Title	Local Concepts and Perception of Disability in the Rural Philippines : Bridging Inclusive Education with the Community
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論 文 内 容 の 要 旨

Many people with disabilities, around the globe, continue to be unserved or underserved in education. According to the United Nations Development Program, there are more than 600 million people with disabilities in the world. More than three quarters of these people live in developing countries, where poverty is very common (UNESCO, 2003). In the Philippines, the National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons (NCWDP) reported that approximately 1% of the Filipinos have a disability. Of this number, 75% - 85% live in rural areas (Agcaoili, 2000).

Relatively few studies have explored community perception of disability and inclusive education. In an Australian study, respondents felt uncomfortable interacting with individuals with disabilities and this was due mainly to their lack of disability knowledge. Only 17% of the samples knew a lot about disability (Disability Services Queensland, 2000). On the other hand, parents of children with disabilities expressed concern that the needs of their children may not be met due to perception of the society (Clement & Bigby, 2008). Moreover, in a study done on learning about happiness from the underprivileged groups, Robison (2007) emphasized that negative attitudes are one of the main impediments towards achieving normal lives of people with disability. Examples of negative attitudes include derogatory concepts (Rusch et. al, 1995), beliefs that they have a lesser position in society (Horner-Johnson et al., 2002) or that they have a low capacity to contribute due to their disability (Kennedy, 2001). These reviews of literature clearly show how parents' and community's perceptions influence the success of inclusion.

In the Philippines, the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons 1992 took the standpoint of addressing issues of disability as a human rights and development issue.　However, while this policy were already written and passed as a law, researches showed that the concept of inclusive education is at a slow pace (Quijano, 2000).　It may be true that a developing country has limited resources available for fully employing policies, but there may also be socio-cultural factors affecting the successful implementation.

This study explores Filipino perception of and local concepts on disability in selected rural communities and investigates whether these have effects on the uptake of inclusive education services. Specifically, it aims 1) to identify Filipino local concepts such as myths, superstitions, stories and other concepts on disability; 2) to investigate and compare the local concepts and perceptions of a) families of children with disability and b) the people in the rural communities; and 3) to examine whether these expressed local concepts and perception affect the uptake of inclusive education services.

The study was conducted in the rural communities of Bocohan, Barra, Barangay 1, Cotta and Domoit in Lucena District, Province of Quezon, Philippines. Statistics revealed that Quezon registered the most number of people with disabilities (Philippine Statistical Yearbook, 2010). The study was implemented from September – October 2011 and April 2012. A qualitative research -- employing focus group discussions (7 sessions) and semi-structured interviews with respondents from the community (160) and family (40) -- was conducted to solicit a broad-based perspective on perceptions of and local concepts on disabilities.　Each interview and discussion lasted 40-60 minutes. The respondents were chosen through multi-stage sampling techniques – quota, cluster and purposive.

A number of themes emerged identifying the local concepts regarding the origins of disability. Most Filipinos in the rural communities perceived disability as a blessing from God (94%). They also believed that when a pregnant woman looked at some disabled people (84%) and consulted witchcraft (78%), disability was more likely to occur. Punishment of their previous sins (77%), the curse of ancestors (76%) and looking at rare animals (75%) were also some of the other most common concepts. Moving on, many families seek medical help (68%), prayer support (53%) and traditional help (45%) when disability was discovered. It is interesting to note that those believing in traditional help (witchcraft) would also seek medical help. Believing in Christian teachings did not refuse witchcraft and other superstitious beliefs. However, the numbers here are too small to make wide generalizations, and cannot indicate a possible trend. In general, myths and misconceptions about children with disabilities exist in the community, even in the family.

Two important themes emerged from families of children with disabilities when asked about their perception of disability. The first theme was about issues within the family with five sub-themes discussing 1) difficulty at home, 2) the burden of sending to school, 3) health-monitoring difficulty, 4) security and safety issues, and 5) financial needs. The second theme was about issues within the community with sub-themes discussing issues on 1) discrimination, 2) communication barrier and 3) parents' concerns for the future. On the other hand, when the community members were asked about their perception of disability, they pointed out themes discussing 1) problems of delegating the care giving role in the family, 2) issues on derogatory terms used to refer to persons with disabilities, 3) challenges on social rejection and abuse and 4) the feeling of pity and concern.

Furthermore, three themes --- social, educational and psychological-- were formed from the statements of parents and community respondents when asked about inclusive education. Those in the community who supported inclusive education had less negative perception but had more positive expectations of it. This finding suggests that there is an importance in neutralizing, if not combating negative views by providing information about the future potentials of what inclusive education may bring to a child. Moreover, respondents from the community who have higher levels of education had more positive views about inclusive education, perhaps because their education and training had provided them with more knowledge about disabilities. In addition, those who had previous experience of seeing children with disabilities at school were positive about inclusive education.

Meanwhile, family members, as expected, supported the inclusive education program and had

positive expectations of what it could bring to their children. Despite the positive views about the benefits of inclusion, both respondents knew that there is a lack of support in terms of funding resources for teaching children with disabilities in regular classrooms especially in the rural community. Wishart and Manning's (1996) study stated that parents had less desire to see their child with special need attending a regular school because of the facilities and lack of resources.

The study also revealed that a big number of parents of children with disabilities (60%) insisted that negative concepts or perception did not affect their child's inclusive schooling. Interestingly, should community respondents have a child with disability, more than half of them were willing to send them to inclusive school (53%). Majority of the community respondents have ages 40-69 years old (80%) while majority of the parents of children with disabilities belong to 20-39 years old bracket (86%). A possible generation gap exists, hence the perception of communities and parents differ in this study.

There are a number of limitations to the current research. The local government did not allow the researcher to conduct fieldwork in three important rural villages due to safety reasons. The geographical remoteness of the villages was compounded by constant landslides along the walking trails during the rainy season and poorly developed infrastructures like limited communication facilities, electricity and bridges. It was also unfortunate that a pre-test of the questionnaire was not possible in the time available. Also, the questionnaire was found to be too long – leading to some sections being scantily addressed; one or two questions could have been clearer; and some were found to be redundant or unduly repetitive. In addition, some of the respondents in the study were known personally to their interviewers, a fact that may have biased their responses towards more socially acceptable choices.

This research would like to emphasize its originality in terms of research location. No other study has yet been done in Quezon in exploring the local concepts, disability and inclusive education. Having been cited as the province with the most number of registered people with disabilities in the country, Quezon qualifies as an appropriate representative in understanding the rural scenario in the Philippines and is thus selected as the location for this study.

Certain characteristics considered unique in Philippine rural settings were found in this endeavor. In contrast to the literature cited earlier, this study revealed that the existing negative local concepts and beliefs need not be eliminated as these are part of the community's rich culture since these negative views do not affect the uptake of inclusive education. Negative perceptions almost do not affect parents' willingness and decision to let their children attend school. Furthermore, many Filipinos perceive disability negatively but they are more likely to do positive actions towards children with disabilities. As expected, religion plays an important role, however, believing in Christianity does not stop people from believing in traditions (healers, superstitions, witchcraft, etc). Lastly, this study revealed that one of the barriers is the use of English language in the rural communities. The term "inclusive education" has no equivalence in Tagalog. Therefore, it is difficult to interpret and understand in the Philippine rural context.

The biggest contribution of this research in the Philippine society is --- asking parents and the community to share their beliefs or concepts about what caused a child's disability could be a useful first step in understanding their choices and expectations of early intervention procedures and of attending inclusive school. Since the result of this study deviates from other studies, this signifies that certain communities in the Philippines may serve as 'working models in progress' showing how 'negative concepts and perception' and 'high uptake of inclusive education services' may blend together in a rural setting. Following this research, this has opened another area of inquiry for disability researchers, advocacy groups or community-based rehabilitation network to explore and investigate further how successful inclusive education program may exist, be developed and be implemented at any place, whether rural or urban, without eliminating the negative beliefs and concepts of disability. This shall therefore allow children with disabilities the opportunities to study in schools with the feeling of neglect being thrown away; making their life worthy and productive while serving their community.

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論 文 審 査 の 結 果 の 要 旨

本論文は、フィリピン農村部における障害に対する認識とローカル・コンセプトを明らかにし、インクルーシブ教育がコミュニティに与えた影響について考察したものである。フィリピンにおいては、1992年に障害者憲章（the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons 1992）が制定されたが、その実践面では遅々とした進展であった。本研究では、ケソン州農村部において、コミュニティ住民（160人）と障害児をもつ家族（40名）に対する半構造化質問紙調査および7回のフォーカス・グループ・ディスカッションを実施した。家族およびコミュニティ住民は、障害を宗教的あるいは伝統的な信念や価値と深く関連して意味づけしていた。一方、障害に対する否定的な認識と同時に、インクルーシブ教育という施策がコミュニティで展開されることにより人々の意識を変化させつつある現状を、社会的・教育的・心理的側面に配慮しつつ分析した。

本論文は、障害者施策の優れた制度をもつフィリピン社会において、インクルーシブ教育が家族やコミュニティ住民の概念や認識に及ぼす影響をコミュニティの視座で明らかにした点で、フィリピンの障害児教育研究に対して多大な貢献を果たした。また、本研究の独自性と有用性は国際的にも高く評価され、博士（人間科学）の学位授与にふさわしいと判断された。

　今後は、先行研究に対する精緻な批判的分析を行うことにより、障害に対するローカル・コンセプトや認識の変化というグローバルな課題に対する普遍的な追及に取り組むことが期待される。