson, inclusive students are allowed to do other activities. Besides, they add that inclusive students usually have certain learning abilities and will not drag the progress of the entire class down.

(4) Principals insist that there are all necessary facilities and if more are needed because of students' need, they will consider buying more. But that depends on their financial conditions and whether they have enough space to fit them in. Apart from that, resources are shared among schools and there are some that school can borrowed from the Educational Psychology Counseling and Special Education Center. They express that they will answer to all requests as long as they are capable of fulfilling them.

(5) Inclusive education in Macao is still at the developmental stage. Principals indicate that the right of education for students with special needs should not be exploited so inclusive education should be implemented in Macao. To implement inclusive education compulsively is difficult, but principals hope to promote it to private schools. This will enable better the acceptance of students with special needs in the society, which is a community responsibility that all schools should undertake.

## **6. Conclusion**

To put everything together including analysis, discussions and telephone interviews, the following conclusions are drawn.

### **6.1 In general:**

(1) Macao's inclusive education is still developing. On one hand, Macao is still young in implementing inclusive education. It has only implemented for some ten years. On the other hand, only government schools are opened for inclusive students.

(2) The biggest problem facing is that there is a lack of teachers and the existing teachers lack experience. Additionally, the differences among students are sometimes so big that they hinder the learning process.

(3) Interviewees believe that Macao should implement inclusive education because the right to be educated is equal for everyone and it is natural that inclusive education can enhance children's civil sense.

(4) Interviewees are confident that comprehensive inclusive education can be implemented in Macao. The existing implementation of small classes paces the road for inclusive education.

### **6.2 From Schools:**

(1) All teachers in the school have contact with inclusive student. When arranging teachers for inclusive classes, the foremost concern is the teachers' correlative experience and whether they have received related

trainings or not. It is natural not to inquire the wishes of the teachers.

(2) Schools use certain ways so as to teach inclusive students effectively. They also design individual education plans for those students. Besides, they make necessary arrangements to suit the abilities of the students.

(3) Basically inclusive students can keep up with the teaching standards because their problems are not big. In addition, the special education team assists teachers and parents how to teach them.

(4) The facilities in schools are enough to cope with the needs of the students. The resources are shared between schools and there are resources that school can be borrowed from the Centre of Educational Psychology Counseling and Special Education.

### **6.3 From teachers:**

(1) Teachers have great enthusiasm towards inclusive education and are optimistic that their classes have students who need special training.

(2) Half of the teachers in Macao do not have relevant training in special education. Only 60% of the teachers who are now in charge of inclusive classes are ever trained.

(3) When teachers come across any problems in teaching inclusive students, they make use of their spare time to read relevant books or to ask specialists for advices so as to increase their knowledge in the field and in order to do their best in inclusive education.

(4) The implementation of inclusive education increases the burden of teachers, but teachers express that the workload is acceptable and it is a great pleasure when they see improvements from their students of inclusive education. Additionally, both schools and parents show great support towards them.

### **6.4 From parents:**

(1) Parents of students of inclusive education show support to both schools and teachers, but they do not actively participate in any functions organized by the school.

(2) Parents who know about the implementation of inclusive education in schools where their children are in do not stereotype children with special needs because they consider them as normal students.

## **7. Suggestions**

In order to develop Macao's Inclusive Education for a better future, here are some suggested equivalent solutions to the difficulties encountered in the implementation of inclusive education.

### **7.1 For teachers:**

All teachers should be well-equipped for inclusive education:

Every year, the DSEJ and other organizations organize several relevant seminars and courses so that interested parties can participate or improve their knowledge in the inclusive education. Teachers can also receive training in this way. Other teachers besides those of inclusive education or those who have received training in the field of special education should constantly absorb new knowledge and upgrade themselves to present their professional skills and image to the public. This is for adequate preparation of the implementation of inclusive education.

### **7.2 For schools**

(1) School should consider teachers' experience and preparation when arranging who to be responsible for inclusive classes:

The first place to consider in arrangement teachers to be responsible for inclusive classes is to look at teachers' experience and relevant training in the field. Additionally, teachers should be informed earlier so that

they are psychologically prepared. The school should enhance teachers' knowledge in this field so that they understand the basic concept and principles of inclusive education. The school can invite specialists as well so as to create chances for exchanging experience to improve teachers' abilities in the field.

(2) School can encourage parents to participate in the school activities and in training of their children:

Schools can constantly organize seminars to tell parents about the school so that parents understand the condition of the school and their children during class. More, parents can reflect their opinions for school reference. At the same time, when the special education training group in the school is assisting inclusive students, their parents can participate as well so that parents can train their children in the same way during their spare time. This is to use resources effectively so that inclusive students can receive different kinds of training for a wider period of time.

(3) Schools can enhance the spirit of team work:

Teachers' role in inclusive education is important. But whether inclusive education can be carried out successfully depends not only on the abilities of the teachers, but of the team spirits of the whole school, ranging from the principal to the cleaners.

(4) Schools can enhance their contacts with other schools

It is necessary for schools of inclusive education to be a watchdog among schools. On one hand, they can enhance opinion exchanges, on the other hand, they can borrow the ways other schools use to teach the students. They can improve themselves by absorbing the strengths to compensate their weaknesses. Their mutual goal is to provide a better learning environment to students.

Besides, the school can also send teachers to nearby places to experience the implementation of inclusive education elsewhere so that they can create a special inclusive education system on their own, based on the situation of Macao.

### **7.3 For the government**

(1) To increase the number of specialists

Macao is now facing a severe lack of specialists. The existing ones are responsible for several schools and they go to work on shift. Their workload and burden are considerably heavy. The average number of times that inclusive students can meet with the specialists every week is only to 2 and they have to meet them in particular time slots. The government should provide more resources in training specialists. It can borrow the ideas from Hong Kong and Taiwan: when the number of inclusive students reaches a certain amount, they send one more resourceful teacher or teaching assistant to the school to assist the main teachers so that both the burden of teachers and the specialists can be lessen and thus, have adequate time to take care of their students.

(2) To provide professional qualification

The number of courses, discussions and seminars for special education in Macao is adequate so the government can make use of these activities to provide professional qualifications to the participants and encourage more teachers and parents to join these activities. This is also to strengthen the standard for professional education in special education.

(3) To put more effort in promoting inclusive education

It is necessary to have sound promotions so that it can strengthen the understanding of the public towards inclusive education and to increase the acceptance and care towards the students who have special needs. The government can organize functions concerning inclusive education and special education in highly densed areas.

## **8. Conclusion**

Macao has implemented inclusive education for only a few ten years. Compared with the regions nearby, Macao is a bit slow in the development of this field. Though there are a number of problems in the current situation of Macao inclusive education, there are pros and cons for everything. As the advantages are exceeding the disadvantages so far, we should show our great support towards it.

There are a number of areas in which Macao's Inclusive Education has to improve and this for sure requires a period of time so that it can continue to develop and to improve. The implementation of inclusive education is not easy. During the process, one should not jump to the conclusion immediately thereafter but follow each step. It is believed that with endless effort, inclusive education can surely bring out its best and receive the best fruit.

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(continued from Page 51)

gradually from interdependence to dependence finally. To understand interdependence from these angles, we can see that the interdependence is an integrated part of the whole autonomous language learning process.

## 5. Conclusion

Because of the scope of investigation and other factors, this mode is still far from comprehensive. But the author do hope that the mode will benefit EFL educators in terms of promoting learner autonomy, thus sparking more interest in research on this part.

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