

Introduction

1. Preface

As a Center for the Asia and the Pacific Program of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID), The National Institute of Special Education (NISE) has been hosting "APEID Seminar on Special Education " since 1981. Since 2002, the name has been changed to "Asia-Pacific International Seminar on Special Education", which has been co-hosted by the NISE and the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO. Last year's Seminar was the Third "Asia-Pacific International Seminar on Special Education" and the 24th Seminar counting from the First APEID Seminar on Special Education held in 1981.

2. The 24th Seminar

The 24th Asia-Pacific International Seminar on Special Education was held from October 12 to 15, 2004. The main agenda was for the participants to report on the states and issues regarding and discuss educational support for children with multiple disabilities with sensory impairments including deafblindness. The Seminar was participated by representatives from 12 countries namely Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

3. Seminar Outline

- 1) Theme
"Educational Supports for Children with Multiple Disabilities with Sensory Impairments including Deafblindness"
- 2) Hosting organizations
The National Institute of Special Education
Japanese National Commission for UNESCO

3) Schedule and venue

Schedule (October 11 – 16, 2004)

Oct. 11 (Mon.): Arrival of participants

Oct. 12 (Tue.): Explanation of outline of and visits to NISE and Kurihama School for Children with Autism, University of Tsukuba, Opening Ceremony, keynote speech

Oct. 13 (Wed.): Country reports

Oct. 14 (Thu.): Country reports, general discussions, Closing Ceremony

Oct. 15 (Fri.): Institutional visit (Yokohama Central Rehabilitation Center for Children)

Oct. 16 (Sat.): Departure of participants

Venue: The National Institute of Special Education

4) Keynote speech

In the afternoon of October 12, the Opening Ceremony was followed by keynote addresses given by Ms. NAKAZAWA Megue, Chief Researcher, NISE, and Dr. Jude Nicholas, Specialist in Clinical Neuropsychology who is conducting researches at Vestlandet Resource Center for the Deafblind/Haukeland University in Norway. Ms. NAKAZAWA spoke on " Development of Deafblind Education in Japan and Its Contribution to Education for Children with Multiple Disabilities " Based on her ample practical experiences in the field of education and guidance for the deafblind children, she specifically talked about the history in Japan of the education for the deafblind children and the contributions that the knowledge gained from such education and guidance have made toward the subsequent education for children with multiple disabilities in Japan. Dr. Jude Nicholas spoke on " Deafblindness and Neuroscience : Educational Implications ". He specifically talked about the outcomes of his researches in the field of neuroscience which included the roles of the brain in the areas of cognition, emotions and physical expressions. He explained the mechanism whereby the brain organizes itself in cases of sensory

deprivation. The participants showed great interests in the development of the guidance methods for the deafblind children that incorporated such findings and knowledge.

5) National reports

The participants from the 12 countries including Japan gave national reports on the 13th and in the a.m. of the 14th. They reported on such matters as statistics on the birth of children with multiple disabilities with sensory impairments including deafblindness, national policies on educational support, the present state and issues of school education, future prospects and case studies. The following persons reported (titles omitted).

Australia:

Dr. Brian Devlin (Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Health and Science Charles Darwin University)

Bangladesh:

Mr. Md. Golam Yahia (Ministry of Education Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka)

China:

Dr. Chen Yunying (Director of Psychology and Special Education Division, China National Institute of Education Research)

India:

Mrs. Neerja Shukla (Professor and Head Department of Education of Groups with Special Needs, National Council of Educational Research and Training)

Indonesia:

Dr. Mochamad Sholeh Y A Ichrom (Professor, the University of Sebelas Maret/Education Manager Directorate of Special Education, Ministry of National Education)

Japan:

Mr. GOKAMI Tetsuo (Research Director, Department for Policy & Planning, the National Institute of Special Education)

Malaysia:

Mrs. Siti Zaharah binti Mat Akib (Deputy Director General of Education, Special Education Department, Ministry of Education)

Nepal:

Mr. Ganesh Prasad Paudel (Section Officer, Department of Education, Sanothimi Bhaktapur)

Philippines:

Ms. Maria Melissa Rossana STA ANA (Guidance Head, Guidance Department Operation Brotherhood Montessori Center INC)

Korea

Ms. Hyun Jin Kim (Senior Education Researcher, Korea Institute for Special Education)

Sri Lanka:

Ms. G L Leela Gunasinghe (Actg. Superintendent, Child Guidance Centre, Department of Social Services, the Ministry of Women Employment and Social Welfare)

Thailand:

Ms. Phonakorn Piratha (Teacher 2, Level 7, Nonthaburi School for the Deaf)

6) General discussions

In the p.m. of the 14th, general discussions were held based on the national reports and concerning the actual state of children with multiple disabilities in the participating countries and the measures taken. The participants generally agreed on the importance of carrying out educational practices backed by theory, and of sharing the outcomes of such practices, in further enriching and improving the educational support for children with multiple disabilities with sensory impairments. To that end, with this Seminar as an opportunity, they agreed to publish a "Journal of Special Education" to promote the information exchange and share the outcomes of educational practices related with special education in the Asia-Pacific region and also to strengthen the networks between the participating countries. They also agreed to follow up on and further develop the discussions carried out in this Seminar.

It was decided for Japan, China, Korea and Malaysia to be in charge of editing this journal, and for Japan to publish its first edition.

A summary of the discussions by the chairperson was followed by the Closing Ceremony.

7) Institutional visit

On the 15th, the participants visited the Yokohama Central Rehabilitation Center for Children (Director: Hara). They inspected the actual scene of individual guidance provided to the area's children with disabilities including those with multiple disabilities with sensory impairments, and facilities such as indoor swimming pool and large play equipment. They heard the Center's operations and the issues that it faced from the person in charge. They showed a great interest in the Center activities, and confirmed that the theories discussed in the keynote addresses were being put to practical application in the actual guidance provided by the Center. In this and other ways, they actively carried out discussions including those with researchers.

The participants left Japan on the 16th.

8) Participants

112 persons participated in the 24th Seminar.

Breakdown:

- a) NISE staff and researchers
- b) Eleven persons from countries other than Japan invited based on recommendation by the respective countries' UNESCO National Committees
- c) Other participants from abroad
- d) Staff of universities and special schools in Japan and parents of children with disabilities

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