A Study of Inclusion

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A Study of Inclusion

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BY

Kelly L. Cook

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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Abstract

Attitudes of 79 educators toward inclusion were investigated in relation to specific job titles, years experience, and knowledge level. Knowledge level was determined by performance on an inclusion quiz. Questionnaires were completed by subjects to determine attitude. The results indicated that performance on the quiz was related to responses on some questions. Those with more knowledge appeared to be in favor of inclusion. This is consistent with past studies. Attitudes were similar across educational disciplines. Years of experience may have some impact on attitude if coupled with other variables. Further investigation of this topic is warranted as it continues to be a popular, educational trend.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Little is known about inclusion—the education reform plan of the ‘90’s. As more research is done, we will be able to reach conclusions about inclusion and decide whether the need to merge special education and regular education is warranted. The Task Force on Inclusion (1994) has collected a number of statistics regarding the extent of inclusive programming. Worldwide, full inclusion programs can be found in Canada and some European countries. At this time, Iowa, California, Colorado, and Vermont all have inclusion policies. In the U.S. Department of Education’s 15th Annual Report to Congress on the progress and implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in November, 1993, it was reported that the number of students with disabilities attending regular classrooms had increased by 6.1 percent from 1985 to 1990. Some 1.6 million students with disabilities attended regular education classes. These 1.6 million students account for approximately one third of the 5 million students with disabilities who attended special education classes and who received related services in 1990.

The Task Force on Inclusion (1994) reported that not only are inclusive programs increasing throughout the world and the United States but also in Illinois. In May, 1994, a questionnaire was conducted by the Illinois School Psychologists Association. Ninety-one percent of Illinois school districts that responded described their programs as being fully inclusive.
Inclusion appears to be a major trend in education today. To better determine whether it is the correct direction to take, an understanding of educators' attitudes and knowledge of inclusion is necessary.

“Inclusive programs are those in which students, regardless of the severity of their disability, receive appropriate specialized instruction and related service within an age-appropriate general education classroom in the school they would attend if they did not have a disability” (Illinois School Psychologists Association [ISPA], 1994).

The above definition is just one of many offered by various educational institutions. It is consistent with the definition offered by the Illinois State Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities, a 15 member panel of professionals, parents and state agency administrators appointed to advise the Governor, the legislature and the State Board of Education on the needs in education for children with disabilities. The aforementioned definition of inclusion is also consistent with definitions provided by the Past Presidents Advisory Council [PPAC] (1993) and attorneys at law--Scariano, Kula, Ellch, and Himes (1993).

Just as various definitions have been created by a number of educational institutions, there have as well been several position statements issued concerning inclusion.

“...The Illinois State Board of Education believes that for students with disabilities, delivery of the specialized instruction and related
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aids and services outlined in each student's individualized education program (IEP) should ordinarily be in the school and class the child would attend if not identified as disabled. Should that regular classroom setting not be individually appropriate, as determined through the IEP process with the family, then an appropriate alternative setting for service delivery must be provided. Removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment should occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes, with the use of appropriate supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily" (Illinois State Board of Education [ISBE], 1993b).

Many professional organizations have issued similar statements. The National Association of School Psychologists [NASP] (1993) advocates the development of inclusive programs and believes that a well-designed inclusive program can offer an alternative to other services on the special education continuum. The Illinois School Psychologists Association [ISPA] (1993), in addition to the aforementioned position, believes that if inclusion is properly implemented, it will not decrease but most probably increase funding requirements for special education. Finally, the Illinois State Advisory Council on the Education of Handicapped Children (1993a) offers a position statement similar to that of the Illinois State Board of Education. In addition, the council recommends that the board ensure that a continuum of alternative placements are offered.
However, there does exist disagreement with the current inclusion movement. In a letter to the members of the Illinois State Legislature and Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Association of the Deaf [IAD] (1993), after reviewing the policy statement of the ISBE regarding inclusion, stated that inclusion is detrimental to the well-being and education of deaf children. They do not believe that the regular classroom is the most appropriate placement for these children. In their position paper, the IAD and the National Association of the Deaf (1993) recommend that Illinois follow federal and state mandates that call for a full continuum of special education services for children with disabilities. This desire as previously mentioned is also supported by other organizations. As well, the Illinois School for the Deaf Parent Organization (1993) supports the position paper presented by the IAD and National Association for the Deaf. They too believe that a full continuum of programs and services should be provided to deaf children. According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990, a continuum of alternative placements should be available to any child. Alternative placements should include: instruction in regular classes; special classes; special schools; home instruction; and instruction in hospitals and institutions (Scariano et al., 1993). The IAD and the National Association for the Deaf (1993) argue that the current inclusion movement has already determined the home school to be the most appropriate placement for children with disabilities. Ultimately, they believe that an adequate education cannot be obtained by deaf children in the regular classroom. According to the Illinois State Advisory Council on the Education of Handicapped Children (1993b),
the requirement of IDEA for a continuum of alternative placements does not favor one setting over another.

The purpose of this study is to determine what the attitudes of those most closely involved in the education system are regarding inclusion. Based on what educators know about inclusion, how do they feel about it? Inclusive programs will work best with the support of all educational personnel. In a study by Brinker and Thorpe (1986) investigating features of integrated educational environments that predicted positive social behavior among students who were severely mentally retarded and students who were not retarded, it was found that school and teacher support for integration accounted for fifteen percent of the variance in rate of social bids to nonretarded students by those who were retarded. Significant predictors of this feature included the amount of support the teacher had from other special education teachers; the amount of support from the building principal; the extent to which the teacher was in favor of integrating students who were retarded with nonretarded students; and lastly, the amount of support from regular education teachers. In a study conducted by Pearman, Huang, Barnhard and Mellblom (1992), investigating attitudes and beliefs about inclusion, they found that the issue of inclusion had created tensions within those school buildings they surveyed. Several areas have acted to impede the successful collaboration between regular and special educators in the development of inclusive settings. Much of the debate and literature revolving around inclusion has been written by educators at the college and university level. It has also been noted that there has been very little participation at the local level. A final impediment is that in order for there to be positive change in
education, all disciplines must be involved. According to Pearman et al. (1992), many times when inclusion is planned and implemented in schools, administrators and teachers are ignored. For all building level persons to accept all students, they should be involved and included in the planning and implementation of inclusion. In discovering educators’ attitudes, it can be determined whether inclusion really is the solution to today’s educational problems.

Literature Review

Merging regular and special education is not a new idea. It has been around since the late ‘60’s and early ‘70’s; however, the solution then was mainstreaming. Mainstreaming refers to the one-way movement of students back into the regular classroom for academic purposes (Illinois State Board of Education [ISBE], 1993a). Children who are mainstreamed are those that are near grade-level academically and socially. Students with disabilities are served in selected general education classes based on the IEP. It is expected that students with disabilities will meet the same requirements for academic and social skills as other students (PPAC, 1993). Mainstreaming many times does not permit students with moderate to severe disabilities to be involved in regular classes. Younger children that have been mainstreamed may never be perceived as belonging to a classroom, and expectations may be lower in special education classes causing the child to be unable to deal with higher expectations placed on him/her within the regular classroom (PPAC, 1993).

Integration, another commonly utilized practice of special education and regular education, refers to the placement of students with disabilities in the regular classroom
for part of the school day for academic instruction, vocational training, and social interaction (PPAC, 1993).

In 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142) was enacted. This act federally mandates that all students are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and that students with disabilities are to be served in the least restrictive environment. According to Scariano et al. (1993) a free appropriate public education consists of educational instruction specially designed to meet the individual needs of a child who is disabled. This educational instruction will be supported by supplementary services that will allow the child to benefit to the greatest extent possible from the instruction. Scariano et al. (1993) add that instruction and services will be paid for at public expense and under public supervision. A FAPE also requires that instruction and services meet the state’s educational standards, approximate the grade levels used in the regular education program, and comport with the child’s IEP (Scariano et al., 1993). This act represented an unprecedented commitment by the federal government that all children with disabilities would receive an individualized education to meet their needs (Scariano et al., 1993).

In 1982, the U.S. Supreme Court interpreted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act for the first time in the Board of Education of the Hendrick Hudson Central School District versus Rowley (Scariano et al., 1993). This case established the two-step inquiry to determine if compliance with the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was maintained. The steps included determining the maintenance of procedural compliance and determining if the child’s IEP was appropriate to provide educational
benefits for the child. This test was created to ensure that a free appropriate public education was being provided.

At this time, too, there were more pleas to merge special education and regular education. In 1986, Madeline Will, the Assistant Secretary of the United States Office of Education, wrote a paper which eventually became known as the Regular Education Initiative (REI). This initiative focuses on encouraging both special and regular education personnel to work together to provide a total education for all students. It puts more responsibility on the regular educator as it calls for him/her to work with children in the classroom prior to referral for specialized instruction outside of the classroom (ISBE, 1993a). REI is a concept and not a legal term. The basic goals of REI are to merge the two separate systems of general and special education. Today in Illinois the focus of REI is two-fold. First, it is hoped that REI will provide those students already identified for special education with the needed supplementary supports and aids. Secondly, REI will focus on reducing the number of students requiring special education through the use of pre-referral interventions (PPAC, 1993).

Besides introducing REI, Will began using the term "learning problem" to refer to children who have learning difficulties. This term included those who are learning slowly, those with behavioral problems, those who may be educationally disadvantaged, and those who have mild specific learning disabilities and emotional problems (Scariano et al., 1993).

In 1990, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142) was reauthorized. This reauthorization amended the act to revise and extend programs in
parts of the act. The 1990 amendments restyled the statute as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (P.L. 101-476) (PPAC, 1993; Scariano, 1993).

The revision of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act continues to entitle all children with disabilities to a free and appropriate education. These children are to be educated in the least restrictive environment to the maximum extent possible. These acts have served to educate more and more children each year in special education (National Association of State Boards of Education [NASBE], 1992). IDEA has created significant opportunities and safeguards for students with disabilities. Both the National Association of School Psychologists and the National Coalition of Advocates for Students (1994) in a recent joint position statement believe that since 1975 all children with disabilities are guaranteed a free appropriate public education, the right to due process, and an individualization of educational programs according to their needs.

The National Association of School Psychologists supports IDEA, but also realized the importance of continued reevaluation of the current educational system. NASP (1993) recognized that the special education system that has evolved under IDEA brings with it a number of problems. First, there exists a referral and evaluation system that is not functioning as it was originally intended to do so. NASP (1993) discussed this problem more in greater depth by detailing the problems currently existing within the evaluation and referral system including: (1) an inability to reliably distinguish between categories of student with disabilities; (2) a lack of evidence that students who are categorically grouped learn differently or are taught differently; and (3) a classification system that lacks reliability, utility, and acceptance by parents and professionals.
Secondly, in implementing the least restrictive environment provisions of IDEA, NASP reported that inequities exist. The restrictiveness of many special education placements according to data show that the child’s disability is not the basis for this placement but rather the configuration of the service delivery system. A third problem NASP discussed in its position statement was the inability of special education programs to provide effective learning outcomes. For example, only 57% of students in special education graduate with a diploma; almost 1 in 5 students labeled as emotionally disturbed are arrested while still in high school; and only 49% of youth who are disabled and out of school aged 15-20 are employed 1 to 2 years after high school (SRI International, 1991).

A final problem listed in the NASP position statement (1993) was that there are overly restrictive special education programs located in separate schools. This results in social segregation and a disproportionate number of students with disabilities grouped together. According to NASP, many parents and professionals feel it is not fair or equitable to make some students leave their own neighborhood to receive an appropriate education. Poor outcomes have been linked to unnecessary segregation and labeling of children (NASBE, 1992).

The National Coalition of Advocates for Students and NASP (1994) in their joint position statement continued to discuss problems revolving around the issue of access to appropriate education. They argued that on the one hand access must be assured for all children who are significantly disabled; however, they assert that some children are being inappropriately labeled as handicapped and consequently placed in special education. This has occurred because of a lack of regular education options, a lack of understanding
of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and the use of inadequate measurement instruments that are used basically for the labeling of children and not for providing information for curriculum and program development.

Once again there is a cry for the merger of regular and special education to solve education’s current problems. In the ‘90’s, this merger is called inclusion. Inclusion is different from REI in that it only provides for students who have already been identified as eligible to receive special education services (Illinois Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities, 1993). For those students not identified, REI emphasizes the use of pre-referral interventions to be used in the regular classroom. However, REI like inclusion also is based on the idea that children already identified receive services in a less restrictive environment.

Unfortunately, the inclusion movement has created some of its own problems. In an effort to promote inclusion and dispense with the aforementioned problems, the ISBE (1993c) offered the following administrative actions. They suggested a public relations and marketing campaign on inclusive education to improve attitudes and heighten expectations. As well, they recommended that the focus should be placed on outcomes and the quality of instruction within the regular classroom. NASP (1993) supported such an action as they suggest the collection of outcome-based data to ensure that both disabled and non-disabled students are making consistent educational progress. Thirdly, the ISBE (1993c) recommended that incentives be provided. They note that Illinois has and can channel federal flow-through funds to districts. The ISBE has done so to date with various discretionary funds. As a result, they have found that districts are showing
greater responsibility for serving students locally. NASP and the National Coalition of Advocates for Students in their position paper support this recommendation. They believe that there needs to be a reevaluation of funding, and advocate for policy and funding waivers for alternative service delivery. A fourth suggestion of the ISBE (1993c) was to alter current funding strategies so that they do not encourage the labeling of students of a restrictive school placement. The position statement of NASP (1993) as well as the joint position statement of NASP and the National Coalition of Advocates for Students agree that the link between funding and placements needs to be cut. A final recommendation of the ISBE (1993c) was that the regulatory, statutory and administrative barriers prohibiting a more inclusive environment be removed. Another important suggestion made is that children's needs should be determined through a multi-dimensional, non-biased assessment process (NASP & National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1994; NASP, 1993).

For regular educators, inclusion means that they will need to develop additional instructional strategies and skills that right now only special educators possess. Many state boards have required all teachers to take a general questionnaire course in special education; however, such courses have been found to be very superficial. They provide no real assistance to teachers in terms of classroom interventions (NASBE, 1992).

The school psychologist, whose role in the past has been one of test-giver, interpreter and reporter of the child's abilities will be enlisted to provide instructional assistance and support to these regular educators. In a questionnaire done by Reschly, Genshaft and Binder (1987), most practitioners felt that they needed more training in
interventions including instructional techniques within regular education classrooms for both learning and behavior problems.

Few studies have investigated general educators' attitudes toward accommodating students with disabilities (McIntosh, Vaughn & Schumm, 1993). McIntosh, Vaughn and Schumm (1993) did examine how general education teachers' behaviors toward mainstreamed students with learning disabilities compared with those students without disabilities. They found that students with learning disabilities are treated very much like other students. This is both positive and negative for students with learning disabilities. On the positive side, students are accepted by the teacher, treated fairly and involved in the same activities and use the same materials as other students. However, instruction has not been differentiated to meet the needs of these students. Through observations of learning disabled children, McIntosh et al. (1993) found that they infrequently ask the teacher for help, do not volunteer to answer questions, participate in activities less, and interact with the teacher and other students at a lower rate. It was found that even teachers who are considered to be effective teachers of learning disabled children make fewer adaptations to meet the special needs of students (McIntosh et al., 1993). Baker and Zigmond (1990) conducted a questionnaire of an elementary school to determine the extent to which accommodations were made for individual differences. According to observations, interviews, and surveys, the overall climate of the school was one of conformity. Curriculum and instruction was overwhelmingly undifferentiated and was mostly large group in nature. Baker and Zigmond (1990) found that teachers considered most adaptations to be desirable and deemed all adaptations to be more desirable than
feasible. Those adaptations thought to be the most feasible by teachers were those that related to the social or motivational well-being of the student, as well as those that required the teacher to make little adjustment with instruction. Teachers rated three adaptations as most feasible: providing reinforcement and encouragement; establishing a personal relationship with the disabled child; and involving learning disabled students in whole-class activities (Baker & Zigmond, 1990).

In a study by Bacon and Schulz (1991), strategies were identified that were most often used by effective regular classroom teachers in adapting instruction to meet the needs of those students with mild handicaps. Both elementary and secondary teachers were surveyed. Elementary teachers reported using individualized instruction and receiving special education teachers’ support more often than secondary teachers. Both groups used instructional modifications. Teachers reported that those modifications they used less frequently were ones that required equipment or coordination with people outside the classroom. Those modifications that could easily be implemented within the classroom were reported to be used more frequently. These modifications required little extra time, little change in the teacher’s usual teaching practices, and little additional assistance.

Instructional strategies that can be implemented within both small and large groups and that all educators should be aware of include the following: demonstration; role playing; learning centers; cooperative learning groups; hands-on activities; major projects; community-based instruction; experientially-based instruction; computerized instruction; games and mentorships (Ford, Daven & Schnorr, 1993). According to Ford
et al. (1993) these strategies have been found to be much more effective than traditional lecture in teaching a group of diverse learners. According to Halvorsen (1993) cooperative learning groups are the most frequently used strategy within inclusive classrooms. One reason is that they lead to less need for multiple adaptations for disabled students. In classrooms that are less individualistic and competitive and more cooperative, students with disabilities have more opportunities (Halvorsen, 1993).

Collaborative strategies that have been used in the past are Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), Making Action Plans (MAPs) and Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH). An IEP list is a written statement for a child who is exceptional. It provides a statement of the child’s present levels of educational performance; annual goals and objectives; specific special education and related services; the extent of participation in the regular education program; the projected dates for initiation of services; anticipated duration of services; appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures; and a schedule for annual determination of short-term objectives (PPAC, 1993). An IEP is required by law for any child receiving special education services.

MAPs bring together all key players in the child’s life to create an action plan that can be implemented within the regular classroom. Although not an IEP, results can be used on an IEP (Forest & Pearpoint, 1992). Unlike an IEP, a MAP is not required by law. MAPs are basically used for the purpose of including students who are exceptional in the regular education class. Consistent use of MAPs has found them to be successful (Forest & Pearpoint, 1992). In creating a child’s MAP, a series of eight questions is
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asked: What is a MAP?; What is the person’s history?; What are your dreams?; What are your nightmares?; What are the person’s strengths?; What does the person need?; and What is the plan of action? (p. 26-28). Through these questions, educators are able to arrive at answers that will help them to better understand the child’s background and problem. By talking with the parents and the individual child, educators get an idea as to what the child’s life goals are and what they are afraid of happening if the child receives no help. Necessary supports are also discussed in response to these questions and in general, what each person present can do in helping the child to reach his/her dream or life goals.

Whereas MAPs deal more with life skills as goals, PATHs concentrate more on academic goals. A PATH is much more similar to an IEP than a MAP. It is essentially an additional planning tool that can be used in conjunction with information from the MAPs process to develop a strategic plan of action. The facilitator asks those present to situate themselves in a positive future, to picture it clearly and then to think backwards (Forest, Pearpoint, & Snow, 1992). So educators, parents and anyone else present examine the goal or future and then think where the child is now in terms of that goal and what needs to be done to achieve that goal. The group decides on what people and/or supports are needed, and what each will do in order to ensure that the child will reach this goal. Within in each of these three planning processes teamwork is essential. Teachers, school psychologists, social workers, parents, etc. are all valuable resources that allow a well-designed inclusive program to be implemented. By involving this
diverse group within the planning process, a truly individualized program can be created that meets the needs of each student.

Generally speaking, inclusion is based largely on the collaboration of educators, not only in the planning process but within curriculum development and usage, and program evaluation. Because the successful implementation of inclusion involves a spectrum of educators, it is necessary to assess their attitudes about inclusion. Those most knowledgeable about it may be the most qualified to determine whether or not the merging of special and regular education is the answer to education's current problems.

Studies show that educators' attitudes regarding inclusion vary. A study of 400 regular and special educators examined attitudes and perceptions of children who are exceptional (Knoff, 1985). Specifically, the following topics were investigated: educators' attitudes toward the effects on these exceptional children; their reactions to the integration of these children into the regular classroom; their knowledge of their special education responsibilities; and their involvement in building-level special education processes. Across disciplines, special educators were in general more aware of the federal and state education laws. Also, it was found that special educators felt more strongly than regular educators that average students are not harmed by having children who are exceptional in the classroom. Both regular and special educators expressed fewer positive expectations for children categorized with a label such as learning disabled or mentally retarded. Knoff (1985) concluded that differences in responses between regular and special educators may be attributed to differences in their academic training and public education experience, differences in their interpretations of state
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regulations, differences in the histories and movement of the two groups, as well as differences in their understanding of children who are exceptional.

In 1992, Stoler specifically investigated the effect that differing educational backgrounds and number of special education courses taken by educators could have on regular educators' attitudes towards inclusion. Two hundred thirty-five regular education teachers were involved in the questionnaire. Stoler (1992) posed the following research questions, “Is there a difference in the attitudes and perceptions of regular education teachers toward inclusion who have differing educational backgrounds?”, and “Is there a difference in attitudes and perceptions of regular educators toward inclusion who have differing amounts of special education courses and inservice training?” Stoler (1992) found a statistically significant difference indicating that teachers with different. Those teachers with more special education coursework were much more positive about inclusion while those with more education in general had a less positive attitude toward inclusion. These findings supported those of Knoff (1985) and Stephens and Braun (1980). Stephens and Braun (1980) investigated regular classroom teachers’ attitudes toward handicapped children. Through statistical analysis it was found that the number of special education courses was a variable related to teachers’ willingness to integrate handicapped children. Those who had taken more special education courses were more willing to accept handicapped students into their classroom.

In yet another study sampling a wider range of educators including primary school principals, regular education teachers and resource/special education teachers, no major differences were found to exist between the three groups in terms of their attitudes
to the integration of children who are exceptional (Ward & Center, 1987). Functional descriptors of disabilities were used in this questionnaire rather than more vague categories. Ward and Center (1987) concluded that educators may have shared common attitudes because these functional descriptors more clearly indicate the implications of a disability.

In an earlier study, attitudes were also found to be fairly consistent across disciplines. The Attitude Toward Mainstreaming Scale (ATMS) was constructed for the purpose of a study by Schmelkin (1981). The ATMS was used to study attitudes of special education teachers, regular education teachers and nonteachers toward mainstreaming an exceptional child. Responses of all three groups were comparable. Overall, the three groups demonstrated a positive attitude toward mainstreaming. The means of all three groups demonstrate that mainstreaming should not have a negative effect on students’ academic achievement. Special educators perceived the effects to be even less negative than regular educators and nonteachers.

From these studies, it would appear that the more knowledge educators have about special education, the more in favor of inclusion they may be. It is believed the more educators know about inclusion (based on experience and actual performance on an inclusion quiz), the more favorable attitude they will have towards such a program.
Chapter 2

Method

Participants

Seventy-nine educators from the Chicagoland area were enlisted to participate in this study. Fifty-three percent of packets sent out were returned. Specifically, participants were from School District 21 of Wheeling, Illinois, School District 54 of Schaumburg, Illinois, or School District 75 of Mundelein, Illinois. These educators were randomly selected and were involved in regular education or special education. They were administered a quiz and questionnaire to complete via school mail.

An inclusion questionnaire was completed by subjects. The original questionnaire was adapted by Knoff (1985) from a study by Gickling and Theobald (1975) and consisted of 16 questions (See Appendix A). For the purposes of this study only questions 1-12 were utilized. Questions 13-16 were addressed by the quiz. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. The first section is entitled, “Teacher Attitudes toward the Effects of Different Educational Placements on Handicapped Exceptional Children” and is made up of four questions. Section two is entitled, “Reactions to Including Children in Regular Classrooms” and is made up of eight questions. Questions on the original questionnaire were bipolar in nature. In order to get more reliable responses a Likert scale was used. Participants were asked to respond on a scale of 1-7 (1—strongly agree, 4—neutral, 7—strongly disagree) on all items. Demographically, subjects were asked how many years experience they have in education, and their current job title. Respondents were grouped into categories based on
the number of years experience they reported. The following categories were utilized: 0 to 5 years; 6 to 11 years; 12 to 17 years; 18 to 22 years; and 23 years plus.

An 11 item quiz developed by the author from various resources cited in this paper was also completed by participants (See Appendix B). It was sent along with the questionnaire in the packets distributed to participants. The quiz contained questions about inclusion and related topics. There was only one correct answer for each question. Subjects chose out of four possible answers which they felt was correct. Subjects were grouped according to number correct to one of these categories: 1 to 4 correct; 5 to 7 correct; and 8 to 11 correct.

Procedure

Quizzes and surveys were sent along with informed consent to educators working in the Chicagoland area. Subjects were informed of confidentiality to ensure accurate responding. The purpose of this study was completely explained in a letter enclosed with the questionnaire and quiz. Subjects were made aware of their right to have access to the results of this study. To do so, they simply mailed the provided form back with name and address indicated.

Three independent variables: number of years experience in education; job title; and number of answers correct on the quiz were used to determine the dependent variable—attitudes of educators toward inclusion. A Chi Square analysis was conducted for each independent variable on the dependent variable to determine if the distribution is significantly different from chance. In addition, an Anova was used to evaluate differences between groups’ (e.g., Psychologist/0-5 years experience with 9 answers correct on the quiz versus a Regular Educator/12-17 years experience with 3 answers
correct on the quiz) attitudes towards inclusion. Each individual question on the
questionnaire was analyzed to determine differences in attitudes of inclusion. Finally,
correlations among all variables were performed. Positive relationships were expected
between the independent variables and the dependent variable.
Chapter 3

Results

One hundred and fifty quizzes and questionnaires were distributed. Fifty-three percent of the packets were returned (N=79). Those who responded were categorized according to one of the following five job titles: psychologist; special educator; regular educator; administrator; and other (speech/language therapists, occupational therapists, social workers and nurses).

Chi-Square analysis indicates that the sample was not evenly distributed in terms of job title [X^2 (13.84, N = 79) = .0078, p < .05]. Special educators (n=27) were overrepresented as they returned more surveys than any other job category. Regular educators (n=10) and other (n=9) were least likely to return packets. Also it was found that a greater number of people did well on the quiz [X^2 (10.81, N = 79) = .0045, p<.05].

According to the correlational analysis, job title and number of years experience were not found to be significantly related to individual questionnaire responses (See Table 1). Number of correct responses was significantly related only to questions three and seven. Actual correlations of individual questionnaire questions indicate a lack of relationship between many of the questions used in the questionnaire. There were, however, some significant correlations between questions.

Multivariate analysis indicates that collectively there does seem to exist some significant effects on responses to question one by the following main effects and
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\[ F(7, 38) = 3.19, p = .009\], and number correct \[ F(2, 38) = 4.55, p = .017\]. Job by years experience also had a significant effect on question nine \[ F(12, 38) = 2.48, p = .016\].
Chapter 4

Discussion

It is important to note that each questionnaire question is independent. For example, question one (Being placed in special education restricts the chance for a student to fully participate in extracurricular activities normally available to regular classroom students) would indicate strong agreement with inclusion if the number one was indicated on the questionnaire. However, question seven (Special education seems to adequately provide academic services for the mildly handicapped and does not need to be changed), would indicate actual disagreement with inclusion if the number one was chosen on the questionnaire. This is indicative of the autonomy of each individual question on the questionnaire.

Actual correlations of individual questionnaire questions indicate consistency among subjects' responses. For example, significant positive correlations exist between question three (Children placed in special education are more likely to be seen as different if permitted to stay in regular classrooms) and question seven (Special education seems to adequately provide academic services for the mildly handicapped and does not need to be changed). In agreeing with each of these statements, one would be disagreeing with inclusion. Similarly, negative correlations were found between opposing questions two (If given a chance, special education students would participate in most school activities) and twelve (Regular education students are educationally harmed when special education students are in the regular classroom). All significant correlations between questions indicated consistency among subjects' responses.
A lack of any relationship between job and questionnaire responses as well as between years experience and questionnaire responses was found by correlational analysis. This may also indicate that there is as much diversity among individuals of the same educational profession as there is between individuals of different professions in education in terms of their attitudes toward inclusion.

Question five (Under normal conditions, the regular classroom teacher feels imposed upon to help special education students) was most highly correlated with job. It appears as though psychologists and special educators are most strongly in agreement with this statement, while administrators and other increasingly are in disagreement with question five. Regular educators are more neutral indicating that they may feel imposed on at times by special education students in their classroom. In response to this question, regular educators seem to be expressing a more cautious, neutral attitude towards inclusion.

Although not significant, the strongest negative relationship for years experience was found with question seven (Special education seems to adequately provide academic services for the mildly handicapped and does not need to be changed). Those with less experience were more likely to disagree with this question indicating that they do believe a change in special education is warranted. This may be interpreted in support of inclusion.

Finally, number of answers correct on the quiz was found to be significantly related to attitude. Those educators who compiled more correct responses disagreed with question seven (Special education seems to adequately provide academic services for the
mildly handicapped and does not need to be changed). A similar correlation was discovered as those who answered more questions correctly on the quiz were more likely to disagree with question three (Children placed in special education are more likely to be seen as different if permitted to stay in regular classrooms). From these significant findings, it may be concluded that the more knowledgeable one is, the more likely it is that they will agree with inclusion.

In terms of the ANOVA, question one (Being placed in special education restricts the chance for a student to fully participate in extracurricular activities normally available to regular classroom students) was affected in some way by years experience, number correct and job. These findings indicated that the more years experience subjects had, the more they disagreed with question one. This may indicate some resistance to inclusion by those with more experience. However, years experience did not have an effect by itself. Only when it was coupled with number correct or job was it significant. Subjects who obtained less correct on the quiz were more likely to disagree with question one. This supports correlational data that suggest the more knowledgeable one is, the more likely it is that one will support inclusion. With the exception of question nine (If special education classes were phased out, regular classroom teachers would be willing to accept special education students into their classroom), no other significant findings were discovered with the ANOVA.

Performance on the quiz may have been affected by more extensive training or education level (Bachelor's Degree versus Ph.D.). This demographic was not investigated but may have contributed to knowledge of inclusion. In addition, a pilot
study was not conducted. Some educators did express concern over wording of questions on the quiz. Consequently, performance on the quiz may have been affected by factors other than knowledge of special education. However, as evidenced by the Chi Square, more people did well on the quiz than poorly. This statistical significance was due to more than just chance.

Findings from this study are consistent with the results of those studies discussed in this paper in that attitudes were similar across educational disciplines and that knowledge level was found to impact attitudes toward inclusion.

Future research in this area is invaluable in education since inclusion is a trend that has become more popular in recent years. Prior to initiating an inclusion program, it may be helpful to questionnaire staff that are directly involved. Specifically investigating attitudes of special educators would be beneficial as their roles would most significantly be affected by the implementation of an inclusion program. It is important to determine differences in attitude based on their actual role. If educators are not willing to make changes or knowledgeable about inclusion, it may be wise to further educate staff before inclusion is begun or to consider a more acceptable alternative. If staff are more knowledgeable, they may feel more comfortable with such a program as evidenced in this study.
References


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* - Signif. Lev .05  ** - Signif. Lev .01  (2-tailed)
Appendix A

Inclusion Questionnaire

Please indicate job title as well as the approximate number of years experience in education. When completing the questionnaire, please indicate HOW STRONGLY you agree or disagree with the statement (1- strongly agree, 4-neutral, 7- strongly disagree).

Thank you!

Job Title

Number years Experience
A. 0-5
B. 6-11
C. 12-17
D. 18-22
E. 23+

SECTION I—Attitudes toward the Effects of Different Educational Placements on Handicapped Exceptional Children

1. Being placed in special education (of any kind, during any part of the day) restricts the chance for a student to fully participate in extracurricular activities normally available to regular classroom students.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ——strongly agree strongly disagree

2. If given a chance, special education students would participate in most school activities.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. Children placed in special education are more likely to be seen as different if permitted to stay in regular classrooms.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. A child becomes socially isolated or rejected by peers when placed in special education.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

SECTION II—Reactions to Including Children in Regular Classrooms

5. Under normal conditions, the regular classroom teacher feels imposed upon to help special education students.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. The regular classroom teacher feels s/he has the skills to help special education students.

   ___1___2___3___4___5___6___7
   strongly agree                strongly disagree

7. Special education seems to adequately provide academic services for the mildly handicapped and does not need to be changed.

   ___1___2___3___4___5___6___7

8. Special education classes have proved to be more effective than regular classes for mildly handicapped students.

   ___1___2___3___4___5___6___7

9. If special education classes were phased out, regular classroom teachers would be willing to accept special education students into their classrooms.

   ___1___2___3___4___5___6___7

10. The regular classroom teachers would rather have special education teachers helping in their classrooms than have them take special education students to another classroom.

     ___1___2___3___4___5___6___7

11. If time were available, regular classroom teachers would work and consult with special education teachers about specific students.

     ___1___2___3___4___5___6___7

12. Regular education students are educationally harmed when special education students are in the regular classroom.

     ___1___2___3___4___5___6___7

Appendix B

Inclusion Quiz

1. The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) originated from what act? (Scariano et al., 1993)
   a. the Education for All Handicapped Children Act
   b. The Free and Appropriate Public Education Act
   c. the MAPs Act
   d. It did not originate from any act.

2. In general, inclusion involves all of the following except...(ISPA, 1994)
   a. Inclusive programs are those in which students, regardless of the severity of their disability, receive appropriate specialized instruction and related services.
   b. Inclusive programs are those in which the child who is disabled is served within the age-appropriate general education classroom in the school they would attend if they did not have a disability.
   c. Inclusive programs are those in which students are placed in a restrictive environment where they will receive the most appropriate education.
   d. All of the above.

3. Proponents of inclusion believe all of the following to be benefits of inclusion except...(ISPA, 1994).
   a. an opportunity for children to be exposed to a wider range of learning experiences
   b. increased expectations placed on children who are disabled
   c. a way for districts to save money
   d. decreased amount of time students will spend in traveling

4. All of the following are collaborative strategies that a variety of educators (i.e. school psychologists, special educators, regular educators, etc...) engage in to provide a more individualized education for a child who has been included except...(Stainback & Stainback, 1993)
   a. Making Action Plans
   b. Preliminary Referral Programs
   c. Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope
   d. Individual Education Plans

5. Approximately how long ago was IDEA enacted? (ISPA, 1994; Scariano et al., 1993)
   a. 5 years
   b. 10 years
   c. 2 years
   d. 15 years
6. The term “free appropriate public education” means special education and related services that: (Scariano et al., 1993)
   a. are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge.
   b. are a magical cure for all the problems in the educational system.
   c. are a means to delay the referral process.
   d. include preschool and elementary school in the state involved.

7. Which of the following adaptations would regular education teachers find the least feasible? (Baker & Zigmond, 1990)
   a. Experientially-based instruction
   b. Providing reinforcement and encouragement
   c. Establishing a personal relationship with the disabled child
   d. Involving learning disabled children in whole-class activities

8. In regards to inclusion, much research has been done in which of the following areas? (ISPA, 1994)
   a. teacher training
   b. academic outcomes for regular education students in inclusive settings
   c. long-term outcomes for young adults with disabilities
   d. academic outcomes for special education students in inclusive vs. non-inclusive settings

9. Who introduced the Regular Education Initiative (REI) in 1986? (Scariano et al., 1993)
   a. Mark Swerdlik
   b. Madeline Will
   c. Mike Havey
   d. Judith Davids

10. In inclusive schools, the most frequently used types of assessment may not include: (ISPA, 1994)
    a. intellectual assessment
    b. problem-solving assessment
    c. portfolio assessment
    d. adaptive behavior assessment

11. Many supporters of inclusion believe that the referral and evaluation system currently in place does not function as it should because of all of the following except: (ISPA, 1994)
    a. an inability to differentiate reliably among categories of students with disabilities.
    b. a lack of evidence that students grouped by category learn differently or are taught differently
c. a classification system that lacks reliability, utility, and acceptance by many parents and professionals

d. a system that evaluates with only adequate instruments and from those instruments offers prereferral interventions