Teachers’ views about teacher training towards inclusive education

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Abstract

This current qualitative study aimed to investigate the views of Thai teachers about teacher training which they have had received in preparing and supporting them to teach within an inclusive classroom or setting. Specifically, this study focused on teachers who underwent a five-year bachelor of education and were currently working at public school, commonly known as government school in Thai context, with inclusive setting. With the mentioned qualitative approach, subjective opinions and perceptions of those teachers could be presented and explained systematically; also, actual social phenomena within particular context of Thai inclusive government school could be portrayed. In order to obtain such views of the participating teachers, semi-structured interviews were conducted and employed as a research method for data collection of this research project. Findings of this study were consisted of five broad themes: (i) situation of inclusive education at present; (ii) teachers’ expertise and proficiency; (iii) teaching in inclusive classroom in practice; (iv) teachers’ direct experience; and (v) teachers’ recommendations for future teacher training towards inclusive education.

In general, it was indicated by participants that knowledge and skills regarding teaching and learning strategies, inclusive classroom management, assessment and education provision, and individualized education plan gained during their pre-service teacher training and education were insufficient, while knowledge and skills gained through in-service teacher training were not quite relatively useful and appropriate for students with special needs or teaching in inclusive classroom. In terms of attitudes, it was found through the findings that direct experience with children with special needs was a major influence on development of positive mindset of the participating teachers. For future improvement of teacher training towards inclusion in Thailand, it was recommended by participants of this current study that more subjects concerning inclusive education and children with special needs should be added to the curriculum of pre-service teacher training and education; also, an experience of having direct contact with special needs children should be provided during this time. With respect to in-service teacher training, they suggested that more additional training in relation to children with special needs should be arranged and offered at the greater level to all teachers who taught within inclusive setting or classroom.

Key words: teacher training, inclusive education, Thailand
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1 Introduction

This study places its focus on teacher training towards inclusive education in Thailand in respect of preparing and supporting teachers for teaching within inclusive setting or classroom. The reason being is that, through a review of relevant education policies and literature, teacher training is seen as an absolute main factor which directly relates and contributes to the process of producing and training teachers in order that they can be well-equipped and professionally qualified to competently teach ‘all’ students, both with and without special needs, in practice. In addition, a matter of such fact that well-trained teachers are the end product of effective teacher training is admitted to be one of important factors that will drive inclusion to a success in many countries across the global regions (Hodkinson, 2010; Vaillant, 2011; Vorapanya & Dunlap, 2014).

According to the Incheon Declaration (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015), it is clearly stated that there must be an assurance for all teachers as well as educators to be well-trained and sufficiently recruited, to possess professional qualifications, have their own empowerment and motivation, and receive support under the systems which are well-supplied, productively governed and efficient in order that they are well-prepared and fully-equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills to deliver good quality education and enhance the learning outcomes of ‘all’ students. This partial statement is a result of a new vision of education for ‘all’ for the next era, towards 2030, which will concentrate on ensuring good quality education that is not inequitable, yet inclusive, and promoting life-long learning chances for ‘all’ (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015).

The new vision of education mentioned above is the fruit of continuing development of the second goal on the Millennium Development Goals which has not yet successfully reached its target in relation to the achievement of universal primary education as set (United Nations, 2015). However, the fact that the Millennium Development Goals will be concluded by the end of 2015, that second goal will still receive its renewed attention as the fourth goal on the new set of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015) in order to maintain the priority of education which should be accessible to ‘all’ children and young adults. This can be seen as a robust evidence of an unwavering continuation in promoting education for ‘all’ which has been constantly and worldwide carried out for the past decades.
through dedication and sacrifice of relevant organizations such as United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Bank. Subsequently, it leads to an undeniable situation for all state parties to also act as advocates in progressing and expanding inclusive education at the local level within their own country, including Thailand. Such significance of having education accessed for all children was first mentioned on the Education for All: World Conference on EFA (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015) back in 1990. Since then, constant attempts have been steadily generated regardless of any failures and impediments occurred along the process.

Besides the Incheon Declaration, a paper titled ‘Defining Quality in Education’ which was presented by the United Nations Children's Fund at the meeting of the International Working Group on Education Florence back in 2000 also precisely points out a necessity of having teachers who are adequately educated and trained when it comes to delivering quality education for ‘all’ children. It is further indicated within the paper that one of the components that needs to be included when defining quality education is the processes in which teachers who are well-trained employ child-centered approaches and teach in classrooms and schools with good management along with adept assessment in order to assist the progress of learning and decrease disparities (United Nations Children's Fund, 2000).

1.1 Teacher training towards inclusive education

During school visits in England – a compulsory part of the coursework of this master program, I was able to notice and identify some differences as well as similarities concerning teacher training towards inclusion between English and Thai context through my close observation. Thereafter, deeper study regarding teacher training towards inclusion of both countries was eventually initiated through an assignment of this module which was called ‘international perspectives in special and inclusive education’. And that was when a whole jigsaw puzzle of Thai teacher training system was slowly assembled and those similar and different matters between two countries were systematically scrutinized through all relevant documents, textbooks, journals and legislations at both national and international level.

Apparently, the reason for why I decided to conduct this research project within Thai context, other than other countries’ context, was because not only would I like to extensively explore
those identified issues concerning teacher training towards inclusion in Thailand, but also to contribute this piece of work to my mother country.

1.1.1 Qualifications of teachers gained through teacher education and training to handle inclusive education in practice

One of the major problems found through my previous work (Taweechaisupapong, 2014) was related to curriculum of pre-service teacher training and education. It was pointed out that the curriculum did not fully cover subject elements in relation to inclusive and special education as supposed which, of course, would have an effect on preparation process for pre-service teachers. This ultimately resulted in a lack of skills and knowledge as well as confidence of those teachers when it came to educating students with special needs in practice (Taweechaisupapong, 2014). Not only the issue about pre-service teacher training and education that was identified within both Thai and English context, but an issue regarding in-service teacher training or continuing professional development was also pointed out as one of the obstacles across the two contexts as there was an indication of a need in improving and providing more of this type of teacher training to teachers who were currently working in the field (Taweechaisupapong, 2014).

From that point where my interest in the teacher training topic just primarily began up to this point where my dissertation is being literally conducted under the topic, more reports and papers have been read with the aim of gaining better understanding as well as greater knowledge regarding process, situations and complications of both pre-service and in-service teacher training, not only in Thailand but also in some other countries where pertinently related in order to be able to make sense of what has happened and what should be improved for Thai teacher training system in preparing and supporting teachers for the inclusion.

1.1.2 Teachers’ knowledge and skills gained through teacher training for teaching in inclusive classroom or setting

Several studies conducted within Thai context pointed out similar problems which were mentioned early on through my previous work (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2014; Sanrattana, 2010; Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013; Vorapanya & Dunlap, 2014). The main problems were related to a lack of knowledge and skills as well as an insufficiency of appropriate training which eventually led to low-confidence, stress, and negative attitudes of
teachers towards children with special needs and inclusion (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2014; Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013). Though some recommendations were made and proposed through those studies (Sanrattana, 2010; Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013; Vorapanya & Dunlap, 2014), they either appeared to be too general, or did not directly come from the perspectives of teachers who underwent a five-year bachelor of education program and have taught in inclusive classrooms or setting.

Therefore, this unit of study aims to investigate the views of Thai teachers who literally teach within inclusive classroom or setting and possess such a specific education background about teacher training they have received in response to inclusive teaching and learning in practice in Thailand. In consequence of this study’s investigation, not only deeper understanding about issues and complications regarding knowledge and skills in inclusive education acquired through teacher training will be gained, but also more definite and particular recommendations will be directly obtained through the information and responses given by the participating teachers.

1.2 Teachers’ views on teacher training

To determine solutions that would meet with objectives of this study as mentioned early on, some broad questions were initially asked and developed at this stage. For example, how does teacher training prepare teachers for inclusive teaching, how can teachers use or apply what they learn from teacher training in practice, and what are challenges that teachers have to face when using or applying things that they learn from the training? All these questions would be, later on, revised and refined through further investigation as well as review of relevant education policies and literature with the purpose that key research questions of the study could be accordingly and precisely formulated afterward.

With the intention of finding out Thai teachers’ views about teacher training towards inclusive education which is the principal thesis question of this unit of study, three additional key research questions are eventually and prudently defined through the revision and refinement as mentioned above. They consist of (i) how does teacher training prepare and support teachers to teach within inclusive setting or classroom; (ii) how do teachers apply knowledge and strategies learned through teacher training; and (iii) what are challenges that teachers face in practice?
For the convenience of all readers, this dissertation is comprised of five major chapters as follows:

(1) Introduction – this chapter briefly introduces readers about the chosen topic which is teacher training as well as the reasons behind the selection of this topic.

(2) Review of the literature – this chapter presents systematic and comprehensive review of the relevant education policies and literature related to inclusive education as well as teacher training at both international and national level. Besides, it includes a clarification of the main objectives which, later on, leads to the formulation of the key research questions of this study.

(3) Research Methodology – this chapter provides explicit justifications of research approach, design and methods which are employed throughout the process of this investigation. Ethical considerations of this research project as well as procedure of how collected data would be analyzed are also clearly and concisely explained in here.

(4) Analyses and Discussions – this chapter contains a fully detailed presentation of results of this unit of study, along with analytical and rational discussions of those outcomes using relevant education policies and literature.

(5) Conclusion – this chapter provides readers an overview of the findings together with an evaluation of a success, limitations, and implications of the study.
2 Review of the literature

In this chapter, readers will be introduced to an importance of inclusive education (for all) through various education policies at international level and its influence towards inclusive education in Thailand including a current situation of inclusion within the country. Besides, relevant policies and literature concerning teacher training and some related ongoing issues within international and Thai context will be meticulously reviewed and presented respectively. Later, more details regarding Thai teacher education as well as pre-service and in-service teacher training will be illustrated so that readers are able to gain a better understanding about how teacher education and teacher training prepare and support Thai teachers to teach in inclusive classroom or setting in practice. Lastly, rationale for the study section will provide readers a comprehensive clarification for why this unit of study focuses on investigating this topic; also, three main research questions will be reasserted.

2.1 Towards the inclusive education for ‘All’

Education seems to be one of the most well-known challenges that many organizations, both at international and national levels, have been attempting to resolve. This is because education is seen as a crucial factor which enormously contributes to the sustainable development, stability and peace within and among countries, also as an imperative means for efficient and productive participation in the economies as well as societies of the coming centuries (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2000).

Due to the significance of education as mentioned early on, several long-standing projects, frameworks, and agreements such as the Education for All, the Salamanca Statement, the Millennium Development Goals, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities have been initiated and progressed over the past decades (Inter-Agency Commission, 1990; Sightsavers, 2010; United Nations, 2006; United Nations Development Programme, 2015; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2000; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994; United Nations, 2008). One key mutual direction in which they all share is to create and establish an education system where all individuals can be included and their personal educational needs can be met (United Nations, 2006; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2000).
2.1.1 Access to education for all

Back in 1990, an awareness as well as action regarding education for ‘all’ was initiated after more than a hundred of delegates and representatives from countries and organizations across the world reached an agreement at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015). This agreement aimed to have all children access to primary education, and to enormously decrease illiteracy by year 2000 (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015). As a result, a World Declaration on Education for All was adopted as a reaffirmation of those countries that they would heighten their endeavors so that the basic learning needs of all could be addressed (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015).

According to one background document called ‘Meeting Basic Learning Needs: A Vision for the 1990s’ (Inter-Agency Commission, 1990), it is clearly stated in chapter three that education inequalities must be removed and discrimination in access to learning opportunities should be eliminated in order to include people from underserved groups such as street and working children, populations who live in remote and rural areas, the impoverished, and minorities and refugees. This document further acknowledges the fact that it would not only require special attention to meet with learning needs of persons with disabilities, but certain phrases and stages would also need to be taken into a great account so that an equal access to education for every single disabled person from every categories could be catered as an fundamental part of the education system (Inter-Agency Commission, 1990). Though it was unfortunate that the targets on this Jomtien Education for All were not achieved as set (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015), it could be seen as a hopeful beginning as well as a solid ground for the latter related protocols or conventions to be built up on.

2.1.2 Inclusion of students with special needs in schools for all

Four years after that, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994) came out in order to ensure that Education for All literally means and works ‘for ALL’, especially for those who are in need and vulnerable such as individuals with disabilities and persons with special needs. Some of the key objectives in this framework are to recognize the urgency and
essentiality of delivering education to all children, youths and adults who require special educational needs within the regular education system; and to establish the principle of inclusive education through a subject of law or policy so that all children are able to enroll in regular schools (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994).

In September 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – a series of eight targets – were built upon the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration with the aim of reducing poverty across the countries that would ultimately lead to the inclusion of vulnerable groups of people such as people with poor nutrition, children with limited access to primary education, and unwell population with deficiency of appropriate health services (United Nations Development Programme, 2015). The reason being is that poverty has been perceived as one of the key components to exclusion towards such groups of people, including people with disabilities (Sightsavers, 2010).

In order to achieve such an ultimate purpose, access to basic education for ‘all’ children, especially the young ones at primary level, is admitted to be one of the fundamental factors and set as the second target of the Millennium Development Goals (Concern Worldwide). This goal seems to be reflecting to what the Jomtien Education for All did not accomplish since they both acquire the similar utmost outcome which is a universal learning access for all children without inequity (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015; United Nations, 2008).

An emphasis on education for ‘all’ is not only mentioned through the Jomtien Education for All, the Salamanca Statement and the Millennium Development Goals, but also in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). As it is detailed in Article 24 of the convention that education shall be accessible to people with disabilities on the equal basis of opportunity just as others with no discrimination and such education shall be delivered through an inclusive education system ensured by States Parties (United Nations, 2006). Furthermore, there is a part in this article mentioning about how persons with disabilities should be included within the general education system regardless of disabilities they possess, especially an access to mandatory and free-of-charge primary education of children with disabilities (United Nations, 2006). And again, some focal points from this article in the convention appear to reaffirm the major conception of the second target in the Millennium Development Goals.
2.2 Inclusive education within Thai context

In Thailand, there are legislations which were launched in response to reinforcing and supporting the conception of education for ‘All’, particularly to those groups of people who have disabilities and/or require special needs. The first one to start with is the National Education Act of B.E. 2542. It is clearly stated that all individuals hold the rights and have opportunities to access free-of-charge basic education provided by government on the equal basis for no less than twelve years while persons with disabilities also hold the rights and have opportunities to access basic education with special arrangements at no cost (Office of the National Education Commission, 1999). For people with special needs, education shall be suitably provided according to their abilities (Office of the National Education Commission, 1999).

Later in 2008, the Education for Individuals with Disabilities Act of B.E. 2551 was enforced. This act stresses its emphasis on the rights of people with disabilities towards their education by stating that (i) they have the rights to received education at no cost since birth or when disabilities detected throughout their entire lives and this shall include all necessary technology, media, facilities, services as well as other supports in relation to their education; (ii) they have the rights to choose educational services, institutions, and educational formats according to their individual capability, interest, competency, and special needs; and (iii) they shall receive education on the equal basis of standard and quality, together with appropriate curricular management, learning process and educational assessment in accordance with their individual special needs (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2008).

2.3 Teacher training for inclusive education

According to evidence from the previous section, it strongly indicates that education is significantly vital and important to any person regardless of that person’s background, capability, or even disability. As a result, there have been a number of attempts from relevant organizations as well as parties in delivering such education to ‘all’ people for the past few decades (Inter-Agency Commission, 1990).

However, another issue is raised whether delivery of education for all has been done with sufficient quality. At one point within the second target of the Millennium Development Goals, it is asserted that achieving universal primary education does not only mean to have
full enrollment, but also to encompass quality education (United Nations, 2008). This means that having children enrolled and had placement in schools is not obviously good enough, especially in schools where the process of inclusive education takes place.

Admittedly, one of the crucial factors that facilitates quality education, particularly inclusive education, to meet with diversity of individual educational needs and characteristics of all types of learners including children, adolescents and adults is ‘teacher’ (Department of Education and Science, 1978; Inter-Agency Commission, 1990; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994; United Nations, 2008).

### 2.3.1 Teachers’ role in inclusive and special education

Teachers are recognized as persons who play a significant role in the process of delivering special and inclusive education on the Warnock Report (Department of Education and Science, 1978). It is further asserted that this process of providing education to ‘all’ children can become challenging and difficult to succeed, even with the most accurate plan, if teachers are unable to perform their duties with genuinely good intention and sincere commitment towards students with disabilities, especially those with severe or complex conditions (Department of Education and Science, 1978). This is because teachers, in general, are expected to be able to comprehend diversities of various learning styles as well as different intellectual and physical development of their students in order to generate the learning environment that is full of invigorating and participatory atmosphere (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2000).

For that reason, having teachers received suitable training will enable them to develop a proper understanding out of an appropriate teacher’s mindset so that they become aware of what shall be considered as crucial when teaching students with diverse needs in practice (Department of Education and Science, 1978). Nevertheless, with an understanding alone is not enough to keep it going until the very end. It is pointed out that attitudes of teachers towards implementation of inclusive education are also very imperative since it might influence on how they welcome and react to students within their classes (Hodkinson, 2010). Likewise, it is suggested through the Warnock Report that positive attitudes of teachers is essentially needed; alongside with knowledge and skills, in order to recognize and arrange supports for children with special educational needs (Department of Education and Science, 1978). While one study reported that teaching professionals’ better understanding as well as
positive attitudes towards inclusive education can be developed through professional trainings (Bentley-Williams & Morgan, 2013).

### 2.3.2 Towards inclusive education through teacher training

In the background document of Education for All (Inter-Agency Commission, 1990), teacher training is mentioned as one of the indications of ‘teacher effectiveness’ which is pointed out as one of the important elements in quality improvement of basic education for all. While there is an urge in the Salamanca Statement (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994) about how teacher education programs/trainings, both pre-service and in-service, should enable teachers to be capable of addressing the provision of special needs education in schools with inclusive setting. Additionally, it is asserted that mobilization of support for organizations of the teaching profession in relation to improving teacher education as respect provision for special educational needs should be provided (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994).

Undoubtedly, teachers who are well-trained will be one of the requirements for a success in catering education with good quality to ‘all’ individuals (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2000). However, it is pointed out that there is still an insufficiency of attention towards quality improvement in certain areas such as teacher training (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2000). Similar emphasis concerning the importance of teacher training is also found in the second target of the Millennium Development Goals as it is suggested that there is a need in training more teachers, and yet, effectively retraining them in order to achieve the universal primary education goal (United Nations, 2008).

According to the Millennium Development Goals Report (United Nations, 2015), India is one good example, among countries which have adopted these goals, in making a significant progress in terms of putting efforts to make the country’s education system become more inclusive through the Right to Education Act and a change in allocation of funding for teacher training as well as school infrastructure. This indicates that teacher training is definitely one of the critical factors for not only delivering quality education, but also for achieving in education that can be accessible for everyone, particularly to those who are in need of special needs and those with disabilities.
Therefore, it is very necessary for teachers to be well-equipped with comprehensive repertoire knowledge, skills, techniques and strategies that will enable them to make use out of and apply when they efficiently promote individual learning as well as development of each child under different situations, or conditions (Carrington & MacArthur, 2012). Unavoidably, this leads to the fact that teachers must be adequately and properly trained through both pre-service and in-service teacher training (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2000). However, it seems that problems in preparing teachers to fully possess such proficiency and expertise can still be identified through findings of some studies (Norwich & Nash, 2011; Vaillant, 2011).

2.3.3 The need of teacher training for inclusive education within Thai context

In Thailand, several laws have been enacted with an intention of having persons with disabilities included at all levels of education (Manason, 2010). These acts share the key goal which is to make a guarantee of an access to education to all learners across all school ages, regardless of their individual differences. In fact, it is clearly stated that persons with disabilities hold the rights to be given not only the placement in schools, but also all kinds of educational services which are fundamental, necessary, and in response to their needs throughout their studies (Office of the Committee for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, 1991; Office of the Committee for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, 2008). Even though there is such a clear framework at national level, it turns out that an implementation of inclusive education within the country might still be unsteady due to the lack of awareness, support, adequacy of resources, and ‘teacher training’ (UNICEF, 2003).

While a national scheme of professional development for teachers, faculties, and teaching or other related staff who work in an education field was first launched through the Second National Education Act of B.E.2545 (Office of the National Education Commission, 2002). It is stated that the Thai Ministry of Education shall take responsibility in establishing, promoting, and supporting a professional development system in order to enable those who are in teaching profession to meet with high standard as well quality of the profession (Office of the National Education Commission, 2002).

In addition, it is strongly asserted in the Standard of Quality Assurance for Inclusive Education within Academies (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2012) that teachers
shall seek for knowledge, and build up appropriate understanding and attitudes through teacher training which allows them to be able to evaluate each student in order to subsequently generate Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Individual Implementation Plan (IIP) for those who are in need as part of the provision in inclusive education. Obviously, teacher training can be said to be one of the major factors to a successful inclusive education, or education for ‘All’ in Thailand, just like evidence showed at the international level.

However, findings from several researches and studies unveiled that one of the key matters which is seen as an obstacle towards an achievement in implementation of inclusive education, in practice, is ‘teacher training’ (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2012; Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2014; Kantavong, Nethanomsak, & luang-ungkool, 2012; Sanrattana, 2010; Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013; Vorapanya & Dunlap, 2014).

2.3.4 Teacher education in Thailand

An ongoing transformation of teacher education in Thailand has taken place during the last four decades (Thongthew, 2014). It started off with a traditional teacher education model which was employed way back in 1978 to an up-to-date Teacher Certificated and Teaching Certificates model which was first introduced in 2003 by the Teacher Council of Thailand (Thongthew, 2014). With the recent model, it requires teachers who want to be qualified to have undergone a process of being accredited and licensed (Thongthew, 2014). It is explained that changes regarding subject knowledge and teaching and learning strategies must be made in order to prepare and equip the country’s population with higher level of knowledge, more enhanced abilities, and more advanced skills, particularly a critical thinking skill which enable them to cope with a transition within the society in response to the changes within economic, political, and social aspects (Office of the National Education Commission, 1999; Thongthew, 2014).

Recently, Thai teacher education system has been changed again from a four-year course to a five-year model of bachelor program, since 2012, which was a result from a review of national standard of higher education qualification and specification back in 2009 (Ministry of Education, 2011). In order to graduate this five-year education program, a total of one-hundred and sixty credits must be earned at a minimum, which is consisted of general subjects (not less than thirty credits), specific subjects (not less than one-hundred and twenty-four
credits), and elective subjects (not less than six credits), through the first four years of coursework and the last year of field based learning through action (Ministry of Education, 2011). In addition, for any higher education institutions which intend to offer this course, they must (i) meet with all requirements of an outline of curricula and teaching and learning management quality assurance, and receive a pass in each category; (ii) be able to make availability of all kinds of essential resources, including human resources; (iii) follow criteria of the Thai Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in terms of program, course and field experience specification, and some other necessary details (Ministry of Education, 2011).

2.3.5 Pre-service teacher training in preparing and supporting for inclusive education

According to a ministrial announcement regarding the Standard of Qualification and Specification for Bachelor of Education, it is clearly stated that all prospective teachers are expected to be able to meet and cope with diversity of all learners such as those with gifted abilities, those with special needs, and others who are average (Ministry of Education, 2011). As a result, it was found out through one study conducted by Kantavong, Nethanomsak, & luang-unngkool (2012) that all sixteen pre-service teacher training institutes from the sample group did offer at least one or two courses in special and inclusive education to those prospective teachers.

Though it was reported that the course descriptions covered certain knowledge and skills for those prospective teachers to recognize and respond to learning barriers within the school setting, various issues in relation to the pre-service teacher training’s curricula were still found, for example: (i) there was an unclear policy in how to integrate some subject matters such as human rights, gender equality, inclusion of underprivileged and marginal groups, and special education into the curricula; (ii) it was very challenging to find instructors who were experienced and knowledgeable in these mentioned areas; and (iii) different institutes would put different emphasizes on such subject matters since there was no explication about the courses in the curricula (Kantavong, Nethanomsak, & luang-unngkool, 2012).

Knowledge of special educational needs
It is reported that the pre-service training provided through Thai universities for those student teachers might not be enriched enough to enable them to fully understand persons with disabilities, especially young children (Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013). Similar issue regarding pre-service teacher training in Bangladesh is further reported in a study by Ahsan, Sharma, & Deppeler (2012). Its findings revealed that some teachers were not confident and felt inadequately trained when teaching in an inclusive classroom (Ahsan, Sharma, & Deppeler, 2012). They also suggested that the existing pre-service teacher preparation trainings should be reviewed in some certain areas, for example, to increase course length of the pre-service teacher education, to revise an existing assessment system that was based on memorization, and to ensure usage of technology in supporting and promoting education so that all needs of learners with special needs could be more effectively and properly identified and discussed (Ahsan, Sharma, & Deppeler, 2012). Correspondingly, another study also unveiled that teachers, in general, lacked skills and knowledge in teaching students with disabilities and special educational needs (Norwich & Nash, 2011).

**Teachers’ attitudes and teacher training**

Several studies showed that positive attitudes of teachers towards students with special needs and inclusive education could be improved through teacher training (Bentley-Williams & Morgan, 2013; Engstrand & Roll-Pettersson, 2014), especially when they had direct contact with these children (Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005). Conversely, another study by Forlin & Chambers (2011) disclosed that there was no improvement of pre-service teachers’ attitudes after receiving training and being given opportunities of having applied experiences with persons with disabilities during the initial teacher education, and only their awareness towards inclusive education was raised.

Sucuoğlu, Bakkaloğlu, İşcen Karasu, Demir, & Akalın (2013) conducted a research to investigate a relation between knowledge and attitudes of teachers who worked in preschool setting towards inclusive education in practice. In consistency with the results from Forlin & Chambers’s study (2011), their findings revealed that there was no significance of relationship between level of teachers’ knowledge and attitudes, also, attitudes of the teachers regarding inclusion could be viewed as neutral (Sucuoğlu, Bakkaloğlu, İşcen Karasu, Demir, & Akalın, 2013). Interestingly, another research even reported unfriendly attitudes of teachers.
towards inclusion of students with special educational needs within regular classrooms (Malak, 2013).

### 2.3.6 In-service teacher training in preparing and supporting for inclusive education

A significance of in-service teacher training or professional development for teaching professionals is pointed out in several studies as it is claimed to be one of important factors which further develop teacher’s skills and abilities to meet with different needs and characteristics of ‘all’ students while working and teaching in practice (Hodkinson, 2010; Sanrattana, 2010; Vorapanya & Dunlap, 2014). It is asserted that some Thai pre-school teachers tend to perceive themselves as being inadequate in possessing essential knowledge and skills concerning special and inclusive education (Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013). Therefore, there is a demand from teachers in receiving more efficient, practical, and productive trainings that would help them expand their teaching proficiency, gain more deepened knowledge, and develop better understanding in order to deliver effective and quality education to ‘all’ students (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2014; Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013).

There were some particular areas such as speech and language support, management of inclusive classroom, adaptation and assessment in classrooms, usage of naturalistic strategies within classrooms, and collaboration with families of students with special needs that teachers who participated in one study pointed out as areas they least knew and wished to have more knowledge about (Sucuoğlu, Bakkaloğlu, Işcen Karasu, Demir, & Akalin, 2013).

### 2.4 Rationale for the study

Apparently, evidence indicates that teachers need to be well-trained, well-equipped, and well-prepared in having adequate knowledge, and possessing practical and efficient skills as well as useful experience in order to not only provide inclusive education with the aim of meeting with all students’ needs (Coates, 2012; Peters, 2007), but also to later make use of those skills, knowledge and experience in expanding their inclusive acceptance of all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities (Pavri & Luftig, 2001). Correspondingly, there is similar significance of teacher training towards a successful inclusion in Thailand (Sanrattana, 2010;
UNICEF, 2003; Vorapanya & Dunlap, 2014). This is due to a shift in Thai education policy that was made since 1999 with its current focus on ‘Education for All’ (Office of the National Education Commission, 1999; Office of the National Education Commission, 2002).

Several researches and studies did explore a role as well as an influence of teacher training in relation to inclusion within Thai context (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2014; Kantavong, Nethanomsak, & Luang-Ungkool, 2012; Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013). However, their findings either seemed to be too general and not directly related to teacher training as a main focus, or were not straightforwardly come from teachers who underwent a five-year bachelor of education program and worked in inclusive classrooms.

Noticeably, a gap in literature pertaining to the explicit views of Thai teachers, who possess such specific education background and work experience, about teacher training towards inclusive education within Thai context can still be found. For this reason, this study intentionally aims to investigate teachers’ views about teacher training in preparing and supporting them in delivering inclusive education in practice. Particularly, in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes in which general teachers receive, gain and develop through both pre-service teacher training and education, and in-service teacher training. Besides, this study also seeks for possible challenges that those teachers face when teaching under the inclusive setting in practice as well as practical recommendations for further improvement of Thai teacher training in hopes of enhancing and achieving quality inclusive education within Thai education system in the future.

Therefore, this current study is required to provide answers for the following questions: (1) how does teacher training prepare and support teachers to teach within inclusive setting or classroom; (2) how do teachers apply knowledge and strategies learned through teacher training; and (3) what are challenges that teachers face in practice?
3 Research Methodology

In this chapter, readers will be presented with clarifications of research approach, design and method used within the study. Additionally, the procedure of how the investigation was carried out as well as how data were collected and analyzed will be systematically explained, including ethical considerations, and validity and reliability.

3.1 Research paradigm

This study aims to explore views of Thai teachers in relation to teacher training towards inclusion in Thai context which means that an in-depth interpretation of human perceptions and behavior of a small group of participants in order to acknowledge both of similarities and differences among them is being acquired (Basit, 2010). Consequently, the interpretive, or naturalistic, paradigm is employed (Basit, 2010). This paradigm does not only allow researcher to recognize such differences and similarities, but also to understand person’s behavior through a contribution of researcher’s frame of reference (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). This is because to be able to understand persons’ concepts, ideas and viewpoints of the world around them, it needs to come from the inside, not the outside (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Moreover, this research seeks for an explanation as well as understanding of what the social world is like through an investigation of direct experiences of the members in such specific context (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007), leading to an adoption of epistemological position in this case (Bryman, 2012).

In terms of findings, they would not be generalized since it is not part of what researcher intends to do in this study (Basit, 2010), and they are demonstrated in just textual form, instead of the numerical type (Robson, 2011). While another paradigm which is called a positivist or normative paradigm cannot be used in this research due to several reasons. Firstly, the positivist paradigm believes that truth can only be disclosed through experiment, observation, or interrogation of a large group of participants (Basit, 2010). Secondly, this paradigm seems to be less successful when it comes to the study of human nature where its complexity and quality of social phenomena could be seen as physically indefinite, yet qualitatively valuable (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Thirdly, it involves data that are in numerical form and can be analyzed systematically and statistically (Basit, 2010; Newby,
Lastly, researchers who use this paradigm tend to look for generalization of their findings towards the natural phenomena (Basit, 2010; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Briefly, it is indicated that this study is being conducted under the interpretive paradigm which subsequently leads to an employment of qualitative methodology (Basit, 2010) for its research design.

3.2 Research design

According to Basit (2010), a qualitative approach is being engaged in this case since the aims of the study are to scientifically describe views and perceptions of those teachers, yet illustrate social phenomena that are there. Additionally, it allows researcher to put concentration on the subjective opinions given by the research participants to uncover and explain social reality as it is perceived and presented by them (Basit, 2010; Cohen, et al., 2011). Similar conception but different title of the study approach called ‘small-scale empirical studies’ is presented by Punch (2009). This kind of study has become rapidly growing in education field because it is more practical in situations where there are limitations of resources, access and cooperation (Punch, 2009). He further asserts that small-scale studies can go into substantial depth with a small group of sample, for example, when conducting a small-scale interview-based project (Punch, 2009).

Thus, with the mentioned approach above, this research project is going to obtain in-depth information regarding teachers’ perspectives and opinions about teacher training in preparing and supporting them towards inclusive education in practice from a group of four participants through semi-structured interviews.

Apparently, this study is generally about studying the subjectivity of participants who are teachers in order to explore their views regarding the situation of teacher training towards inclusion in Thailand in particular. However, there is an interesting question raised in the author’s mind while writing this piece of work whether those participants did provide honest answers in all questions, or there might be something that they could not respond straightforwardly or something they did not want to mention during the interviews since it might somehow relate to or affect their profession. There is no definite way to find out the answer to this question at this point, yet it seems to be a good remark for this study’s author as well as readers to keep in mind when it comes to the findings later on.
3.3 Data collection

Since qualitative approach is employed throughout this entire study, it is very understandable if data which are collected here would be called ‘qualitative data’. Newby (2010) explains that qualitative data are frequently specified as a linkage to ideas and feelings of people which can be valid only in relation to representation of reality of a person. Additionally, this type of data can be seen as an attribute of an individual or object and most importantly, it can be measured (Newby, 2010). With the purpose of obtaining such data that involve with human beings’ perceptions, thoughts and opinions, it seems to be unavoidable to collect them in the form of ‘verbal data’. Verbal data refers to an umbrella term which contains a variety of data that share the common characteristic of primarily comprising of words (Flick, 2014). Similarly, Punch (2009) also points out that qualitative researchers who work in education field tend to study representations in the written and spoken forms as well as the experience of humans that being recorded. These mentioned data are results from having the research participants spoken about their experiences, points of view, or particular situations through various methodological ways such as interview, group discussion and observation (Flick, 2014; Punch, 2009).

3.3.1 Interview

Interview is used as a research method of collecting qualitative data in this study due to several reasons. Firstly, interview adopted in this study is purposely designed to gather relevant data, which are views of teachers, on a particular subject, which is teacher training towards inclusion in Thailand, in order to illustrate such a definite phenomena within a specific context (Basit, 2010). Secondly, it is an excellent way of accessing individuals’ meanings, feelings, and opinions of events and structures of reality (Punch, 2009), and seeking and gaining an in-depth data (Basit, 2010). Lastly, participant is able to ask researcher to further explain a question or meaning of any term that he or she may not understand or provide more clarification to their answer when needed while researcher is able to probe responses of participant to ensure accuracy of data (Basit, 2010; Hobson & Townsend, 2010).

Semi-structured interview

The semi-structured interview used in this study allows researcher to have a systematic guideline covering a set of reflective questions which is formulated in response to collecting
data that would enable researcher to answer the key research questions at the end; at the same time, there is still a room given to both participant and researcher to clarify one another’s understanding, and to ask follow-up questions in case researcher wants to reach for more detailed and comprehensive response (Basit, 2010; Hobson & Townsend, 2010; Newby, 2010).

A set of thirteen open-ended questions was formulated and put together for the interview guide, including inquiry about general information of participants. The key reason for using open-ended questions mainly in the guideline is because this type of questions enables participant to overtly express and describe how they see, think and feel (Creswell, 2012) about circumstances that has happened in reality. However, during each interview there were times that close-ended questions were asked in order to confirm correctness of given responses. The interview questions were generated based on the reviewed literature with the hope of filling in the gap mentioned in the chapter two.

After the English interview protocol was developed, researcher checked the content once again before sending out the guideline to four colleagues who have had experiences in teaching in the field of inclusive and special education for the last scrutiny of content. Useful feedbacks were given back, not only in terms of content, but also other issues such as length of some questions and time management when conducting interview in reality. Then a modification of some statements on the interview guide and rearrangement of some details of the interview plan were taken place to ensure smooth process and appropriate time management during each interview according to suggestions received from those colleagues before piloting the final version of the interview questions.

### 3.3.2 Participants

For some practical reasons, selection of participants in educational research sometimes cannot be done randomly (Hartas, 2010). Especially within qualitative approach where small-scale research being conducted (Basit, 2010), it is very unlikely for researcher to study everyone in all places covering everything that has happened (Punch, 2009). In such cases, non-probability sampling is the most suitable way of selection (Basit, 2010; Hartas, 2010; Newby, 2010). The reasons for that are: (i) a sample chosen through non-probability sampling might or might not represent its population (Basit, 2010; Hartas, 2010) since researcher would deliberately cast only particular participants from the whole population; and (ii) researcher
does not have any interest in making generalization of findings towards the wider population, but narrowly aim to work with a small group of participants that would only just represent themselves (Basit, 2010; Hartas, 2010) in order to meet with the needs of specific circumstances (Newby, 2010).

In order to select an appropriate group of sample of the study that employs the qualitative methodology, many factors are needed to be taken into consideration (Hartas, 2010; Punch, 2009). According to Hartas (2010), factors such as voluntary characteristic, accessibility and availability of members of the sample group are mentioned to be regarded when it comes to such process. While Newby (2010) points out that the sampling method employed should be the one that can provide the best results out of the situations within the scope of that research which researcher has to carefully think about and make it become satisfactory. He further explains some other important points that researcher should take into account when specifying the sampling method as the following: (i) purpose of the research: whether to prove a hypothesis or to study human behavior or perceptions in particular events or conditions; (ii) nature of the data analysis: whether to use a statistic procedure or to deeply analyze the complexity of human nature and the social phenomena; (iii) importance of the speed: when time and cost becomes the first priority; and (iv) limitation of resources: when not many options are left for researcher to choose in case of urgency during the process (Newby, 2010).

Among several types of non-probability sampling (Basit, 2010; Flick, 2014; Hartas, 2010; Punch, 2009), this study used a method of purposive or judgemental sampling in the process of selecting participants (Bryman, 2012). The reason being that this type of non-probability sampling was adopted because, in this case, researcher would like to choose the sample group which was selective and suitable with the aim of the study in order to provide the best answers for the research questions (Basit, 2010; Hartas, 2010). Basit (2010) additionally mentions that this means of sampling is beneficial and favorable for any researcher whose study is small-scale since she or he knows precisely what kind of sample is needed and how it should be approached and accessed.

In this study, four participants were chosen from one public school with inclusive setting which was located in Bangkok through a contact person. This contact person also worked in the field of special and inclusive education in Thailand. However, she did not meet with the requirements of the research sample. All four of them were teachers who underwent pre-service teacher training through their five-year bachelor degree in education, and were
currently teaching in inclusive classrooms. The reason behind this was to ensure that the participants had formerly gone through the pre-service teacher training and had had experience in the in-service teacher training. Out of four participants, two of them were male and the other two were female. Each of them graduated from different universities. Also, they had different duration of experience in teaching within an inclusive setting.

First participant
For the first teacher, he graduated from a university in Nakhon Sawan province, his major was computer, and has been working in the present school for about sixteen months. He was assigned to teach the second and third year of mathayomsuksa, which were equal to the eighth and ninth grade respectively in American education system. Each year had four classes and in each class approximately had four to five students with special needs with the majority of autistic children. Additionally, he has already passed particular examinations and become qualified as a government officer who holds a title of assistant teacher under the Ministry of Education of Thailand.

Second participant
The second teacher graduated from one university in Bangkok province. Her major was mathematics and she has started working in this school since November 2013. Unlike the first teacher, she has not yet been qualified as an assistant teacher. However, she has been directly employed by the school under a contract. She taught four inclusive classes in the third year of mathayomsuksa, being equivalent to the ninth grade, and one inclusive class in the fifth year of mathayomsuksa, being equivalent to the eleventh grade. In the third year of mathayomsuksa, she needed to handle various types of special needs such as physical disabilities, hearing impairments, autisms, and learning disabilities within those four inclusive classes while there were only four students with hearing impairments in the inclusive classroom of the fifth year of mathayomsuksa.

Third participant
This teacher studied at a university in Roi Et province and graduated from there with his bachelor of education in computer major. He became a qualified assistant teacher after passing examinations last year and has begun his job as a teacher since then at this school. He
was currently teaching eight classes in total: four classes in the first year of mathayomsuksa, which was comparable to the seventh grade; and the other four in the fourth year of mathayomsuksa, which was comparable to the tenth grade. However, only three out of four classes in the fourth year of mathayomsuksa were inclusive with a few students with special educational needs in each class while all four classes in the first year of mathayomsuksa were taught under inclusive setting with four to five special needs learners per class. Majority of students with special needs he taught were reported to have learning disabilities across the two years of mathayomsuksa.

**Fourth participant**

The final participant went to study for her bachelor degree in education in Uttaradit province and received a graduate certificate in special education through a one-year program from another university in Phitsanulok province. Before she came to work at the current school, she used to teach at one regular private school for a year in computer subject which was her field of study back in her first degree. After that she was introduced to work with children and young people with special needs for the very first time when she started her second job at Special Education Center in Nan province. In 2013, she passed the particular examinations and became a qualified assistant teacher and that was when she moved to Bangkok and began her teaching profession again at this school. At the moment, she mainly taught in primary level which consisted of the first, second, fourth and sixth year of prathomsuksa, being equivalent to the first, second, fourth and sixth grade respectively. Each year had five classes so she taught twenty classes in total. However, only three out of five classes in each year group were inclusive. Mostly, learners with special needs in her classrooms were reported to have autistic spectrum disorders or learning disabilities and there were around three to five of them in each class.

**3.3.3 Procedure**

At the outset, researcher started to contact each participant to confirm their availability and convenient date and time for interviewing. Later, each interview was individually conducted at participants’ school and approximately took 45 to 60 minutes per session.

Interview questions were piloted beforehand in English and everything went well so there was no change taken place after completion of the pilot session. Nevertheless, researcher
conducted each interview and communicated to each participant mainly in Thai. The reason for this is that it is affirmed that an ideal interview should be conducted in the language that both interviewer and interviewee consider being the most comfortable when expressing and interacting (Rossman and Rallis as cited in Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013).

Data collection was done after completing four interviews. Researcher had verbatim record of each interview since audio-recording was taken place in each session (Basit, 2010) with permission from all four participants. Audio files were first kept in the researcher’s personal mobile phone with passcode required each time when using. Later, all files were transferred to the researcher’s personal laptop computer which also required password every time when logging on. The file names were de-identified by not addressing their names or other relevant personal information. In order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of all participants, fictive names were used throughout this study.

3.3.4 Ethics

Before the process of data collection started, researcher had to submit an online notification form regarding the legal and ethical guidelines for student and research projects subject to notification or license to the Norwegian Social Science Data Services. An approval to conduct this research was granted afterward. In the mean time, researcher attempted to look for an access to participants through a gatekeeper of the school (Creswell, 2012) after knowing school’s location and receiving contact information from personal contact. A letter of permission to enter the school for interviewing four teachers was directly delivered in person to the school principal via department of administration of the school. A submitted notification form of the legal and ethical guidelines to conduct a research under supervision of the University of Oslo was also attached with the letter.

In terms of the interviews, each participant was verbally informed about information of this research project during the first contact to further make an appointment for interviewing in case of voluntary participation (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Creswell, 2012). All four of them were willing to take part in this project; therefore, further appointments of the subsequent interviews were made. On the interview day, each participant received the written informed consent (Seidman, 2006) together with an information letter which explained and clarified important details of this research project (Newby, 2010) as well as contact
information of the researcher. After being clearly informed, consents were agreeably signed by all participants.

As being pointed out in the informed consent, there was a high level of the placement of issues regarding confidentiality, privacy and anonymity in the study (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Creswell, 2012; Lincoln, 1990). Each interview was one-on-one and conducted individually. All information received from participants through interviews was kept between individual participants and researcher. Even though the maintenance of anonymity was also carried throughout the study, there might be a question raised due to the fact that all participants worked at the same school and they seemed to know one another. Therefore, there might be a chance of exchanging conversation taken place afterward.

3.4 Data analysis

Due to the fact that this study is about exploring and investigating the views of teachers about both pre-service and in-service teacher training which they have received within the Thai context, it is very crucial for researcher to find a proper data analysis method ensuring illustration of all important themes in the description of such phenomenon under such specific circumstance (Daly et al. as cited in Joffe, 2011).

As a result, thematic analysis is chosen as the most appropriate method here since it represents the thematic content of qualitative data such as interview transcripts (Anderson, 2007) through identification and analysis of common themes or patterns of meaning in the set of data supplied in this stage (Anderson, 2007; Braun & Clarke as cited in Joffe, 2011). In addition, this way of analysis is able to provide researcher the end result in which features the most noticeable yet valuable constellations of meanings found in the data (Anderson, 2007). Importantly, these assemblages are not just collections of plain words or texts, but they actually contain several dimensions such as cognition, emotions and attitudes, and symbols (Anderson, 2007).

The first step of the analysis stage was transcribing all four interviews (Basit, 2010) in Thai. After completing Thai transcripts, the translation of Thai into English version was commenced. Once the English transcripts were produced, cross-checking of English content with the interview records was proceeded to ensure correctness of the English translations. This step was carried out by researcher of this study only due to the fact that I am a Thai
native speaker so it was very convenient for me to go back and forth between Thai and English without any restriction during the process.

Then the researcher took some time to take a look at the interview questions on the interview guide in order to generate the criteria (Anderson, 2007) that would be used later on when sorting out the relevant responses whether it should be included. At this point, research questions and the reviewed literature were largely used since the criteria were supposed to be based and closely related to them.

Next, researcher started to read through each transcript on electronic copy and highlight the relevant questions and answers according to the criteria. Then reread again on the printed version and highlight the parts where it was related to the criteria. While going through each English transcription in order to sort out all related responses based on the criteria, researcher found that there were some unexpected responses emerged which were quite important and interesting. The reason being for this could be the fact that all interviews were semi-structured, questions did not need to be exactly asked in sequence as set on the guideline (Basit, 2010). At the same time, some unplanned questions were asked to not only follow the dynamic of interviews, but also to probe and prompt where necessary (Hobson & Townsend, 2010; Newby, 2010). Hence, researcher did take notes on those newly emerged issues since they might be useful later on when analyzing and finding themes. Then a comparison between interview questions on the guideline and the interview questions that were literally asked in each interview, including the newly emerged issues, was carried out so that they could be regrouped or broken down where appropriate. Through this step, the final edition of criteria eventually came out. After that, all related responses were rearranged and adjusted where suitable under these finalized criteria in order to have all relevant data ready for the analyzing stage.

In order to analyze data, researcher segmented those data and divided them into meaningful analytical units (Anderson, 2007). The similar units of meaning were put together and coding of each unit was also initiated and carried on all the way through. For example, code 1.4.4 was for question number four under the first item of the fourth interview. Key words from the similar units were used as initial themes or categories at this point. While this process was proceeding, researcher also revised the units and categories to ensure that no information was missing and to rearrange the units and re-label the categories where suitable. After the completion of this step, researcher decided to go through the original English transcripts again
and then return to the initial categories and meaningful analytical units to compare, redistribute, regroup, and break up where appropriate (Anderson, 2007) before finalizing the analysis.

At the end of the analysis stage, there were 43 code segments produced which were later reduced by assembling those that were similar into the same categories. At this point, 13 categories were eventually developed and subsequently reorganized in order to be presented within five extensive themes through the usage of diagrams which was carried out by the researcher with an intention of finding out a relationship among these categories.

The five emerged themes consist of

- Theme I – Situation of inclusive education at present
- Theme II – Teachers’ expertise and proficiency
- Theme III – Teaching in inclusive classrooms in practice
- Theme IV – Teachers’ direct experience
- Theme V – Teachers’ recommendations for future teacher training towards inclusive education

**Reflexivity**

Reflexivity is one of the important issues in the research. This is because researcher is supposed to allow participants as well as circumstances express themselves, rather than being preconceived and trying to predominantly interpret, evaluate, and conclude based on her own judgment or feelings (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, Research methods in education, 2007). Relatively speaking, it could be seen as caution to remind researcher about being unbiased (Basit, 2010), aware of my role and limitation, and not trying to affect the research process as well as outcomes. Additionally, researcher is expected to analyze data, present results, develop discussion and conclusion, and write the report based on the principle of reflexivity.

To maintain this reflexivity, I kept reminding myself throughout the entire process of this dissertation, especially during the interviews and data analysis stage, that I was here as a researcher whose duty was to facilitate the research project only. Therefore, I should
definitely not allow my bias to overpower the participants and their ways of thinking and responding while asking questions. Also, I needed to take a short break every now and then if I felt that my personal opinions and feelings started to slowly get involved while analyzing the collected data.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

In this study, the researcher put an effort on maintaining an internal validity by ensuring the plausibility of the research using the interview questions that were generated on the relevant literature, and later reviewed with the expectation of collecting data that would provide answers to the main research questions at the end (Basit, 2010). At the same time, piloting of interview questions was done, in English, in order to enhance the reliability within this research (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, Research methods in education, 2007). However, it might be slightly affected by the fact that all interviews were mainly conducted in Thai, though feedbacks from the piloting session were positive, for example, instruction was clear, and questions were understandable.

In addition, there is another possible way to uphold reliability and validity of the research project when using interview as a research method to collect data, and that is to minimize the possibility of bias during the interview (Basit, 2010; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). According to Basit (2010), such bias being formed during the session might be difficult to avoid since it could either come from one side or both in whichever way that might reshape how questions being asked by interviewer or how answers being illustrated by interviewee, or both ways at once. Bearing this caution in mind, researcher kept an open mind no matter what kind of data would be brought up from the participants, also, tried to balance the interview flow by using prompt-and-probe technique where necessary (Basit, 2010).

Ultimately, Basit (2010) concludes that as long as there is no invention, distortion or falsification of data which researchers collect by means of the recorded interview, their researches are ‘valid’ and ‘ethical’. And that is what the researcher of this unit of study has followed accordingly in order to maintain the quality and standard within the dissertation.
4 Analyses and Discussions

Findings of this study will be presented in the first section of this chapter then following up with discussions. Within the presentation of the results section, readers will be able to easily and conveniently comprehend what were found in this research project as all outcomes are categorized and put into five major themes while the later section will provide readers with analytical and rational discussions of those outcomes using relevant literature.

4.1 Presentation of the results

The results presented in this study are meant to represent the views of teachers and other relevant aspects about teacher training towards inclusive education in Thailand. Four teachers who agreed to participate voluntarily would be referred to P1, P2, P3, and P4 as their pseudonyms with no relation to any order or significance throughout the study. All four of them aged from 25 – 30 years old. They all underwent a five-year teacher education for their bachelor in computer for education and mathematics major and their work experiences in teaching in inclusive classrooms or setting ranged from one to two years. Three out of four began their teaching profession at this school, while another one previously taught at one private school and one special education center before working here.

Five extensive themes were emerged from the analysis of data collected through interviews of the participating teachers. Those themes are comprised of situation of inclusive education at present, teachers’ expertise and proficiency, teaching in inclusive classroom in practice, teachers’ direct experience, and teachers’ recommendations for future teacher training towards inclusive education.

4.1.1 Theme I: Situation of inclusive education at present

In here, four teachers expressed their opinions through discussions of two sub-themes in relation to the current circumstance of inclusion. The two sub-themes were importance of inclusive education, and access to inclusive education for students with special needs.

Importance of inclusive education
Three participants mentioned about an existence of children with special needs within Thai education system and their need in receiving education to develop themselves as reasons why teachers should know about inclusive education. They further pointed out that teachers were supposed to know about background of this group of students so that they would be able to provide education that matched with the needs of the students:

Teachers should be able to teach them properly and suitably, in response to their needs, to support and help them to improve their development. (P2)

One of these three participants referred to a law which came out in order to promote, help and provide opportunities to all students with special needs that they must be able to study if they wanted to. He further explained that a chance for them to be included in the education system was highly increased; therefore, there was a subject about special needs children and their education taught within the curriculum of teacher education back then. While another participant honestly revealed that he knew nothing about inclusive education and children with special needs during the first four years of his teacher education.

**Access to inclusive education for students with special needs**

Three participants mentioned about how children with special needs gained an admission into the school. They believed that there might be a school committee who were responsible for screening or assessing those children during the application process before they were placed in the inclusive classrooms:

Perhaps, they already did assessment or screening during the application process from the beginning. (P2)

One of them even referred to a point where these children might need to see doctors at one specific institute for their diagnosis as part of the process, while another one further explained that for some children with special needs who might be very slow or had difficulty in learning with others, they might end up being placed to study separately in another class. There was an explanation from two teachers who also taught in this type of classroom that this separate classroom was called ‘parallel classroom’ where there would be only students with special needs studied together.
4.1.2 Theme II: Teachers’ expertise and proficiency

There were three sub-themes discussed by all participants under this broad theme which included knowledge and skills in preparing teachers for teaching in inclusive classrooms, continuing professional development for teachers, and graduate diploma in special education.

Knowledge and skills in preparing teachers for teaching in inclusive classrooms

All teachers unanimously reported that there was an insufficiency of knowledge and skills taught during their teacher education and pre-service teacher training in order to teach in inclusive classrooms. Three out of four teachers revealed that throughout their five-year bachelor program, they had only one subject which roughly introduced them to children with special needs, special education, and/or inclusive education. There was no deep enough knowledge and skills gained through pre-service teacher training from their views. One of the three said that

…And just like an introduction only. I mean there is no deep and enriched knowledge gained unlike other teachers who directly graduated from that field. I just know a bit like what is inclusive education. (P3)

While the other teacher genuinely stated that there was no module or subject taught about children with special needs, special education, and/or inclusive education back then. This teacher further explained that he knew nothing about children with special needs and inclusive education until he did his teaching practice for the last year of his teacher education:

That was when I knew about it and also the inclusive education where there were students with special needs learned together with regular students in the same classroom. (P1)

In addition, when they were asked whether they gained any knowledge in relation to teaching and learning methods or strategies, inclusive classroom management, assessment and education provision or individualized education plan through their pre-service teacher training in preparing them to teach under inclusive setting, three participants who undertook one subject within the curriculum provided similar answers that they did learn something in relation to such knowledge but it was very little and they did not feel that they were fully equipped with just this one subject.
However, when it came to academic knowledge regarding their fields of studies which were computer and arithmetic subject, all four participants believed that they gained sufficient knowledge through pre-service teacher education and training in order to teach all students.

**Continuing professional development for teachers**

According to three teachers who were already qualified as government teachers, one of in-service training they must attend was ‘assistant teacher training’. They said that it was a compulsory part of their professional development and was an intensive training for all newly qualified government teachers within their first two years of employment. Each round of this training would last for about three days. They further explained that contents provided and taught in the training were related to general principles, laws, ethics, and moralities of teaching profession, rather than academic knowledge and skills in relation to teaching in practice. One teacher said that this assistant teacher training was very helpful since he was just a fresh graduate when he became qualified so he gained some useful knowledge and information through it. While another teacher asserted that

> There is training for intensive preparation which helps develop spirit of being a teacher and makes me love my career better and enable me to take care of students better. (P4)

Several other trainings were mentioned through all four participants such as Boy Scout module training (P2, P4), stem education training (P2, P4), computer workshop (P3), packaging design training (P1, P4), IT management training (P4), internal quality assurance training (P2), and school visit (P3). They all admitted that most of in-service teacher trainings they received up to this point did not have much of involvement with children with special needs or teaching in inclusive classrooms. However, when they were questioned whether they gained any knowledge through those in-service teacher training, they answered likewise that they definitely gained some new knowledge but it was not relatively beneficial or suitable towards their students in inclusive classrooms. They further clarified the reason for this was that they each had other job responsibilities within the school, not just only teaching. As a result, they were sent to receive some training relating to what there were assigned or responsible for.
Nevertheless, one teacher reported that she did attend IEPs online training which was the only training that directly related to inclusion and children with special needs. Through this training, she learned how to create IEPs for students with special needs using this specific software online. She additionally pointed out that these IEPs were not only used for academic purpose, but also used as a part of verified documents so that the school could receive extra financial support from Thai government via coupon system.

**Graduate diploma in special education**

Among four participants, there was only one participant who reported that she underwent this graduate diploma in special education course. She explained that it was a one-year course for teachers who did not graduate in special education major but wanted to be specialized in teaching students with special needs. She openly revealed that she gained very deep and enriched knowledge as well as skills:

I got to learn all sorts of things: assess, identify, provide educational plan, teaching and learning strategies for those with special needs, and IEP and IIP. (P4)

She emphasized that what she learned and gained through the graduate diploma course was much more useful and practical than what she learned and gained through pre-service teacher training when it came to teaching in inclusive classroom in practice.

**4.1.3 Theme III: Teaching in inclusive classrooms in practice**

There were four sub-themes in relation to how teaching literally went and things that the participating teachers actually faced in inclusive classrooms in practice. Those four sub-themes were usage and application of knowledge and skills gained through teacher training, inclusive classroom management, teaching and learning process in inclusive classrooms, and challenges faced when teaching in practice.

**Usage and application of knowledge and skills gained through teacher training**

In terms of knowledge and skills gained through in-service teacher training, most of the participating teachers reported that they were hardly able to use or apply things that they learned from in-service training they received to their inclusive classroom. They explained
that the reason for this was either knowledge was too advanced for students or knowledge was not directly related to their subject:

I think it is useful but do not think that the students can take it yet because knowledge that I gained through this training was at the level of master degree. … (P3)

…it is because those are all about experiments which take some time to try or do. And it was more about science, did not have much to do with mathematics. (P2)

Yet, one teacher asserted that knowledge she gained through the IEPs online and Boy Scout module training was applicable and usable when teaching in practice.

When the same question was asked but this time was for pre-service teacher training, all four participants agreeably shared their views that what they learned back in their bachelor was mainly theoretical knowledge. Though one teacher revealed that role play activities he did with his classmates back in those days would be helpful somehow when solving problem in practice and another teacher asserted that teaching practice helped her greatly when teaching in the classroom, similar responses were generally reported by four of them that things they learned from pre-service teacher training scarcely prepared and assisted them to teach students with special needs in inclusive classrooms and they had to adjust teaching and learning strategies themselves without prior adequate skills and knowledge.

In case of knowledge gained through the graduate diploma in special education course, it was strongly affirmed by the particular teacher who underwent that all things that she learned were useful and favorable in consideration of teaching students with special needs. However, she also pointed out that

It is helpful and supports me a lot but, of course, there might be situations where I need to deal with by myself and those theories might not be applicable. (P4)

Also, she further added that there might be some knowledge or strategies that she was not able to apply or use in inclusive classroom where students without special needs were also included.

**Teaching and learning process in inclusive classrooms**
Each participating teacher disclosed that there was no special lesson plan for students with special needs. In fact, they generally created lesson plan for the entire class since they pointed out that it was an inclusive classroom meaning that they had to also take into account of interests of other students who were regular. Their lesson plan needed to follow a curriculum for academy which was derived from a core curriculum from the Ministry of Education. As a result, the four of them asserted that they needed to adjust or adapt their teaching styles themselves in order to match with the needs of all students especially those with special needs. In terms of individualized education plan (IEP), it was reported by one participant that all students with special needs must have IEPs which would be generally created by classroom teachers who either underwent the graduate diploma in special education course or received a specific training in special education, and later on attended the IEPs online training.

All participants additionally indicated that differentiation was crucial for students with special needs when it came to assignments to ensure that they would be able to cope with the given tasks:

When it comes to assignments in math subject, I will assign work normally to those regular students, but for students with special needs, I might give them less work or something easier (P2)

…For example, in computer subject, I would ask the class to make a note about one topic in relation to information technology. For some of students with special needs who are very slow in writing, only 2-3 letters in 10 minutes, I need to adapt the method. Then I think of pictures. So I give them pictures to color then ask them to match those pictures if they can see a connection. (P3)

Similarly, they pointed out that adjustment of achievement criteria was necessary for this group of students when it came to learning outcome as they tended to achieve at the lower level than others:

Usually, there are two parts in the test. For the part where students are asked to fill answers in the blanks, those with special need will have difficulty to complete. So I will just ask them to do only the multiple choices section. (P1)
However, they all firmly asserted that no matter which case, core content of the lesson must be taught on the equal basis for every student regardless of special needs:

It should not be like this that students with special needs just learn one thing while regular students learn another thing. That is not what I want. This is obviously like a discrimination which is done by a teacher. (P3)

In terms of marking criteria, all four participants universally addressed that they gave marks based on a quality of submitted work as well as an actual performance in class which was the same for every student. One participating teacher remarked that

There definitely are certain criteria for marking. For example, on-time submission, completion of work. If they cannot meet with some items of the criteria, I will adjust marking accordingly which is based on what they could do. It means that marking is done based on their actual ability and what happened in reality. It is called authentic assessment. There are no special marks for them though they have disabilities. There is nothing like that because I will give marks according to the actual ability. And no student fails, they will all pass but maybe not with high marks. (P3)

When asked about how to support students with special needs in inclusive classroom, three out of four teachers referred to a buddy system where they paired up one student with special need with another regular student who was quite nice and bright as their first strategy. While another one tended to use working-in-group method in general. All teachers would double-check on those students with special needs individually afterward to ensure that they did access the lesson or get on with their task. Another thing that all participating teachers pointed out that they normally did when it came to supporting children with special needs within their inclusive classrooms was to be more attentive towards them.

**Inclusive classroom management**

All four participating teachers likewise reported that they did not use any special way or method in creating an inclusive atmosphere within their classrooms as they further clarified that not only the atmosphere within the classrooms but also across the school was generally inclusive and friendly. One teacher openly commented that
I think it is just the same as other regular classrooms because both students with and without special needs can learn and spend their student lives here together in the same classroom. There is not much difference. This could be because students without special needs here are being familiar with this kind of atmosphere so it is just like regular classroom to me, nothing special. (P2)

While another teacher revealed that within his classrooms, there was always a group of students without special needs who voluntarily took care or helped those with special needs. However, they all admitted that there were cases of arguing or teasing or bullying between students with and without special needs at times. When they were further asked about how they solved such problems, several methods were mentioned. For example, one teacher disclosed that she would use quite a strong way in dealing and closing the case which was to deduct some marks when necessary, but on the regular basis all four of them would call on students from both sides to have a talk and reconcile eventually.

Furthermore, they all complimented their students with special needs that they were very nice and obedient and that was one of the reasons why they found managing inclusive classroom was not that difficult in practice.

Another issue mentioned by all participants within this sub-theme was emotional and behavioral control of students with special needs. They all agreed that this issue could be problematic at times though it did not happen frequently.

**Challenges faced when teaching in practice**

Four participating teachers unanimously identified that the most common problem when teaching in class was behavioral and emotional issues of students with special needs as they found it unpredictable whether when and how this would happen. One teacher remarked that

> Sometimes they will just act out or make a scene and I do not know why or what is the cause of it? Some cases they do not hurt other friends but they hurt themselves. (P4)

The second challenge that all four of them mentioned in this sub-theme was incident about teasing, bullying and arguing between students with and without special needs. They further explained that in most of these cases, it would be students without special needs who started to tease first. When they were asked how they would cope with such a situation, four of them
shared their own experience that what they usually did was to talk to both sides of students and give admonition to the one who started the scene. However, there were three teachers who further mentioned that the first step they would normally do was to console and calm students with special needs down before they initiated communication with them while other students in the class were asked to not be disruptive. This kind of method was also used by these three participating teachers when they had to manage behavioral or emotional issue of some children with special needs within their classrooms.

The last challenge that all four participants discussed and expressed their concern about was an academic aspect of students with special needs. They all stated that majority of these students had difficulty in following the lesson and their ability in taking and coping with given assignment was different from the others as one teacher commented that

He might not be able to do it as other friends do. I would find him example and demonstrate him how to do it. (P3)

4.1.4 Theme IV: Teachers’ direct experience

In here, four teachers discussed about how direct experience with children with special needs they formerly gained could create positive impacts on how they taught in the classroom and how they perceived and comprehended children with special needs as well as the inclusive education.

Influence of direct experience in relation to teaching in practice

Three out of four participating teachers mutually identified that direct experience with children with special needs they had during their teaching practice was beneficial and advantageous when it came to teaching in inclusive classrooms in practice. They further pointed out that such an experience also helped and assisted them in adapting themselves when working professionally. While another participating teacher referred back to her work experience as her first direct contact with children with special needs since she did not get to teach or meet with this group of children during her teaching practice. She remarked that

There are times when you cannot say anything just by looking whether they have any special needs since some of them look typical just like others. Once you have direct
contact with them and to teach them to read and write that is when you realize that they have impairments or disabilities. (P4)

This teacher additionally shared her personal experience that it was very hard when she started to teach for the first time ever at one school since she had to manage a few students with special needs in class while having no clue of what happened and how she should deal with things under such a circumstance:

I did get to experience with students with special needs actually while working at the private school but I did not know much back then. I mean I knew that they had special needs, had autisms. But I did not know how to deal with them back then. (P4)

Moreover, she firmly emphasized that such a direct experience she gained through the previous work was greatly useful not only for her teaching now but also for when she was studying in the graduate diploma in special education course:

…Yes, because I gained some knowledge while working so I knew something. It made this course easier somehow since I had gained some experience and knowledge from my work before. (P4)

In short, all four participants confirmed that having had direct experience within an actual environment was very important and helpful since theoretical knowledge did not help much when teaching in practice.

**Influence of direct experience on teachers’ attitudes towards children with special needs and inclusion**

Each participating teacher similarly reported that direct experience they previously had considerably contributed to how they perceived children with special needs as well as when they taught these children within an inclusive setting. One of the participating teachers expressed that

Before, I thought that children with special needs were kind of scary, just like mentally ill. After I got to teach them during my teaching practice, I found them very cute and pitiful. And I believe that they have potential to improve themselves. (P2)

While another teacher shared his concern about teaching this group of students that
I was worried before. I was afraid about what I should do to make them understand. (P3)

And that was how he felt before he taught and directly had contact with the children. However, when he was asked how he felt at this point, he stated that

I am very happy. It is actually easier to teach them. (P3)

When all teachers were questioned how direct experience could actually change their attitudes and feeling, one teacher explained that

The longer I stay (with children with special needs), the more acceptable it is for me. And I understand more about their nature as it is… (P1)

Likewise, some related comments were made by another two teachers:

After some time, I started to learn from them and try to understand them, why they could not do it. And I have become calmer through time and tried to adjust myself. (P4)

Having had direct experience, I know how they are like and I am not scared anymore when I have to teach them now because I have been familiar with them. (P2)

Ultimately, all four teachers revealed that their attitudes was very much improved after directly teaching and experiencing with children with special needs through either teaching practice or previous work. Half of the participating teachers firmly stated that their attitudes became even more positive after working for some time. At this point, four of them also found that these children were actually cute (P2, P4), obedient (P1, P3), and hard-working (P2).

4.1.5 Theme V: Teachers’ recommendations for future teacher training towards inclusive education

Recommendations that all four participating teachers did mention within this broad theme could be simply divided into two sub-themes which were teachers’ recommendations for pre-service teacher training and education, and for in-service teacher training.
**Teachers’ recommendations for pre-service teacher training and education**

Three out of four teachers who did take one subject in relation to children with special needs, inclusive education, and/or special education during their bachelor degree revealed that this one subject did not provide sufficient knowledge and skills in preparing them to teach in an inclusive classroom. They felt that they were not well-prepared in how to teach students with special needs and manage such a classroom. Therefore, they suggested that at least one more subject should be added to the teacher education’s curriculum to provide deeper knowledge about inclusive education and how to teach students with special needs in the inclusive classroom.

While another teacher who did not get to take any subject in relation to inclusive education, children with special needs, and/or special education remarked that

> In Thailand, learners with special needs are not seen as much important as it should be so some universities do not cover or include children with special needs module within its curriculum. (P1)

He additionally expressed his thought that knowing about teaching and learning management within an inclusive classroom would enable and lead him to the direction of a successful inclusive teaching in practice.

In terms of direct contact and teaching experience with children with special needs, one teacher strongly advised that university students in bachelor of education program should be given a chance to directly experience with this group of children during the coursework at least once before proceeding with teaching practice in their fifth year of the program while another teacher furthered her suggestion that it would be very helpful for those student teachers to practice their teaching at any school where children with special needs were included.

**Teachers’ recommendations for in-service teacher training**

All four teachers mentioned that there was a lack of in-service teacher training in relation to inclusive education or children with special needs. One teacher clearly made her point that

> I think it is not sufficient and there should be more training provided in schools where they have inclusive classrooms and the training should be provided yearly. (P4)
This teacher further clarified her recommendation concerning future in-service teacher training towards inclusion that

…To all teachers who teach in inclusive classroom or parallel classroom should receive such training so that they can use knowledge from training to develop these students. (P4)

All four participating teachers suggested that more additional training about children with special needs should be arranged and given. Two of them brought up an inclusive classroom management as one of their proposals for future training. Three teachers stated that it would be ideal for them to receive training about creating individualized education plan (IEP) for students with special needs in their classes since most of the classes they taught were inclusive. While training about teaching and learning strategies that could be used within an inclusive classroom was also recommended by two teachers.

4.2 Discussions

In this part of the dissertation, researcher would like to stress one point before moving on to an actual discussion. It is about the fact that none of the participants within this research project graduated in special education major for their bachelor degree. The reason being is that this dissertation aims for exploring how teacher training, in Thailand, prepares and supports teachers for teaching in inclusive classroom or setting in general. As a result, a group of teachers who has already possessed a strong background in relation to children with special needs and inclusive education and/or special education is not the main focus within this study.

4.2.1 Teachers’ acknowledgement towards inclusive education through teacher training and education

The findings of this study showed that several complex issues still revolved around teacher training towards inclusion in Thailand. The first one to be discussed here is dissimilarity in pre-service teacher training and education among universities in Thailand. Such dissimilarity is related to a slight difference concerning curricula’s modules and some other relevant details that were offered through each university. Though majority of teachers who participated in this research project exhibited their understanding towards an importance of inclusive education within Thai education system through one module relating to children with special
needs, inclusion and/or special education they took while studying for their bachelor degree, one teacher reported that there was no such subject offered during the coursework of his teacher education. While another teacher stated that she did not have any direct experience with children with special needs during her teaching practice even though she did take one subject in relation to this group of children back in the coursework.

Nevertheless, in relation to aspects of equity towards diversity within the learning environment, participants from this study displayed their recognition of such matters as they acknowledged that children with special needs should be able to receive and access education on an equal basis as others. Additionally, they pointed out that it was teachers’ responsibility to provide those children with good quality of educational services that would meet with their needs and helping them make progress on their development.

Even though the findings of the study by Kantavong, Nethanomsak, & luang-ungkool (2012) revealed that subject matters regarding such aspects, i.e., human rights and an inclusion of marginal and underprivileged groups were not offered as individual modules and they were merely mentioned in some other subjects as a lightly integrated topic within the curricula of pre-service teacher training and education, the participants from this unit of study were still able to demonstrate such recognition as well as display a sense of being responsible for quality education for their students, especially the ones with special needs. This might signify that teachers, at least from this research project, are able to not only acknowledge an importance of equity matter towards diversity within the classroom, but they are also able to develop their sense of responsibilities as trustworthy educators regardless of amount and frequency of those mentioned subject matters they have learned and obtained during their pre-service teacher training and education.

This current study’s finding seemed to go hand in hand with another study’s finding by Bentley-Williams & Morgan (2013) as it was disclosed that their participants also recognized that ‘all’ students had the right to be given and provided an appropriate education and it was educators’ duty to support these children. However, such awareness of participants of Bentley-Williams & Morgan’s study was reported to be significantly expanding through their reflexive learning after completion of inclusive education units that was previously taught.

Evidently, teachers who came from different institutions seemed to have different knowledge, skills and experience in relation to inclusive education and children with special needs. This
could mean that the curriculum of pre-service teacher training and education in each university might be offered in a slightly different way in terms of some modules and details. This matter seemed to be in consistent with what was found through a study of Kantavong, Nethanomsak, & luang-ungkool (2012) which was conducted within sixteen pre-service teacher training institutions that assorted gaps concerning curricula of pre-service teacher training were still found despite that fact that all sixteen institutions’ course descriptions did cover certain expertise and competency in relation to identifying and responding to learning barriers within school setting for their prospective teachers.

4.2.2 Expertise and proficiency of teachers

Next issue is a lack of teachers’ expertise and proficiency for teaching in an inclusive classroom or setting. In terms of knowledge and skills gained through pre-service teacher training and education for inclusive teaching, three out of four participants from this research project stated that they studied only one subject in relation to children with special needs and inclusive education and/or special education while another participant did not learn anything about this group of children and their education throughout his coursework. They accordingly felt that they were not well-equipped and fully confident to teach those children within inclusive classroom, especially when they started their teaching profession at the very beginning. However, some of the participating teachers argued that direct experience with children with special needs they gained while undertaking teaching practice during the last year of their bachelor program was helpful and supportive when it came to teaching in practice afterward, regardless of no further knowledge and skills taught throughout that year.

According to the 2015 Global Monitoring Report – Education for All 2000-2015: Achievement and Challenges (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015) – it was reported that there were less than one-third of Thai schools that had teachers who were well-trained to work with students with physical and learning disabilities. Such findings were likewise identified through two other studies of Ahsan, Sharma, & Deppeler (2012) and Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey (2013).

Through the Standard of Qualification and Specification for Bachelor of Education (Ministry of Education, 2011), it is clearly stated under a sub-section of Pedagogical Knowledge that all prospective teachers who would graduate from a five-year teacher education program are supposed to have knowledge in relation to special education since it is one of the subject
matters that is included within specific subjects module of the curriculum outline. Moreover, it is obviously written in the document that one of the skills that those prospective teachers shall possess at the end of this bachelor program is to be proficiently skilled in learning management of their chosen major field of study or subject such as mathematics or computer in order to innovatively provide educational service at various levels regardless of talented ability, moderate ability, and special educational needs (Ministry of Education, 2011). However, a discrepancy in curricula and practical details of pre-service teacher training and education among Thai higher education institutions could be found through the outcomes of this research project.

Relevant issues in connection with pre-service teacher training and education were also found in another study. It was about teacher preparation towards inclusive education in Latin America (Vaillant, 2011). Vaillant’s study (2011) pointed out that teacher education was an urgent challenge towards inclusion within Latin American education system. Though an importance of teacher education was widely acknowledged in Latin America, an inadequacy of current reforms still existed due to a lack of training for teachers (Vaillant, 2011). It was further revealed through her work that there were a large number of primary school teachers, in Latin America, who lacked essential pre-service teacher training in order to competently fulfill their teaching roles and obligation (Da Silva as cited in Vaillant, 2011).

In terms of in-service teacher training, though all participating teachers, three of them taught at secondary level while another one taught at primary level, agreed that they did learn and gain some new knowledge through additional training they received while working at the school, they disclosed that there was still an inadequacy of expertise and skills in respect to children with special needs and teaching within inclusive setting. Such an ongoing issue seemed to appear not only within primary and secondary level, but also at pre-school level according to a study by Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey (2013). Their result unveiled Thai pre-school teachers’ perception about themselves in a way that they did not possess enough crucial skills as well as knowledge in relation to early childhood special education to particularly teach those young children within the inclusive setting.

**4.2.3 Inclusive teaching and learning in practice**
The third issue is concerning how teachers applied and used things they learned through teacher training as well as situations and challenges they encountered while teaching in inclusive classrooms in practice, and how they would deal with all those matters.

Participants of this current study revealed that they found it difficult to apply or use knowledge they acquired through in-service teacher training they attended. The given reasons were that some training did not directly provide knowledge that was relevant to their teaching subjects while other training did provide advanced knowledge that was not suitable or did not meet with students’ needs in their classes. The same situation was found in Latin American countries according to Vaillant’s study (2011). It was mentioned through her study that teachers in this region generally tended to not implement what they had learned and gained through those courses of professional development they took part in (Aguerrondo as cited in Vaillant, 2011). Vaillant further explained one possible reason for why this probably happened was the fact that content of those courses did not appear to be close to teachers’ matters and realities (Vaillant, 2011). She continued to provide more details about the situation of continuing professional development in Latin America that teachers frequently received this type of training as either a channel of advancing in their teaching professions or complying with a compulsory requirement connected with the law (Vaillant, 2011). This aspect corresponded to what three participants of this study addressed early on that they were obliged to undergo the assistant teacher training which was mandatory for all newly qualified government teachers.

Vaillant then added on another point that teachers in this region seemed to be more interested in accumulating certificates and diplomas from such training than concentrating on acquisition of substantive knowledge and education due to a predominant incentive system within the countries (Vaillant, 2011). Correspondingly, one teacher of this research project did lightly touch on this sensitive issue as she expressed her opinion that some teachers who underwent specific training in special education, which was a much shorter course than a graduate diploma program, to become qualified in teaching children with special needs in classrooms might just want to only earn extra money. This teacher further explained that it was money funded by Thai government for all teachers who had either diploma or certificate in special education. Admittedly, such a personal view from one particular teacher might not be evidently valid and convincing enough to presume that other Thai teachers would consider undergoing such training only for that extra money. However, this might be a striking remark
which could lead to another inkling regarding future continuing professional development towards inclusion in Thailand.

According to Norwich & Nash (2011), it is asserted that requirements of specialist expertise and proficiency related to particular kinds of special educational needs are largely taken into consideration when it comes to teaching children with special educational needs. Furthermore, it is pointed out by both of them that mainstream teachers in general do not have such specific expertise and proficiency to teach those children with disabilities and special educational needs (Norwich & Nash, 2011). At this point, it seems that participating teachers in this current study also faced such a circumstance since they did report that there was no adequately deep and enriched knowledge and skills learned and gained through teacher training they have received thus far. However, the fact that there is no straightforward and definite pedagogy suggested by a specialist about how one should teach students with special needs, the next key point is that teachers should, instead, know how to utilize and strengthen general teaching methods in order to create efficient and productive personalized provision for those students (Norwich & Nash, 2011).

Coincidentally, all participants from this research project also used such a key point while teaching in practice as they stated that they needed to differentiate tasks and adjust achievement criteria for students with special needs where appropriate and necessary to ensure a full participation of this group of children within their inclusive classrooms. Whether they realize it or not, the way they focus on students’ actual ability could be seen as part of ‘personalization’ pedagogy which is a model that closely concentrates on shaping learning for all students in accordance with their individual needs (Leadbetter as cited in Norwich & Nash, 2011) and it has a very solid ground on learner-centered connotations (Norwich & Nash, 2011). Naturally, all four teachers were able to come across with such approaches to teach and support students with special needs in their classes even though they reported that they did not sufficiently learn about practical knowledge in teaching and learning strategies, inclusive classroom management, and development of individualized education plan during their pre-service teacher training.

In respect to an insufficiency of knowledge in inclusive classroom management that was mentioned early on, participating teachers in this study reported that there was no use of any special strategy or method when they managed their inclusive classrooms. Yet, there was no mention about any kind of severe problem from them except for this one common issue which
also became one of the challenges they encountered while teaching in practice. This common issue was behavioral and emotional control of children with special needs. Even though they stated that such case did happen occasionally, they pointed out it could be challenging for them to handle at times.

However, there was no indication of frustrated and stressed feelings disclosed from any of participating teachers when they had to manage behavior and emotion outburst of students with special needs within their classes. This appeared to be slightly opposite to one study’s findings as it was revealed that its participants extremely felt frustrated and stressed when it came to behavior outbursts management (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2014). Some of the participants from Agbenyega & Klibthong’s study (2014) further relayed their thoughts that they would rather have students with disabilities study in special schools. Differently, one teacher from this current research project even expressed her concern towards some of students with special needs who ended up hurting themselves when such an outburst occurred.

Another challenge that was brought up by this study’s participants was related to arguing and bullying between children with and without special needs. Though the participating teachers did not report any specific difficulty regarding this matter, the fact that they pointed it out as one of the challenges they faced when teaching in inclusive classrooms might imply a significance of this challenge, especially when it came to managing the classroom where both students with and without special needs were studying altogether. Correspondingly, comparable finding was also found in another study which examined the views of Thai pre-school teachers about inclusive education for young children with disabilities (Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013).

The last, but not least, challenge discussed by participants from this current study was regarding academic ability and achievement of students with special needs in their inclusive classrooms. They carefully explained that most of children under this group would generally find difficulty in given assignments due to their limited capability comparing to other students without special needs in the same class. They further reported that it was necessary to adjust achievement criteria for these children. Consistently, equivalent result was presented in one study by Ekeh & Oladayo (2013) as they discovered through an investigation into academic achievement of special needs and regular students nurtured in inclusive and non-inclusive settings that regular students’ grand academic achievement mean score was greater than
special needs students’ grand academic achievement mean score within the same inclusive classrooms.

Intriguingly, one of recommendations which Ekeh & Oladayo proposed through their study was that both students with and without special needs should be placed to study together in the same inclusive classroom (Ekeh & Oladayo, 2013). This recommendation was evidently supported by their findings as there were significant differences identified in the academic achievement of students between ones who were in inclusive classrooms and others who were in non-inclusive classrooms (Ekeh & Oladayo, 2013). It was further explained that the mentioned significant differences turning out to be in favor of those who studied in the inclusive classrooms which were applicable to both students with special needs and regular students (Ekeh & Oladayo, 2013).

4.2.4 Teachers’ direct experience

Then there is an issue concerning teachers’ direct experience with children with special needs. Though there was a minor difference among participating teachers in terms of how each of them gained such an experience, all four teachers jointly reported that having had direct experience with special needs children in the past was definitely an advantage when it came to the matter of teaching in an inclusive classroom in practice. Such an importance of direct experience with this group of students was likewise pointed out, especially during teaching practice or practicum program (Ahsan, Sharma, & Deppeler, 2012).

Findings from Ahsan, Sharma, & Deppeler’s study (2012) additionally revealed that majority of their participants believed that lacking or not having any of adequate experience in relation to teaching and learning within a diverse classroom during teaching practice or practicum was a primary barrier towards a preparation for pre-service teachers. This appears to be in harmony with what was confirmed by all four participating teachers of this current study that experiencing directly with those children within an actual environment was very much useful and beneficial for when they had to teach in practice.

Nevertheless, when carefully observing, a gap in relation to pre-service teacher training and education as well as teaching practice-related matters could be identified here again. It was not only found within this unit of study, but also in the study by Ahsan, Sharma, & Deppeler’s study (2012) as it was further disclosed through their findings that there was a critical gap in
principles and knowledge covered in pre-service teacher preparation programs, and teaching practice facilities for supplying all pre-service teachers as well as for using in classrooms under the real situations. Apparently, such a significant gap might lead to a significant concern whether teachers would be properly and decently prepared to manage diverse classrooms in practical circumstances (Ahsan, Sharma, & Deppeler, 2012).

Not only teaching in practice was being influenced, but teachers’ attitudes towards children with special needs and inclusive education was also being affected by such direct experience which those educators formerly acquired through either pre-service teacher training or previous work. Findings of one study revealed that previous experiences with children with disabilities greatly influenced on positive attitudes of its participants who were teachers that taught in inclusive classrooms (Leatherman1 & Niemeyer, 2005). It was explained that such direct experiences would create a positive impact on pre-service teachers’ attitudes by providing them a familiarity with children with disabilities during their teaching practice or practicum which might lead to a successful promotion of inclusion as well as facilitation of optimistic inclusive opportunities for this group of children when they have become lead teachers within their own classrooms in the future.

At the same time, in-service teachers’ attitudes would be positively affected by actual hands-on involvement with children with disabilities since they had been working with these children (Leatherman1 & Niemeyer, 2005). Moreover, in-service teachers would have favorable circumstances in finding strategies that would successfully work with these children under the real situations (Leatherman1 & Niemeyer, 2005). Correspondingly, participating teachers of this unit of study admitted that having had direct experience with children with special needs during either their teaching practice or previous job was a major factor behind their positive attitudes towards these young people as well as inclusion. In addition, half of the participants stated that more positive attitudes were developed over time while working at the school.

Interestingly, above findings seem to be contrary to some other studies’ findings as there are either neutral or negative attitudes reported from their participants (Forlin & Chambers, 2011; Malak, 2013; Sucuoğlu, Bakkaloğlu, İşcen Karasu, Demir, & Akalın, 2013). According to Forlin & Chambers (2011), a lack of positive attitudes gained was identified though there was a voluntary social experience provided for participating pre-service teachers with the aim of allowing them to have direct contact with an individual or people with disability for about ten
hours. Concurrently, unfriendly attitudes towards students with special needs and their inclusion could be found through Malak’s exploration (2013). Importantly, it is worth noting that participants of Malak’s study were pre-service teachers whose majors of study could be any but not special education as he aimed to explore only responses of the general pre-service teachers. Such condition was similar to this current study’s condition which was set from the beginning. Consequently, it could be claimed that there is a slight difference in terms of teachers’ attitudes towards students with special needs and inclusive education between Bangladeshi and Thai context. However, Malak (2013) did not mention through this piece of his work whether his participants ever undertook any subject or module in relation to special needs children, inclusive education and/or special education during their Bachelor of Education (Honors). Also, the fact that participants of this unit of study were currently working as professional teachers in the field while participants of Malak’s study were still studying at that time, such a difference regarding work experience might as well be another factor that should be taken into consideration when making a comparison between the two studies. This is because direct experience gained through work is also influential when it comes to this matter as mentioned and discussed previously.

4.2.5 Recommendations for future teacher training towards inclusive education

The final issue to be conferred here is concerning teachers’ recommendations about teacher training towards inclusive education. In respect of pre-service teacher training and education, majority of participating teachers of this current study expressed their views that, at least, one more subject or module should be added to the pre-service teacher education to provide them with more enriched knowledge about inclusive education as well as methods or strategies for teaching students with special needs within the inclusive classroom. While another teacher mentioned that to be able to learn and know about how to manage teaching and learning process in inclusive classroom would help him move towards the direction of a success in inclusion in practice. It was also strongly recommended by those teachers that direct experience with special needs students during pre-service teacher training and education should be given more attention due to the fact that such experience could considerably influence on their attitudes and teaching in practice as it was formerly discussed.
Consistently, Engstrand & Roll-Pettersson (2014) reported through their work that there was a significant relation between amount of credits earned in special education during pre-service teacher training and teachers’ attitudes, especially towards children with autism and their inclusion. It was further asserted that teachers who previously took special education modules or programs during either pre-service or in-service teacher training and additionally worked on a regular basis with children with autism appeared to respond towards inclusion of these children in a positive way (Engstrand & Roll-Pettersson, 2014).

However, the fact that the focus of Engstrand & Roll-Pettersson’s study was, on one hand, specifically placed on autistic spectrum children, it might be too soon to confidently conclude that their findings would be entirely applicable if this was the case for other types of special needs children. The reason being is that each category of special needs children has their own key characteristics as well as complexities, not to mention about individual personality of each child. Consequently, this leads to another thought-provoking question whether attitudes of teachers would be slightly altered when it came to another type of special needs students. Even though a definite answer to this emerged question within the context of pre-service teacher training and education might be impossibly given just yet since further investigations are required, it could still be a good remark for future researches to further explore the influence of curriculum of pre-service teacher training and education on teachers’ attitudes.

On the other hand, this unit of study particularly focused on teacher training, rather than any specific category of children with special needs, though corresponding outcomes concerning teachers’ attitudes were identified. Therefore, this minor difference should also be taken into consideration when comparing this study’s findings and Engstrand & Roll-Pettersson’s findings (2014).

In terms of in-service teacher training, though criteria regarding qualifications of teachers who shall teach within inclusive setting as well as details about additional training in relation to skills development in managing and providing inclusive education are clearly stated in the Standard of Quality Assurance for Inclusive Education within Academies (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2012), it appears that there is still a wide gap identified between what is written on the papers and what has actually taken place in reality. This could be clearly seen since there was still a demand in further training in relation to inclusive classroom management, individualized educational plan development, and teaching and learning strategies for using within inclusive classroom from participants of this unit of study.
Up to this point, it might be evidently enough to claim that there is an inadequacy in both pre-service and in-service teacher training in preparing and supporting teachers towards inclusion within Thai context. Such issues do not solely occur in Thailand, but also in some other countries from other regions such as Turkey, Bangladesh and Latin American countries according to the findings of several studies (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2014; Malak, 2013; Sadioglu, Bilgin, Batu, & Oksal, 2013; Sukbunpant, Arthur-Kelly, & Dempsey, 2013; Vaillant, 2011).

A matter of this insufficiency in both types of teacher training is perceived as a significant problem not only at the national level among those countries, but also at the international level as there is an emphasis regarding improvement of quality education to ensure impartial and inclusive education for ‘all’ by providing educators and teachers an empowerment, adequate training, and professional qualifications under efficient, well-supplied and successfully administered systems in the Incheon Declaration (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015).
5 Conclusion

With the aim of investigating teachers’ views about teacher training in preparing and supporting them for inclusive education in Thailand, this unit of study was conducted by employing the qualitative approach. All data were collected through the semi-structured interviews with four participating teachers who underwent five-year bachelor of education program and were currently working and teaching in inclusive classrooms. During the interview process, they shared and expressed their opinions regarding not only the recent situations but also other relevant aspects of teacher training towards inclusion within Thai context which resulted in valuable and useful findings.

Towards the end of this chapter, important matters that were found in this study as well as further suggestions for future studies are also presented.

5.1 Teacher training in preparing and supporting teachers to teach within inclusive classroom or setting

In terms of preparing and supporting teachers to teach within inclusive classroom or setting, teachers from this study were satisfied with academic knowledge, especially in relation to their majors of study, which they gained during pre-service teacher training and education as well as some other new aspects of knowledge which they acquired through in-service training. All participating teachers seemed to be fairly confident with the academic knowledge they formerly gained when it came to teaching in practice, especially towards students who were regular. Additionally, an understanding towards the importance of inclusive education as well as the admission process of students with special needs could be perceived from majority of them. However, it turned out that several issues could still be identified through the findings of this unit of study when it came to how both types of teacher training prepared and supported teachers, in general, in order to teach students with special needs under the inclusive setting.

A difference in pre-service teacher training and education’s curriculum among Thai universities was obviously found in this research project according to the fact that three participating teachers did take one subject in relation to children with special needs, inclusive
education and/or special education during their bachelor degree while there was one teacher reported that there was no module in relation to those subject matters offered at all. And again, during their teaching practice, three out of four participants were able to have direct experience with children with special needs while another one reported that there was no direct contact with any of special needs children back then. Though there is an outline that all universities and institutions need to follow as well as requirements that each one of them has to meet when publicly offering a bachelor of education program (Ministry of Education, 2011), those outline and requirements do not seem to come out strictly enforced as supposed since there is still a room for an adjustment to be made by individual university and institution when it comes to curriculum plan and development.

Simultaneously, it was indicated by participants of this study that in-service teacher training they have received thus far did not appear to be very much related to teaching and learning within inclusive classrooms or special needs students in their classes. In fact, this issue should not have been reported since there is the Standard of Quality Assurance for Inclusive Education within Academies (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2012) which is meant to be used as a mutual guideline in respect of the continuing professional development of teachers within any schools where students with disabilities and special needs are included in their schooling system.

**Graduate diploma in special education**

With respect to the graduate diploma in special education course, only one teacher who undertook this course admitted that it was very useful and practical when it came to teaching within her inclusive classrooms. Most of expertise and proficiency she gained through the program were applicable and beneficial for students in her classes, especially for students with special needs. However, she argued that there were some strategies or knowledge which could not be used or applied in the inclusive classroom where students without special needs were also present.

**Recommendations for future improvement of teacher training towards inclusive education in Thailand**

As a result, recommendations for future pre-service and in-service teacher training towards inclusion in Thailand suggested by these participating teachers were mainly about gaining
deeper and more enriched knowledge and skills in teaching students with special needs, creating and using individualized education plan, and managing inclusive classroom. They further pointed out that having had direct experience with this group of students in an actual environment beforehand, especially during the pre-service teacher training and education, should not be overlooked. The given reason was they felt that such experience greatly influenced them in a positive manner on their attitudes towards children with special needs and inclusive education, particularly when teaching in the field.

5.2 Applying knowledge and strategies learned through teacher training

A matter of how teaches did apply and use both knowledge and strategies which they have learned through pre-service as well as in-service teacher training was also relevantly important within this research project. All participating teachers felt that there was nothing much of knowledge and skills that they could use and apply when they were teaching in their inclusive classrooms under the real situations. The reasons for this were that such expertise and proficiency regarding special needs children and inclusive education were not sufficiently provided during pre-service teacher training and education while additional skills and knowledge offered in in-service teacher training were not appropriate to be used and applied for their students, especially those with special needs. Consequently, they had to learn how to differentiate tasks, adapt teaching and learning strategies and adjust achievement criteria themselves in order to meet with the needs and actual ability of all students in the inclusive classrooms.

5.3 Challenges faced by teachers when teaching in practice

Having gone through all issues and matters mentioned above while teaching under inclusive setting in practice, it would be impossible for these teachers to not facing any challenge at all. Therefore, several challenges were pointed out by them. The most common challenge was emotional and behavioral control of students with special needs when they were in classroom. Majority of the participating teachers appeared to be genuinely concerned as they explained that behavioral and emotional outbursts were usually unpredictable and difficult to handle at
times since they could not know immediately what cause or reason for why it happened. Moreover, there were some cases of special needs students who hurt themselves during the outbursts. Another challenge was about incidents of bullying, teasing or arguing between students with and without special needs which these teachers would generally talk things over with students from both sides in order to solve the cases. The last challenge reported by participants of this research project was related to academic achievement and progress of students with special needs. These participating teachers found this issue quite challenging because they realized that this group of students had limited capability when it came to academic aspect and there was not much of help or support they could possibly do or offer at this level to develop academic skills of these children.

5.4 Limitations and Implications of the study

The fact that this study employed qualitative approach as evidently seen, there would be a difficulty in making generalization of the findings which came from the purposely selective group of participating teachers to all Thai teachers (Creswell, 2012). In addition, such findings from this unit of study might be only relevant within this particular setting of the Thai inclusive government school (Creswell, 2012).

In terms of the participants, though a total of four participating teachers seems to be acceptable when it comes to a small-scale empirical study, the collected data would have been more enriched by some means if more participants could be added in and this would have led to more interesting findings with a full of assortment. Moreover, this study would have been more various if participants from other schools could be included due to the fact that there might be a difference in respect of visions and philosophies on which each school would carry that could result in different details of the school setting. However, by having all participants who came from the same school could be advantageous when it came to analyzing data and comparing findings since they were all on the equal basis of standard and setting.

Another point regarding the participants that would be mentioned in this section is related to their majors of study. Even though it was the original intention of this research project to select general teachers whose majors of study could be any but not special education to take part in, it seemed to be slightly unfortunate now that careful observation has been made. The reason being is that this study would have been much more enriched if a well-founded
comparison between teachers with secure background concerning children with special needs and special education and teachers with limited background in those subject matters could be yielded by just adding a few more participants with such direct background in special education and special needs students to the study.

One more important thing that should be noted here is in connection with transcribing procedure and reliability and validity within this study. The fact that there was only one person who both translated Thai transcriptions into English and cross-checked the final version of English transcriptions, this might, by some means, slightly affected the reliability and validity of the research project. Though this happened due to a constraint of time and the person who did the translation was a Thai native speaker which allowed no restriction between two languages during the process, it would have been much more valid and reliable study if there was another qualified person who could, at least, double-check an accuracy of English translations once again.

In relation to implications for the future researches, not only more participants from different schools should be included, but teachers whose major of study is special education should also get involved in case of replicating this topic of study. Besides, it would be very interesting to see the future studies investigate further into the graduate diploma in special education course and specific training in special education that are offered to teachers who do not study in special education as their major field, but would like to teach and work with children with special needs within school setting. Such further investigation will allow researchers and readers to know better about how these course and training prepare those educators to work with children with special needs under the inclusive setting. In addition, deeper understanding about the possible differences between pre-service teacher training and education and the two additional course and training might be probably gained through the further studies. For example, the differences in terms of modules provided through each program, course or training, and some other relevant aspects towards inclusive education in Thailand. On top of that, there is a possibility that the further investigation might shed some light on the particular remark raised through the findings of this unit of study whether extra money funded by Thai government would be one of the main reasons which motivates some teachers to choose to receive such additional training.

All in all, it seems that several problems still revolves around teacher training in relation to preparing and supporting teachers towards inclusive education in Thailand according to the
findings of this study. However, ways of solving some of the problems as well as recommendations are clearly pointed out and suggested by participating teachers who have had direct experience in both types of teacher training in hopes of improving and strengthening Thai teacher training system. For instance, addition of more subjects concerning children with special needs and inclusive education within the curriculum of pre-service teacher training and education should be considered, especially for the prospective teachers whose majors of study are not special education. Also, in-service teacher training in regard to inclusive education and special needs students should be more consistently and practically provided to teachers who are already working in the field.

With the strong and well-developed teacher training system, teachers seem to have better opportunity in keeping their paces with an ever-growing expansion of inclusive education for ‘all’ within the country. Conceivably, this study may act as a small trigger to call for a small attention from relevant stakeholders while its findings may be used further as an initial outset for future development of teacher training towards inclusive education within Thai education system.
References


Appendices

Appendix 1: Approval letter from NSD

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES

Ivar Mørken
Institutt for spesialpedagogikk
Universitetet i Oslo
Postboks 1140 Blindern
0318 OSLO

Vår dato: 13.06.2015
Vår ref: 44057/71/AG
Dens dato
Dens ref

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 14.07.2015. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

- A4057: Teachers’ views about teacher training towards inclusive education
- Behandlingsområdet: Universitetet i Oslo, ved institusjonens øvrige leders
- Deltager: Ivar Mørken
- Studie: Monitir Tveecheiaispapong

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepålitlig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningerne gitt i meldingen, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.


Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, http://pro.osl.no/prosjekt.


Vennlig hilsen

Bjørn Heinrichsen

Audun Løvlie dlf 55 58 23 07
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering
Kopi: Monitir Tveecheiaispapong, 347/121 Phaholyothin Road, Saranennai, Phaythai
10400 Bangkok, 0001 OSLO
Appendix 1: Approval letter from NSD (continued)

Personvernombudet for forskning

Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Utvalget informeres skriftlig og muntlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Informasjonsskrivet er godt utformet.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger Universitetet i Oslo sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet. Dersom personopplysninger skal lagres på mobile enheter, bør opplysningene krypteres tilstrekkelig.


Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det gjøres ved å:
- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger (identifiserende sammenstilling av bakgrunnsopplysninger som f.eks. bested/arbeidsted, alder og kjønn)
Appendix 2: Interview guide

Interview Guide

“Teachers’ views about teacher training towards inclusive education”

I. Please provide your general information
   - Age
   - Education background
   - Experience (work/practice): how long is your teaching experience?

II. Questions
   - During your pre-service teacher training, what have you learned about special and/or inclusive education?
     ➢ What are the aims and reasons for learning about special and/or inclusive education during your pre-service teacher training? (Or why do you think you get to learn about it?)
     ➢ Have you learned anything about students with disabilities, learning disabilities and/or special educational needs during your pre-service teacher training? (Please give examples)
     ➢ Have you learned any methods for special and/or inclusive education during your in-service teacher training? (Please give examples, how?)
   - Throughout your pre-service teacher training, did you think it provide you sufficient knowledge and skills enabling you to teach within an inclusive setting/classroom?
   - How do you assess, identify and provide educational provisions to meet with the needs of individual students in classroom?
   - How do you manage your inclusive classroom?
   - Through in-service teacher training, have you gained any new and/or deeper knowledge, skills, or pedagogy that can be useful and applicable for your class?
   - What will be your view about in-service teacher training in terms of further support and/or ongoing development for all teachers towards inclusive education in Thai context?
- What will be your view about pre-service teacher training in terms of preparing and strengthening all teachers for teaching within an inclusive setting/classroom?

- What kind of experiences have you received through teacher training in relation to academic and/or pedagogical aspects?

- Apart from academic and/or pedagogical knowledge and skills, have there been any other valuable aspects you have learned or gained through teacher training that can benefit you when you are in classroom?

- How do you support children with special needs in classroom?

- How do you create/ generate an inclusive atmosphere in classroom?

- What kind of additional support do you need in order to ensure good quality educational services that meet with the needs of all students?

- What are the challenges you have to face when using/ applying what you have learned from teacher training in classroom?
Appendix 3: Information letter with Consent form

Request for participation in research project

"Teachers’ views about teacher training towards inclusive education”

Background and Purpose

This research project belongs to a master’s dissertation which is part of a master program called Erasmus Mundus Special and Inclusive Education, based at University of Oslo. It aims to investigate the views of teachers about teacher training towards inclusive education within Thai context in order to find out (i) how does teacher training prepare and/or support teachers to teach in an inclusive setting/classroom?; (ii) how do teachers apply the knowledge and/or strategies learned through teacher training?; and (iii) what are challenges teachers face in practice?

The participants will be contacted and selected through personal contacts. This sample is requested to participate because they are teachers who are currently working in inclusive setting/school and had undergone a five-year bachelor program in education.

What does participation in the project imply?

Participation in this project includes interviews which will be conducted individually and last for about 45-60 minutes per session. Throughout each interview, audio recording will be taken place with permission from participants as well as note-taking. Interview questions will concern about participants’ general information and background, and their views/ opinions/ experience about how teacher training prepare them to teach all students in an inclusive classroom/setting in practice.

What will happen to the information about you?

All personal data will be treated confidentially and will be accessed mainly by myself and by my supervisor where appropriate and necessary. All data will be stored safely in my personal laptop which requires password to log on.

Participants’ confidentiality will be remained throughout and after the project. This means that they will not be recognizable in the publication.

The project is scheduled for completion by 31 December 2015.

After the project is completed, all data and recordings will be made anonymous.

Voluntary participation

It is voluntary to participate in the project, and you can at any time choose to withdraw your consent without stating any reason. If you decide to withdraw, all your personal data will be made anonymous.
If you would like to participate or if you have any questions concerning the project, please contact Miss Montira Taweechaisupapong, telephone number: +66 89-2228240.

In case of contacting her supervisor, please contact Mr. Ivar Morken, telephone number: +47 22858123.

The study has been notified to the Data Protection Official for Research, Norwegian Social Science Data Services.

Consent for participation in the study

Dear...........................................................................................................................

You are being invited to participate in the master research project titled “Teachers’ views about teacher training towards inclusive education”. This research project aims to investigate teachers’ views about received teacher training towards inclusion in Thai context. You will be asked to take part in an interview which lasts for about 45-60 minutes. During the session, you will be interviewed about views, opinions and experiences regarding teacher training for teaching in an inclusive setting. The interview will be conducted at your school.

By participating in this research project, you shall be informed and assured the following:

- There will be confidentiality about all information given by participant
- All given information will not be disclosed and/or transferred to other party for any other study and/or project
- It is voluntary to participate in this research project, and participant can withdraw his/her consent without stating any reason at any time
- All given information will be made anonymous after the completion of this research project and/or after the completion of consent withdrawal

I have received information about the project and I am willing to participate

............................................................................................................................

(Signed by participant)  (Signed by participant)