ORIGINAL ARTICLE

PERCEPTION OF STAKEHOLDERS ON SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIT (SEU) AND THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN SCHOOLS WITH SEU IN AMPARA DISTRICT, SRI LANKA

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Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate the perception of stakeholders about the SEU system and its way forward to support inclusive education in the schools which practice the SEU system. The methodology of the study was mixed design (both qualitative and quantitative) and the survey method was used to conduct the study. 27 principals, seven In-Service Advisors (ISA) of Special Education (SE), and 86 SE teachers were selected purposively. Also, 35 parents of children with Special Educational Needs (SENs) were randomly selected for this study. Questionnaires, interview schedules, and focus group discussion schedules were administrated to collect data. The descriptive analysis method was applied to analyze the data. Also, the SPSS-21 version was used to analyze the data. Tables, bar-charts, and pie charts were utilized to interpret the findings of the study. Findings: the educational qualification and appointment type of the SE teachers and educational qualification of principals support to improve the SEU system and improve the inclusive education practices in their schools. Similarly, the 10 years of experience of the SEU system can support inclusive education. The positive perception of the SE teachers, principals, and ISAs SE supports the improvement of the SEU and inclusive education systems. The practices of the SEU system and support given to the SEU system can improve inclusive education practices of the students with SEN in the government schools of the Ampara District. This study suggests the proper guidance for inclusive education practices of students with SEN needs to develop in the schools in the Ampara District.

Key Words: Special Education Unit, Special Needs Education, Integrated Education, Inclusive Education, and Regular Schools

Introduction

The paradigm shift in SE from 'segregated instruction' to 'integrated education' and 'inclusive education' has been part of the discourse of professionals in the field of education worldwide in the last three decades (Hettiarachchi & Das, 2014)[1]. In line with that, inclusive education is considered, a current trend by national governments and international agencies. However, developing countries including Sri Lanka are still in the developing stage of an inclusive education system. Therefore, Sri Lanka needs to design a culturally compatible inclusive education model for the inclusion of all communities that will enable it to keep pace with this global paradigm shift in education. Moreover, provisions show that although there is a positive trend towards the implementation of an inclusive education system, there continues to be a gap in achieving the internationally recommended level of inclusive education in the Sri Lankan education system. Also, the SEU system has been in practice in the Sri Lankan education system since the 1960s, with the expectation of improving the students with SENs in the regular schools. In addition, there are believes that the SEU system supports the implementations of the inclusive education system.

According to the background of the research area, 8462 peoples with disabilities live in the Ampara District. Out of them, 380 children with SEN educate in the 27 SEU system in the regular schools in the Ampara District with the expectation that these SEUs would provide proper education aimed at the development of students with SEN (Eastern Provincial Council, 2019)[2].

However, students with SEN who are accommodated in SEUs rarely participate in inclusive educational activities of the schools in the Ampara District; even though they can learn in an inclusive setup with typically developing students. According to UNESCO (2003)[3], children with disabilities are denied the opportunity to learn with children in regular classrooms. Moreover, according to Perera (2015)[4], the separation of SEUs inside regular schools is the main challenge for establishing an inclusive education system. In order of the above problem, this study investigates the perception of stakeholders about the SEU system and its way forward to support inclusive education in the schools which practice the SEU system.

Literature Review

People with Disabilities and Education: The general thought about children with disabilities is that children with disabilities are 10 times more vulnerable when compared with typically developing students, not attending school. Moreover, even if children with disabilities attend school, they are more likely to drop out before the completion of their school education (UNICEF, 2013)[5]. However, educating students with SEN is a challenge in the world today. In addition, there is a global agreement that all children have the right to be formally educated individually and/or together, including children with SEN (United Nations, 1989 & United Nations, 2008)[6]. Moreover, the Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All (2007), the articles of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 2007)[7], Sustainable Development Goals-2015 (UNESCO, 2015)8 reinforce provisions for education for children with disabilities.

Provisions for Education of the Disabled: In Sri Lanka, some important publications: Sessional Paper - 1943, Jayasooriya Report - 1961, Jean Canmore Report 1962-1965, Five-year Plan 1972/1976, 1st Report of National Commission - 1992, General Education Reforms - 1972,

Premaratne Report - 1979, Educational Reforms - 1979, White Paper - 1981, General Education Reforms – 1997 and National policy on disability for Sri Lanka – 2003 reinforce education of children with SEN. These publications support the implementation of SEU in mainstream government schools (Piyasena, 2003 & Rajapakse, 1991)[9,10], and introduced provisions for integrated education in Sri Lanka.

Special Education Unit: Children identified as having SEN, come to school with a wide range of needs. Some children, with greater needs, may benefit from being placed in a special class in mainstream schools where there are smaller numbers of normal pupils in the class. It is important to have a differentiated curriculum for the special class. The term 'differentiated curriculum' means that teachers adjust their teaching taking into account the children's different needs and abilities. A certain number of these children in these classrooms, who have more complex needs, will have access to individualized education programmes. Children who need additional care may have access to a special needs assistant, where necessary and appropriate (National Council for Special Education, 2014)[11].

In the early 1970s, the Ministry of Education started increasing educational opportunities for these children through integration (with the introduction of the SEU system). In line with that, children who have disabilities obtain an education in Government schools either through inclusion in the ordinary classroom or SEUs attached to normal schools (Ministry of Social Welfare, 2003)[12].

Inclusive Education: Giangreco (1997)[13] identified the following features in the implementation of an inclusive education system. They are collaborative teamwork, a shared framework, family involvement, general educator ownership, clear role relationships among professionals, effective use of support staff, meaningful Individual, Education Plans. Moreover, Winter and O'Raw recommended these measures regarding inclusive education. They are provisions for information, physical aspects, inclusive school policies, and the Individual Education Plan, student interactions, staffing and personnel, external links, assessment of achievement, curriculum, and teaching strategies (Forlin, Chambers, Loreman, Deppeler & Sharma, 2013)[14].

Empirical Review: John, Attanayake & Daskon (2013)[15] suggested that there are people with disabilities in Sri Lanka, and there is a need for conducting research on SEN for disabled children in the Sri Lankan school context. In this respect, Samararatne, Soldatic, and Perera (2018)[16] conducted a Study of disabled children in Sri Lanka and recommended the development of a SE programme for them. The literature review suggests researches should be conducted on the Educational Disability of children in the Sri Lankan context.

Abeywickrama, Jayasinghe & Sumanasena (2014)[17] found out that, there is a need to design inclusive education models to make a paradigm shift within the education system in Sri Lanka. Moreover, Furuta and Alwis (2017)[18] suggest that more training programmes and seminars be conducted on special needs education strategies and the philosophy that can enhance and improve the teachers' professional competence and their attitude for accommodating the students with SEN.

However, the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Sri Lanka has taken necessary action to extend the policy at all educational levels, the national to provincial, to stipulate that a child with

SEN must be attached to the neighborhood regular school. Moreover, the MOE prepared a Concept Paper on Promoting and Developing the Processes of Implementing Inclusive Education in Sri Lanka, to submit to the Cabinet of Sri Lanka, and also prepared a Five Year Plan of Action on Inclusive Education to strengthen the suggestions made through the Concept Paper (Dhanapala, 2009)[19]. The literature shows the findings in relation to the educational needs of the students with SEN.

Aim Of The Study

The study aimed to investigate the perception of stakeholders about the SEU system and its way forward to support inclusive education in the schools which practice the SEU system

Research Questions:

How do stakeholders perceive the SEU system?
How does the perception of the stakeholders support the implementation of inclusive education in the Ampara District?

Methodology

The design of the study was both qualitative and quantitative and a survey method was employed for this study.

Participants: There are 437 regular schools and out of the 27 schools with SEU in the Ampara District. Therefore, all 27 principals of schools were chosen from selected schools. Moreover, 86 special trained teachers who work with children in SEU, 35 parents of children with SEN, and ISAs of SE from seven educational zones were selected for this study. 27 principals of schools 86 special trained teachers, 7 ISAs of SE selected purposively. Moreover, 5 parents of children with SEN from each Education Zone were selected using the lottery random sampling method for this study. Overview of the population and sample of this research is in the following tables – 1 and 2.

Table 1
Population of the Schools with SEU in the Ampara District

Name of the Zones	Number of Schools	No of Schools with SEN Unit	Special teachers	Zonal Education ISA
Kalmunai	64	5	17	1
Sammanthurai	70	3	11	1
Akkaraipattu	71	3	10	1
Thirukkovil	44	3	05	1
Dehittakandiya	47	4	16	1
Maha oya	40	1	02	1
Ampara	101	8	25	1
Total	437	27	86	7

(PD office, Eastern Province-2018)

Table 2
Population and Samples

Participants	Population	Samples
Principals	27	27
Teachers	86	86
Additional Directors/ISAs	7	7
Parents of Students with SEN	373	35

The following figure-1 displays the location and pattern of the research area, Ampara district.
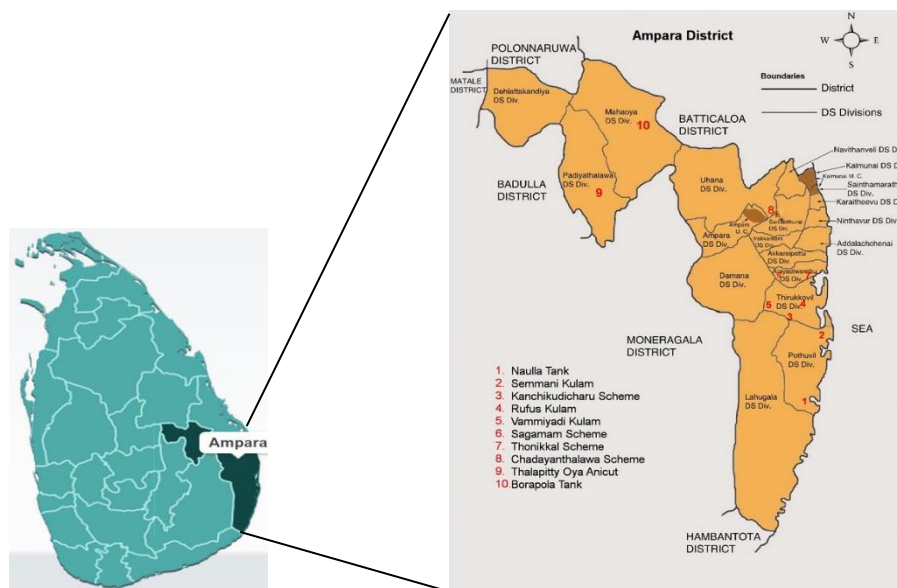

Figure 1 Map of the Ampara District

Data Collections: Questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions were the techniques used for collecting data in this study. Questionnaires: particularly, were utilized for collecting data from teachers and principals. Interviews were conducted for collecting data from principals and ISAs. Focus group discussions were conducted for collecting data from parents of children with SEN.

Validation of the Instruments: The questionnaires were piloted on 15 SEU teachers (randomly selected) from four schools in the Batticaloa district and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .864. The Cronbach's alpha value of all the contents exceeded the minimum required value of 0.7.

The interview schedule and focus group discussion schedule were validated by three experts in the field of special needs education from the Open University of Sri Lanka.

Ethical Consideration: In this study, permission was sought from all the participants taking part in the interviews, and the focus group discussions. Accordingly, the Provincial Director of Education (PDE) of the Eastern Province granted permission to conduct the data collection in the government schools of the Batticaloa district. Also, ADs of SE of all seven educational zones in the Ampara district agreed to conduct the data collection in the government schools of their educational zone. Questionnaires contained an introduction about this research and agreement of each respondent also was taken before answer the questions in the questionnaires.

Fictitious and Coding:

Fictitious and coding are commonly used in educational researches instead of the real names of the participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2019)20. Therefore, teachers and principals were coding during the data gathering in this study. According to that, 27 principals were coded P1 to P27, 86 teachers were coded T1 to T86, interviewed ISAs were coded as ZA to ZG, and parents were coded as Pa1 to Pa30

Findings and Discussions

The data collection instruments such as questionnaires, interview schedules, and focus group discussion schedules were used to collect data in order to elicit the answers for the setout research questions in this study. Personal information of teachers and principals, perceptions of teachers, principals, and background of the SEU system, Additional Director/ISA Special Education and parents of children with SEN, and perception about the implementation of inclusive education were analyzed.

Table-3 illustrates appointment types of teachers, the gender distribution of the principals and teachers, and the experience of SEU teachers. Accordingly, 93% of the teachers are appointed as permanent teachers and 7% of teachers are appointed as temporary teachers for working in SEU. Additionally, 92.6% of the principals are males, on the other hand, 87.2% of teachers who teach in SEU are females. Furthermore, 7% of special trained teachers have 13 or more years of experience in SEU. 32% of teachers have 10-12 years of experience, 27% of teachers have 7-9

years of experience, 13% of teachers have 4-6 years of experience and 21% of teachers have less than 13 years of experience in teaching in SEUs.

Table 3
Background of the Teachers and Principals

Type of Appointment		Gender-Based Distribution				Experiences as an SEU Teacher				
		Principal		Teachers						
Permanent	Temporary	Male	Female	Male	Female	≤ 3 years	4–6 years	7-9 years	10-12 years	≥13 years
93%	07%	92.6%	07.4%	87.2%	12.8%	21%	13%	27%	32%	07%

The data in relation to the professional qualification of teachers and principals who work in the selected schools are shown in figure-2.
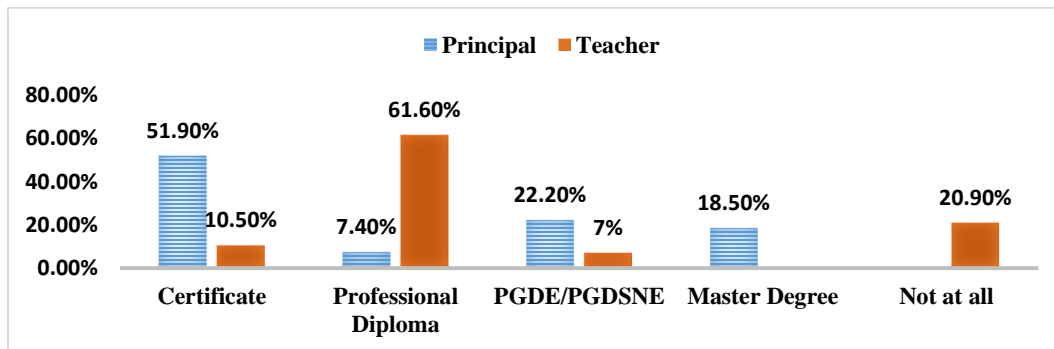

Figure 2 Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Principals

Accordingly, 61.6% of SEU teachers have the National Diploma in Special Education, 10.5% of the teachers have the Certificate in SE and 7% of teachers have either the Postgraduate Diploma in Special Needs Education or the Postgraduate Diploma in Education, however, more than 20% of teachers do not have any professional qualification.

On analyzing the professional qualifications of the principals it was found that 18.5% of principals have a Masters Degree. 22.2% of principals have either Postgraduate Diploma in Education or Postgraduate Diploma in Special Needs Education. 7.4% of teachers have the National Diploma in Special Education. Also, 51.9% of principals have a certificate qualification. When both teachers' and principals' professional qualifications were compared it was found that most of the teachers have the Diploma in SE and most of the principals have certificate qualifications in the field of education. Theeb, Muhaidat, & Al-Zboon (2014)[21] revealed competencies of professionals in relation to the students with SENs have correlations with the

achievement of students with SEN. Similarly, the competencies and educational qualifications of the special trained teachers and principals in the Ampara District can support the improvement of the students with SEN in the SEU system.
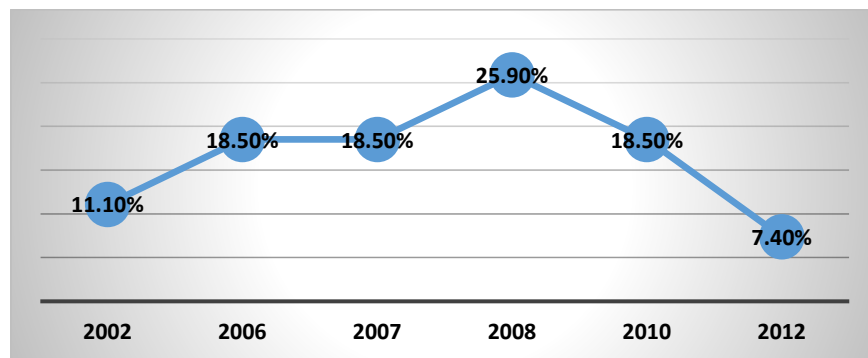

Figure 3 Years of Establishment of SEUs in the Ampara District

According to the figure-3, the year 2008 can be mentioned as the highest number of SEUs established in the Ampara District that is, seven (25.9%) SUEs. Moreover, in each following year 2006, 2007, and 2010 five (18.5%) SEUs, in 2002 three (11.1%) SEUs, and in 2012 two (7.4%) SEUs were established in the Ampara District. Altogether 27 (100%) SEUs were established during the decade from 2002 to 2012. The establishment of the SEUs increase in the Ampara District and it will improve the educational opportunities of students with SEN in regular schools.

Advantages of the SEU System:

The following figure-4 displays responses of teachers on the needs of the SEU system for the improvement of students with SEN. Accordingly, 20 (30.2%) teachers strongly agreed, 31 (36%) teachers agreed, 25 (29.1%) teachers were neutral and meanwhile, four (4.7%) teachers disagreed. Overview, the majority 57 (66.2%) of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the benefits of the SEU system for the improvement of students with SEN. It shows that their stakeholders believe that the SEU system is a good opportunity for the improvement of students with SEN in regular schools.
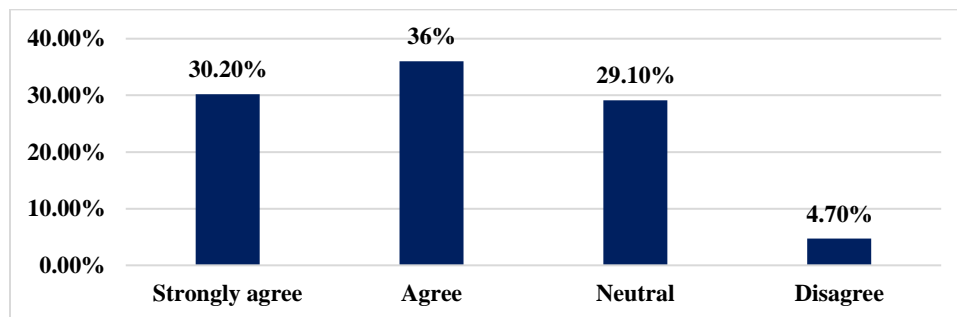

Figure 4 Responses of Teachers on Benefits of SEU System in Regular Schools

Moreover, according to the figure-5, responses of principals on the statement of 'SEU system allows improving the students with SEN in the regular classroom with regular students', Accordingly, 18 (66.6%) principals either strongly agreed or agreed and six (22.2%) principals were neutral regarding the statement. It seems the majority of principals have a positive perception about the SEU system in line with the development of students with SEN with typically developing students. Also, when comparing principals' responses and teachers' responses, the findings are mostly matching. It shows that the SEU system supports the improvement of the students with SENs in the schools and this positive perception of principals and teachers may be a preliminary step in inclusive education practice.
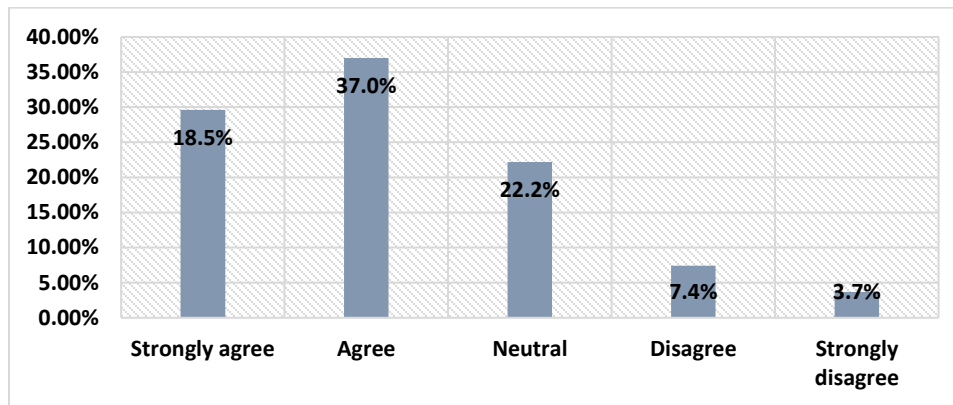

Figure 5 Responses of Principals on Benefits of SEU System in Regular Schools

ISAs' Perception about SEU Practices:

ISAs of special education responded to the question regarding the practice of SEU in their educational zones. Three ISAs responded regarding SEU practices of their educational zones. According to their responses, the SEU system in their educational zones is practiced at a satisfactory level. For instance, the ISA from 'ZB' stated, "…special education units are functioning well in my educational zone…", the ISA from 'ZE' expressed, "…I am satisfied regarding the cooperation of professionals in our educational zone and it helps for the smooth function of the units…", and the ISA from 'ZA' stated, "…special education teachers do their job at their best…". Similarly, all the ISAs mentioned that they are conducting training and monitoring programmes, model class practices for teachers, in order to enable them to identify the educational needs of students with disabilities. Moreover, they said that all schools with SEUs in their educational zones are supported by an NGO named Ampara Special Needs Network (ASNN) for professional development. In contrast, Woods, Morrison, and Palincsar (2018)[22] revealed, most stakeholders rely on elementary-level educators to identify students with exceptionalities; and administrators are still challenged by perceptions that general and special education are two separate systems and this contradiction of the finding raised may be the educational background of countries.

Improvements of SEU Systems

In addition to that, ISAs for special education were responded about the improvements of SEU systems in their zones. Three ISAs responded about the improvement of SEU in their zone. Their responses are as follows. ISA from zone 'ZE' stated, "…we are conducting caretaker counseling sessions for parents. It is good for their children's well-being. At the sessions, we are discussing with parents how to support children in their learning and there is a good parent's cooperation…", ISA from zone 'ZG' stated, "…now we are developing individual education plans for children with special needs…", and ISA from zone 'ZB' stated, "we included new topics for professional development programmes, those topics helped to develop knowledge and skills among teachers regarding curriculum adaptations and now we are planning to implement district-level curriculum adaptation programs". It is evident from the above responses that the ISAs make provisions to improve the SEU system in the Ampara District. A similar finding revealed by Aron and Loprest (2012)[23] is that special needs education has given children with disabilities much greater access to public education, established an infrastructure for educating them, helped with the earlier identification of disabilities, and promoted greater inclusion of these children alongside their nondisabled peers.

The following figure-6 shows teachers' responses to the statement of 'SEU system supports the improvement inclusive education system'. Analyzed data shows 73 (84%) teachers responded positively (yes) and 14 (16%) participants responded negatively (no). The majority of the participants positively responded to the statement. It shows the SEU system supports the implementation of inclusive education in the schools. Frieden (2004)[24] revealed, there is strong support for increasing expectations for students with disabilities and helping them to improve their academic outcomes. This finding ensures the integration education system support to improve the social skills and academic achievement of a student with SEN. Furthermore, Lopez (1996)[25] found, in none of the schools, children with disabilities/special educational needs were rejected by their peers. Most teachers and principals in the study are willing to support inclusive education if they are provided with skills training on inclusive education, time for planning, and necessary resources in Sri Lankan schools. The finding of the present study confirmed by above-mentioned findings.
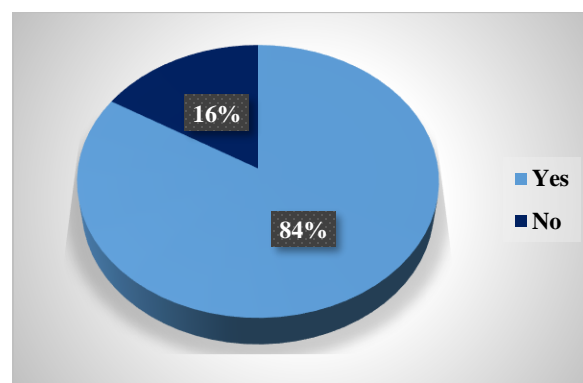

Figure 6 SEU Supports for the Implement of Inclusive Education System

At the focus group discussion, parents also expressed their perception of the support of the SEU system in the development of their children. According to the responses of the parents, Responses of Parents on Development of Students with SEN in SEU System: parents of children with SENs responded about the development of their children in the SEU system. Accordingly, six parents of children with SENs stated, about the socialization of their children. For illustration, the 9th parent of a child with SENs expressed, "…now my child builds up relationships with peers. This happened after the child was admitted to the special education unit. There are lots of activities inside and outside of the school for socialization. My child socialized to a certain level…"

Moreover, three parents expressed on the academic development of their children. For instances, 26th parent of a child with SENS stated, "…After studying in this unit, my child shows improvement in reading and writing skills. Now he can talk…", 19th parent of a child with SENs expressed, "…Our children participate in extra-curricular activities with regular classroom students. It helps in the total development of our children…", and 21st parent of a child with SEN expressed, "Our children with SEN love to go to school now". In line with parents' responses, the SEU system supports their children's socialization, developing academic skills and extra-curricular skills and total development of their children. The students with SEN are gradually improving in social and academic activates due to the integration and educational intervention of the school community (Maria & Nikolaos, 2017)[26]. It confirms and shows the similarity with the finding of the present study.

Inclusion of Students with SEN in the Normal Classroom:

During the interviews and focused group discussions, principals and parents were responded regarding their views on inclusive education and they expressed their views on inclusive education. Accordingly, the principal from school '17th school' stated, "…it's an instructional process that is conducted, centered on students with SENs with extra resources, additional training and adapted curriculum in the regular classroom…", principal from school '26th school' expressed, "…we accommodate all students both SENs and without SENs in a regular classroom without discrimination…", principal of school '14th school' illustrates, "…inclusion of students with SENs is a necessity because it is a goal of the SEU in our school…", and principal from school '21st school' articulated, "…we have provisions for inclusive practice in our schools and we are practicing it…". The above-mentioned findings show, there are provisions to improve the inclusive education practices in the regular schools with SEN system. Also, it confirms the positive perception of school principals' to educate students with SEN in their schools. Emam and Alkharusi (2018)[27] revealed school leaders perceive more strongly than teachers that the governmental formal educational system and academic curriculum as the main causal factors for students with SENs. It ensures the findings of the present study.

In contrast to the above ideas, the principal from '11th school' stated: "…Inclusion is impossible in our school because only deaf and mute students are accommodated in our school…". It shows the negative perception of the principal about the implementation of the IE practices in their school.

Parents also voiced their opinions on the inclusion of children with SENs in the normal classroom. Accordingly, 2nd parent of a child with SEN expressed, "…my child with SENs gradually improved in knowledge and skills. Thus, if they are included in the normal classroom they will get the opportunity to develop more…", 22nd parent of a child with SENs stated, "…My child with SEN developed in social activities and extra-curricular activities. Thus, if he is included in the normal classroom, he will be developed in academic activities as well…", 28th parent of a child with SENs expressed, "…all the teachers have to develop their competencies about the students with SEN before including our children into the inclusive classroom…". 18th parent of a child with SENs stated, "…inclusive classroom will support to my childhood education and socialization of my child; it will be an opportunity for my child to socialize…". It confirmed that parents of children with SEN have positive perceptions about the future inclusion of their children in the normal classroom. A similar finding revealed by Gasteiger-Klicpera, Klicpera, Gebhardt, and Schwab (2013)28 that parents of children in inclusive classes were satisfied with their children's schooling than those of children in special schools. It confirmed parents' positive perception about the schooling of their children with SENs in the regular schools of the Ampara District.

How best, practices of SEU system support to implement Inclusive Education.

Participants were responded on 'best practices that support to develop inclusive education'. The following figure-7 shows the responses of teachers. According to the data, 83 (96%) teachers positively (yes) responded and four (4%) teachers negatively (no) responded. It seems that the SEU system supports developing inclusive education in the Ampara District.
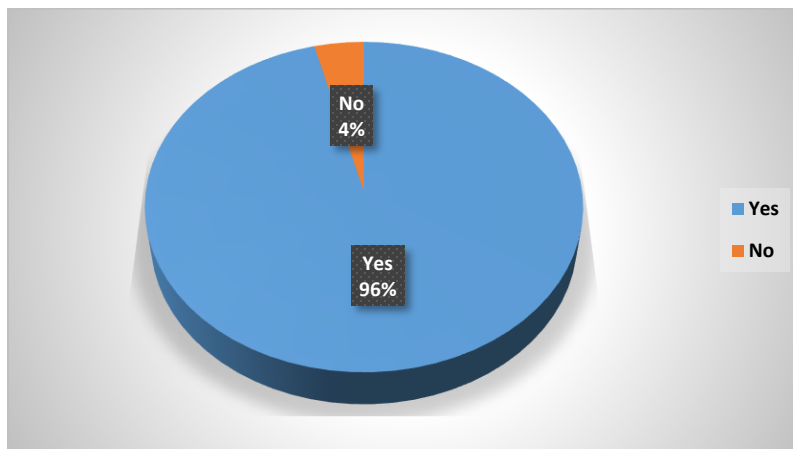

Figure 7 Support of SEU to Implement the Inclusive Education System

Principals responded to questions regarding the best practices that support developing inclusive education and various ideas were shared by the principals.

All principals stated that the support of teachers is the most important factor for practicing inclusive education systems. For instance, a principal from school '21st school' expressed, "…support of a teacher of SEU is necessary for the practice of inclusion in our school…", three principals highlighted that the identification of children with SNE is more important for practicing

inclusive education in their school. For illustration, the principal from school '6th school' stated, "…teachers in the SEUs support to identify students with SENs and their needs and after developing them they are enrolled in inclusive setup…", and six principals stated that the commitment of teachers is more important in inclusive education practices. For instance, the principal from school '14th school' expressed, "…commitment of teachers of both SEU and regular classroom is necessary for inclusive education…". According to the principals' responses, teachers' commitment is playing a vital role in the education and inclusion of students with disabilities in their school. A similar finding of a study conducted by Faas, Smith, and Darmody (2018)[29] revealed a better understanding of the importance of leadership and teachers in shaping a school inclusive climate that promotes a sense of belonging for all the students. Also, the findings confirmed the importance of the teachers' and principals' roles in the improvement of inclusive education in the schools.

Experiences in inclusive education practices

Principals responded regarding their own experiences on inclusive education practices in the school. According to their responses, four principals expressed their works to improve the inclusive practices. For illustration, the principal from school '17th school' voiced, "…some students have been attached to normal classrooms and they get supports from SEU teachers in this school…", principal of school '26th school' stated, "…one student sat the O/L exam last year and obtained a pass result. He was accommodated in the inclusive setup…", and 6th school's principal explained, "…students with SENs integrate with regular classroom students during extracurricular activities in our school…". These findings ensure school principals have measures for inclusive education is practiced in their schools.

Moreover, seven principals stated that SEU improves students and sends them to the inclusive classroom. For instance, the principal from school '17th school' stated, "…we have a practice that, when students with SEN improve in their social skills and learning skills in the SEU system, they will be attached to the inclusive setup in future…". According to their responses, principals get supports from the SEU system to improve the students with SENs and included them in the inclusive setup. These findings illustrate the principals' commitment to improving the students with SEN in their school with the support of the SEU system and inclusive education practices. Sider, Maich, and Morvan (2017)[30] revealed school leaders/principals are central to the shaping of inclusive school cultures. Also, this finding confirmed the finding of the present study. During the interview, ISAs were responded about the support of the SEU system to improve the inclusive education system. The majority of the ISAs responded that the SEU system supports improving inclusive education practice. SEU is the place for improving students with SENs. For instance, ISA from zone 'ZC' ascertained, "…we sent some students to the full inclusive classroom from SEU…". It shows the ISAs' commitment of improve inclusive education practices in regular schools with the support of the SEU system.

Moreover, the ISAs expressed ideas regarding the improvement of the inclusive education system through the SEU system. They expressed that developing awareness among stakeholders on special needs education, zonal level policy, and plan should be developed to practice SEU and Inclusive Education systems. Assessment should be taken individually, and IEP should be practiced, all teachers have to gain knowledge and skills on inclusive education practices. For

instance, ISA from zone 'ZB' said, "…SEU should be separated into two classes according to the severity of SEN-whoever at a mild level in one and the severe level in two…". Kesälahti (2014)[31] revealed the role of the administration is to create a working culture and resources so that this is possible. In addition, there needs to be firm guidance in the legislation and curricula since they provide the framework for school work. These practices can make, better inclusive education in schools.

The following figure-8 explains the opportunities to improve the integration and inclusive education system in the Ampara District.
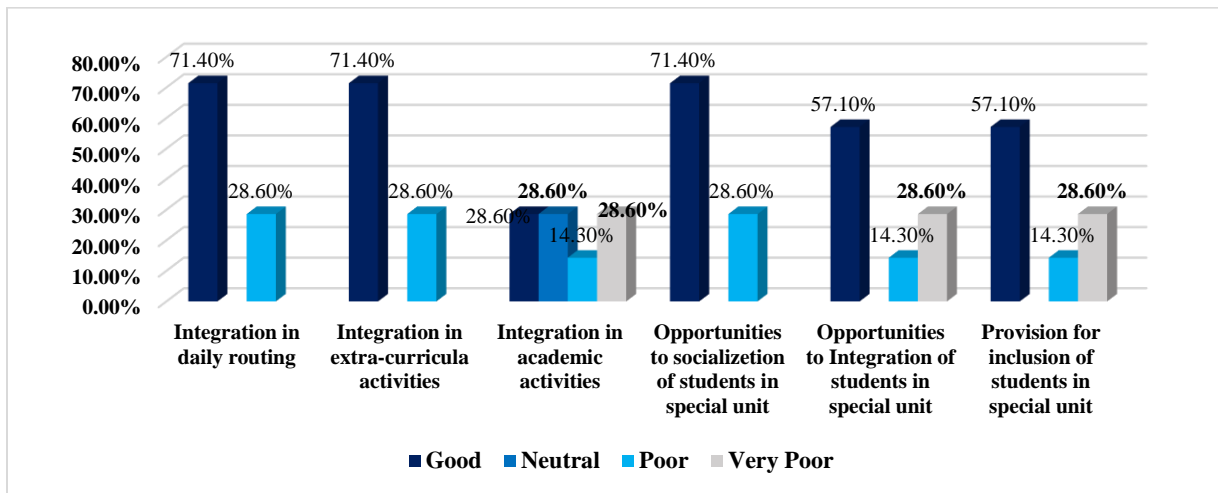

Figure 8 Opportunities to Improve the Integration and Inclusion of Students of SEUs

According to the analyzed data, 19 (71.4%) schools have good integration in daily routine activities, extracurricular activities, and opportunities for the socialization of students of SEU, 15 (57.1%) schools have good opportunities to integrate SEU students and provisions for inclusion of students in SEU. It proves the improvement of the SEU system in the Ampara District. However, eight (28.6%) schools only have good practice for integration in academic activities. They are like labs for the SEU practice in the Ampara District. Tichá, Abery, and Kincade (2018)[32] selected strategies that promote instructional, social, and psychological inclusion (e.g., response to intervention, inclusive service-learning, guided reading, and incremental rehearsal) that are discussed in detail. Potential adaptions and adoption of these strategies are suggested in order to assist in promoting inclusion within the Czech education system. This finding confirms the findings of the present study.

Conclusion:

The educational qualification and appointment type of the SE teachers and educational qualification of principals support to improve the SEU system and improve the inclusive education practices in their schools. Also, the 10 years of experience of the SEU system can support the inclusive education practices of the students with SEN in the government schools in the Ampara District.

The positive perception of SE teachers and principals of the schools with SEUs can support the improvement of the SEU system and inclusive education practices of the students with SENs in the regular schools of the Ampara District. Also, the positive perception of the ISAs on the SEU system and their role in relation to the SEU system might support the improvement of the inclusive education practices in the schools of the Ampara District.

The practices of the SEU system and support to the SEU system can improve the inclusive education practices of the students with SEN in the government schools of the Ampara district. Also, the practices in relation to the inclusive education practices of students with SENs are evidence of the inclusive education practices of the students with SEN in the schools of the Ampara district.

Recommendations:

Proper guidance for inclusive education practices needs to develop for educating students with SENs in the schools. IEP practices, policies for inclusive education practices, collaboration mechanisms for inclusive practices should be followed by the school in the Ampara District. Is it also important that an internationally recommended level is to be followed by schools in the Ampara District.

Future study: A study can be conducted considering how the SEU system operates in regular schools and its future possibilities for supporting the inclusive education system in the entire country. Also, the challenges with inclusive education practice are one of the areas for further research.

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