A Comparison of Teacher Time Spent with Students Who Have Learning Disabilities and Students Who Do Not Have Learning Disabilities at the Secondary Level in the Mainstreamed Setting

Dottye Hogue
Eastern Illinois University

This research is a product of the graduate program in Special Education at Eastern Illinois University. Find out more about the program.

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A Comparison of Teacher Time Spent With Students Who Have
Learning Disabilities and Students Who Do Not Have
Learning Disabilities at the Secondary Level
In the Mainstreamed Setting

BY

Dotty Hogue

THESIS
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
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COMMITTEE MEMBER

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DEPARTMENT/CHAIRPERSON
A Comparison of Teacher Time Spent With Students Who Have Learning Disabilities and Students Who Do Not Have Learning Disabilities at the Secondary Level In the Mainstreamed Setting

Dr. Brulle
Eastern Illinois University
February 14, 1983
Dotty Hogue
A Comparison of Teacher Time Spent With Students Who Have Learning Disabilities and Students Who Do Not Have Learning Disabilities at the Secondary Level In the Mainstreamed Setting

Since legislation has been enacted to insure the educational rights of handicapped students in the least restrictive environment, teachers and administrators are concerned with the placement of the students with learning disabilities in the regular classrooms. Secondary teachers who do not have a background in special education find it difficult to accept students with learning disabilities into their regular classrooms. Many of these teachers feel they will have to spend a disproportionate amount of time with this particular type of student, thus taking much needed time away from students who are not handicapped. The purpose of this study was to determine empirically whether regular classroom teachers spent a disproportionate amount of time with students who have learning disabilities.

The setting for this study was Charleston High School, Charleston, Illinois. Charleston High School is a four year public secondary school located in an east central Illinois rural farming community.

The subjects for this study were 36 regular classroom teachers who had the students with learning disabilities in their classes. Teachers in 13 departments were observed.

Data was collected by 15 students enrolled in Special Education courses at Eastern Illinois University. Observers recorded behaviors through the use of momentary time sampling procedures. A total of 377 hours of observation occurred over an eight-week period yielding 96,664 recorded data entries.
It was found that teachers spent 1.4% of the time (42.5 seconds) assisting students with learning disabilities and 2.4% of the time (72.7 seconds) assisting students without learning disabilities in one class period. When this difference was compared through the use of a Z test, the results were not significant at the .0694 level.
A Comparison of Teacher Time Spent With Students Who Have Learning Disabilities and Students Who Do Not Have Learning Disabilities at the Secondary Level in the Mainstreamed Setting

Since legislation has been enacted to insure the educational rights of handicapped students in the least restrictive environment, teachers and administrators are concerned with the placement of the students with learning disabilities in the regular classrooms. Secondary teachers who do not have a background in special education find it difficult to accept students with learning disabilities into their regular classrooms. Many of these teachers feel they will have to spend a disproportionate amount of time with this particular type of student, thus taking much needed time away from students who are not handicapped.

Another area of concern in dealing with this issue of mainstreaming is the problem of scheduling. The learning disabilities teacher and counselor are responsible for placing the student with learning disabilities into regular classes where he can operate at optimum level without upsetting the equilibrium of the class. The learning disabilities teacher and counselor are also concerned with the number of students with learning disabilities that can be scheduled into the same class period without creating an imbalance between students with learning disabilities and without learning disabilities. The purpose of this study is to determine empirically whether regular classroom teachers do spend a disproportionate amount of time with students who have learning
Mainstreaming

As an outgrowth of the civil rights movement, handicapped persons are seeing their rights as individuals and citizens being established and protected by federal laws, state mandates, and court decisions. The rights of the handicapped include those rights that are afforded to non-handicapped persons. One such federal law which establishes and protects handicapped persons' right is Public Law 93-112, Nondiscrimination on Basis of Handicapped Act. Public Law 93-112:

represents the first Federal civil right law protecting the rights of handicapped persons and reflects a national commitment to end discrimination on the basis of handicap. . . . It establishes a mandate to end discrimination and to bring handicapped persons into the mainstream of American life. (P.L. 93-112, Section 504 (background) )

The "mainstream of life" does not necessarily include the "mainstream of American education" for handicapped students. Effective October 1, 1977, Public Law 94-142, Education of the Handicapped Act, placed the education of handicapped students into the "mainstream of American education." This was accomplished by the mandate of least restrictive environment (LRE) which was insured:

that to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not handicapped, and that special classes, separate schooling or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (P.L. 94-142, Section 612 (5) (B) )
The state of Illinois is in agreement with Public Law 94-142. The Rules and Regulations to Govern the Administration and Operation of Special Education, effective February 1, 1979 defines least restrictive environment:

- to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children are educated with nonhandicapped children.
- Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap requires that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (Rules and Regulations to Govern the Administration and Operation of Special Education, Article 1 (1.05) )

The Public Law 94-142 mandate of least restrictive environment has become better known as mainstreaming. The National Advisory Council on Education Professions Development (1976) has established the following definition of mainstreaming:

Mainstreaming is the conscientious effort to place handicapped children into the least restrictive educational setting which is appropriate to their needs. The primary objective of this process is to provide children with the most appropriate and effective educational experiences which enable them to become self-reliant adults. Within this objective, it is thought preferable to educate children the least distance away from the mainstream of society. Hence there is a heavy emphasis on movement into the regular classroom whenever possible. (p. 71)

Educators across the country interpret this process of mainstreaming differently. In many circles it is viewed as a humanizing effort to move these handicapped students into the regular classrooms. Turnbull and Schulz (1979) state that mainstreaming is the most conducive and humanizing educational environment. Handicapped students have more in common
with nonhandicapped students than uncommon. Handicapped students can benefit from being part of the neighborhood school.

In some areas the Public Law 94-142 mandate has been interpreted as placing all mildly handicapped students into regular classrooms. This wholesale placement of mildly handicapped students is not due to any humanizing movement. Rather, it is due to the financial and social pressures many school districts must labor under.

Public Law 94-142 has established that every child has a constitutional right to an appropriate education (Mori, 1979). It is the obligation of the local school district to provide that education in the least restrictive environment. Therefore it is more likely that students with learning disabilities, educable mentally handicapped students, and mildly emotionally disturbed students will appear with increasing frequency in the regular classrooms (Larrivee and Cook, 1979).

The regular classroom teacher is the pivotal person in determining the success of the mainstreaming concept. The National Education and the American Federation of Labor have expressed a favorable attitude concerning the mainstreaming of handicapped students into regular classrooms providing:

- that mainstreaming is not used as a device for reducing the cost of education; that teachers receive adequate assistance from supportive personnel; that teachers receive training prior to implementation; and that modifications be made in class size and scheduling (Mori, 1979, p. 244).

Mori (1979) goes on to state that regular classroom teachers will be expected to accept more responsibility for the direct instruction of handicapped students.
Teacher Attitudes Toward Mainstreaming

The aspect of mainstreaming which has received little attention is role of teacher attitude. While least restrictive environment may be imposed by federal laws and state statutes, the manner in which the regular classroom teacher responds to the needs of the handicapped student may be a far more potent variable in the success of mainstreaming than any other variable (Larrivee and Cook, 1979). In essence, the following quotation from MacMillan, Jones, and Meyers (1976) aptly describes the mainstreaming situation:

During World War I Will Rogers told of his solution for the German U-Boats and their threat to Allied ships. He said we should raise the temperature of the Atlantic Ocean to the boiling point; this would force the U-Boats to surface. When they surfaced they could be easily sunk. When asked how he would raise the temperature of the Atlantic Ocean to boiling, Rogers replied that he just got the idea and it was up to someone else to work out the details. Similarly, special education professors, the courts, legislatures, and state department personnel have in essence said that they have an idea—mainstreaming mildly handicapped learners—and have said to regular classroom teachers, 'you work out the details' (p. 4).

Because the regular classroom teacher is the key to the success of mainstreaming, it is important to examine these teachers' attitudes toward mainstreaming the mildly handicapped student. Using an attitude scale constructed by the method of summated ratings, Larrivee and Cook (1979) examined the effects of selected institutional variables on the attitude of the regular classroom teacher toward the mainstreaming process. Subjects were asked to respond to thirty statements using a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. It was found that classroom size, school size, and type of school have very little impact on teacher attitude. Teacher perception of degree of
success, level of administrative support received, and availability of support services all seem to have a significant impact on teacher attitudes. Of the seven variables considered, the teacher perception of degree of success in dealing with the mildly handicapped student was the single most important variable. It was also discovered in this study that regular classroom teachers' attitudes toward mainstreaming tends to become less positive as grade level increases. It appeared that the most negative attitudes toward mainstreaming were exhibited by junior high school teachers.

The results of Stephens and Braun study (1980) tend to agree with the Larrivee and Cook (1979) study previously discussed. In the Stephens and Braun (1980) study, regular classroom teachers of grades kindergarten through eight were asked to fill out a questionnaire concerning their willingness to accept educable mentally handicapped, physically handicapped, and emotionally handicapped students in their classrooms. Teachers who had taken courses in special education were more willing to accept handicapped students in their classes than those teachers who had not taken classes. Teachers who believed that handicapped students can become useful members of society were more willing to integrate handicapped students than teachers who did not share this belief. And, teachers who believed the public schools should educate exceptional students were more willing to integrate handicapped students than teachers who did not endorse this position. As in Larrivee and Cook's (1979) study, teachers of grade seven and eight were less willing to accept handicapped students into their classrooms than primary and middle grade teachers. This could imply that as subject matter becomes
more important, teachers become less accepting of individual differences.

Ringlaben and Price (1981) assessed regular classroom teachers perceptions of mainstreaming using a 22 item questionnaire. Regular classroom teachers of grades kindergarten through twelve took part in this study. The majority of teachers who have had students mainstreamed into their classrooms indicated mainstreaming was working at least somewhat. Thirty percent of the teachers perceived mainstreaming as working quite well. One-fourth of the teachers who had mainstreamed students indicated that mainstreaming was not working quite so well. It was found that the teachers' agreement with the intent of mainstreaming may be a determiner of the success experienced by the mildly handicapped student in a regular classroom. Ringlaben and Price also discovered that teacher preparation for mainstreaming may be more heavily influenced by academic preparation than by teacher inservice.

Schultz (1982) cross-sectioned 300 regular elementary classroom teachers to determine what issues concerning mainstreaming were being raised in the actual school setting. Three important concerns were pinpointed in this study. Regular teachers felt a lack of expertise in accounting for individual differences in students as related to curriculum and instruction. Although teachers were aware of the mildly handicapped students in their class, confusion existed as to their respective roles and responsibilities. Regular teachers were comfortable with their current skills, knowledge, and attitudes and felt that their concerns were not being adequately addressed.

The concerns that the regular classroom teachers stated in the previous study are very real. Regular classroom teachers will be asked
to assume major responsibility in the mainstreaming process. As they teach the handicapped students for a portion of the school day or in some cases the entire day, the regular teacher will coordinate the handicapped students instructional needs and social integration. Turnbull and Schulz (1979) go on to state that it requires more time and effort for the teacher to make curriculum adaptions and to arrange situations for socialization for handicapped students than for the nonhandicapped students. Teachers who felt that handicapped students were just as worthy as nonhandicapped students, believed the extra investment of time and effort did not create negative barriers between the regular teacher and handicapped students.

Not all regular classroom teachers share the feeling that handicapped students are just as worthy as nonhandicapped students. MacMillan, et al. (1976), states that it is doubtful that regular classroom teachers in general are enthusiastic over the integration of mildly handicapped learners into their classrooms. Freeman (1980) states that the general interpretation of mainstreaming as placing all mildly handicapped students into regular classrooms has placed handicapped students in high school subjects with no attention to the student's ability or interest. This, in turn, has created a problem for regular classroom teachers. These teachers do not feel prepared to teach a handicapped student and meet the needs of 25 to 30 nonhandicapped students in their classroom.

The success of mainstreaming is somewhat contingent upon the attitudes of the individuals directly or indirectly involved. Using a 25 Likert-type questionnaire, Graham, Burdg, Hudson, and Carpenter (1980) measured the willingness of regular and special teachers to accommodate the process of mainstreaming. The results showed that regular classroom
teachers believed mainstreaming was appropriate and effective, but they did not feel that they possessed adequate mainstreaming skills.

Williams and Algozine (1979) conducted a study to determine if teachers' attitudes toward handicapped children were influenced by a categorical label. Two hundred sixty-seven regular classroom teachers responded to a questionnaire developed to assess reasons for teachers' attitudes concerning handicapped students and mainstreaming. In this study, regular classroom teachers who indicated that they would work with handicapped students did so for three reasons: A. the teachers had had successful experiences with handicapped students, B. specialized support services gave the teachers confidence, and C. the teachers felt programming for physically handicapped students was not different from regular programming. Regular classroom teachers who indicated that they would not volunteer to mainstream handicapped students chose two major reasons for their objections. The teachers felt that the handicapped student would take too much time from the other children. Also, the regular classroom teachers felt that they did not have the technical abilities necessary to work with the handicapped student. Throughout this study, there was not a strong difference in attitude for any particular category of student.

Cline (1981) evaluated the attitudes of principals in a large metropolitan school district using the Rucker-Gable Educational Programming Scale. It was concluded that the presence or absence of a special class or program within a school does not appear to influence the principals' attitude toward exceptional children. Principals' attitudes toward mild, moderate, and severe mental retardation were more
positive in placing these students nearer the mainstream than those of special educators.

The results of Jordan's (1982) study and Petrozzino's (1982) study agree with Cline's findings. Using a five point ordinal scale to measure subject responses, Jordan evaluated the opinions of secondary school administrators, counselors, and teachers toward the concept of mainstreaming. It was found that the opinions of selected secondary administrators and counselors are significantly more positive than the opinions of secondary teachers toward the concept of mainstreaming. Also, as the educational level of the subject went up, the more positive the opinions toward mainstreaming became. Petrozzino found that administrators and teachers held moderately positive attitudes toward mainstreaming, and that administrators held more positive attitudes toward mainstreaming than the teachers.

Proctor (1967) investigated the attitudes of certain groups of regular teachers toward the classroom integration of exceptional students. It was found that special education teachers and ancillary personnel were significantly more realistic in their attitudes toward classroom integration of exceptional students than were regular teachers who had some coursework in Special Education. It was also discovered that the amount of teaching experience rather than the type of teaching experience helps a teacher to achieve a more realistic attitude toward the placement of an exceptional student.

As a policy, mainstreaming has support from within and without special education circles for mainstreaming the mildly handicapped student into the regular classroom. Therefore, the regular classroom
teacher must promote positive attitudes concerning the right to education for all students, especially the notion that a handicapped student is a person first, and that a handicap simply suggests an individual difference in the way the person learns or behaves (Mori, 1979). Mori continues with the fact that if mainstreaming is to work and student’s individual differences are to be taken in consideration, some means must be found to regulate class size and pupil composition.

Clark (1976) investigated preschool teachers’ attitudes toward integration of handicapped students before mainstreaming occurred and four years after implementation of the mainstreaming. The subjects for this study were the preschool teachers at the Preschool Laboratory located at California State University, Northridge. At the beginning of the study, teachers felt that class routines would not have to be modified to accommodate integration. There was a certain amount of insecurity and uncertainty on the part of the teachers. Teachers felt that teaching exceptional students required different kinds of competencies than normal children. Teachers expected all children within a particular category to respond in concert to a particular educational method. Teachers also believed that physically impaired children were easier to accommodate than mentally involved children.

Four years after the implementation of mainstreaming in the Preschool Laboratory, teachers’ attitudes had changed. Class routines were modified so students could be grouped to facilitate curriculum offerings. Activities became multi-level. Teachers came to realize the difference between teaching normal and exceptional students was less a matter of educational method than a difference in background information concerning
specific handicaps. It became apparent early in the study that a child has more in common with the population of all children than in common with others who share a handicap. Teachers also realized the category of handicap was not as important as the degree of involvement.

Using the Rucker-Gable Educational Programming Scale, Gillung and Rucker (1977) measured the effects of unlabeled behavioral descriptions on the expectations of regular classroom teachers. It was concluded that regular classroom teachers have lower expectations for students who are labeled than students with identical behaviors who are not labeled. It was also found that urban regular teachers have lower expectations for handicapped students than suburban regular teachers. Labels carry a negative connotation that results in lower regular teacher expectations.

Regardless of the specific handicap label, several studies have concluded that regular classroom teachers are less accepting of mentally retarded students in their classrooms than students with other types of handicaps. Childs (1981) evaluated the opinions of 200 regular classroom teachers of mainstreamed educable mentally retarded students. Only thirty-eight percent of these teachers supported the concept of mainstreaming the educable mentally retarded students. Moore and Fine (1978) investigated regular and special classroom teachers' perceptions of normal and exceptional students and their attitudes toward mainstreaming. The majority of regular classroom teachers were not accepting of the mentally retarded student in their classrooms for a half day or more. Johnson and Cartwright (1979) concluded from their findings that regular classroom teachers were more supportive of mainstreaming students.
with learning disabilities than mentally retarded students.

Shotel, Iano, and McGettigan (1972) conducted a study to determine how a program for integrating handicapped students into regular classes with supportive resource room services would affect the attitudes of regular classroom teachers toward handicapped students. Regular classroom teachers responded to a 13 item yes-no questionnaire. The regular classroom teachers were generally more positive in their attitudes toward the student with learning disabilities than the emotionally disturbed student and educable mentally retarded student. Only 13.6% of the regular classroom teachers felt that educable mentally retarded students could generally be in regular class most of the day and attend resource rooms part of the day.

Using a Teacher Response Scale, Guerin (1979) examined the affective component of regular classroom teachers interaction with the handicapped student assigned to their classrooms. Teachers were most comfortable with handicapped students in the areas of general supervision, moderately comfortable in preparation of handicapped student instruction, and least comfortable with a handicapped student's verbal or leadership display. The area of greatest concern was that involving the social and expressive aspects of the handicapped student. Forty-four percent of the regular classroom teachers found more discomfort than comfort in this aspect of the handicapped student's performance. The categorical labels of mental retardation and educationally handicapped (includes learning disabilities) were significantly related to regular classroom teacher concerns. Regular teachers reported slightly less comfort with mentally retarded students than with educationally handicapped students.
Panda and Bartel (1972) administered a semantic differential scale in individual booklet form to forty teachers attending graduate summer classes in order to gain regular teachers' perceptions in three areas: evaluative, potency, and activity. Exceptionalities considered in this study were blind, deaf, gifted, epileptic, culturally deprived, emotionally maladjusted, delinquent, crippled, mentally retarded, and speech impaired. Various forms of exceptionalities were perceived differently by subjects in the evaluative dimension. All exceptionalities were rated significantly lower than normal and gifted. Blind and deaf were perceived significantly more favorable than other exceptionalities. Epileptic, culturally deprived, emotionally maladjusted, and delinquent were evaluated much lower than crippled, mentally retarded, and speech impaired. Concerning the potency factor, all forms of exceptionalities, excluding culturally deprived and emotionally maladjusted, differ significantly from the normal, gifted, and delinquent. The mentally retarded and crippled were perceived to be less potent than the culturally deprived and emotionally maladjusted. Mentally retarded, emotionally maladjusted, deaf, epileptic, and speech impaired were perceived as comparatively more active by regular classroom teachers who had had special education training. Other forms of exceptionality were perceived as more active by regular classroom teachers with no special education training.

Using the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons Scale, Higgs (1975) investigated how a person's attitude toward physically disabled people is related to his degree of contact with and knowledge about these individuals. Subjects with a high degree of contact also tended to
have more information about physical disabilities and have more positive attitudes toward physically disabled persons. Attitudes toward disabled persons became more positive as information levels increased.

In a study of 200 undergraduates, elementary and secondary majors, Kingsley (1967) asked each subject to identify eight types of exceptionalities and select a characteristic that described the exceptionality. Eight types of exceptionality were considered: speech impaired, visually impaired, hearing impairment, physically handicapped, educable mentally handicapped, severely mentally retarded, emotionally/socially disturbed, and intellectually gifted. The characteristic most frequently associated with the exceptional student was above-average intelligence. The second most frequently associated characteristic was below-average intelligence. When asked which type of exceptional student the future teacher would most want to work with, the secondary majors chose the intellectually gifted students and the elementary majors chose the emotionally/socially disturbed student. Both groups least wanted to work with the severely mentally retarded students.

The undergraduates in this study felt that speech impaired, handicapped, educable mentally handicapped, and intellectually gifted students would be better served in a special class for those with the same exceptionality. According to secondary majors the emotionally/socially disturbed students should be in regular class. Both elementary and secondary majors agreed that the severely mentally retarded student should be placed in an institutional setting. It was also felt that visually impaired, hearing impaired, educable mentally handicapped, severely mentally retarded, and intellectually gifted students should
have a special curriculum. Physically handicapped students should have a regular curriculum. According to secondary majors, emotionally/socially disturbed and speech handicapped students should have a regular curriculum.

Sesow and Adams (1982) also investigated future teachers' attitudes toward handicapped students and mainstreaming. It was found that college students who had mildly handicapped students in their student teaching placements were comfortable with having mainstreamed students in their classrooms. Sesow and Adams suggest that placement of student teachers in classrooms containing handicapped students seems to help new teachers become more comfortable around mainstreamed students.

The concept of mainstreaming assumes there is a mainstream to begin with. Martin (1980) voiced some real concerns in mainstreaming mildly handicapped students into a high school that uses a tracking system. Tracking divides students into groups according to ability within a grade level. Tracking may enhance the teaching of a particular subject, but it also reinforces labeling. When handicapped students are mainstreamed into a tracking system, they receive another label because the handicapped student is usually mainstreamed into the lowest level track. The "normal" students in this track are having problems of some kind making the lowest track a dumping ground for problems. Martin continues by saying that the high school population is a conglomeration of shapes and sizes, attitudes and abilities. The high school teenager is at an age no one wants to be forever. Because of the teen-age identity problems, the mainstream is more like a "rocky road."
Teacher Time Spent With Handicapped Students

Whether it be the "rocky road" or the mainstream, regular and special educators are concerned with providing appropriate learning environments for all children. In order to mainstream successfully, an environment must exist in which handicapped students can be programmed for their educational needs while not jeopardizing the progress of other students. Knowles, Aufderheide, Mckenize (1982) conducted a study to determine the differences between the amount of academic learning time engaged in by mainstreamed handicapped and nonhandicapped students in elementary physical education classes. Observers recorded data using the Academic Learning Time--Physical Education System. Nonhandicapped students were engaged in academic learning time during 47.9% of the total class time, while mainstreamed handicapped students were engaged in academic learning time 43.9% of the total class time. Although nonhandicapped students received more academic learning time, the outcome was not statistically significant.

Thompson (1982) compared the interaction patterns of regular elementary classroom teachers among four groups of third grade students: high achieving nonhandicapped students, low achieving nonhandicapped students, behaviorally handicapped students, and students with learning disabilities. Classroom observations were conducted for a total of nine weeks and data was collected using a modified version of the Teacher-Child Dyadic Interaction System. Third grade mildly handicapped students are treated at least as equally when compared with the nonhandicapped high and low achieving peers. Thompson also concluded that behaviorally handicapped students take more of the teachers' time per student than do non-behaviorally handicapped students. A large percentage of that
time was spent in interactions other than academic work. Behaviorally handicapped students received almost twice as many teacher initiations as other groups of students.

At the secondary level, the positive attitude of the regular classroom teacher is crucial to the successful mainstreaming of the mildly handicapped student. Using a Likert-type attitude scale, Corder examined the attitudes of secondary teachers toward the handicapped. Over sixty percent of the regular teachers saw the education of handicapped students as the public school's responsibility, but only thirty-four percent definitely felt that handicapped students should be enrolled in regular classes. Eight percent of the teachers felt that regular classroom teachers were qualified to teach handicapped students.

Corder also discovered that approximately 62% of these teachers felt that handicapped students should be included in all school activities, but only twelve percent indicated they preferred to include handicapped students in regular programs. Eight percent of the regular classroom teachers felt comfortable with handicapped students. Almost 90% of these teachers agreed that handicapped students in regular classrooms could result in classroom management problems and that classroom enrollment should be reduced when handicapped students are included.

Damborg's (1981) study arrived at some of the same conclusions as Corder's Study. Regular classroom teachers were apprehensive about their preparation for adequately handling the changes in their classrooms that mainstreaming would bring. Damborg states that in all classroom activities the regular teacher must give time to the handicapped student and that means less attention to the objectives of nonhandicapped
students. Baum and Frazita (1979) echo Damborg's statement in concluding that many regular classroom teachers are concerned about properly instructing exceptional students while not sacrificing instructional quality for the regular students in their classrooms.

Schumaker, Wildgen, and Sherman (1982) arrived at different conclusions than the three previous studies discussed. The purpose of this study was to compare a number of social behaviors and socially related characteristics of learning disabled junior high students and non-learning disabled junior high students in relation to teachers and peers. Students were observed in regular classrooms and data was gathered using a continuous recording system. Because lecture is the most frequently used instructional format in the secondary classroom, attending to the teacher is crucial for a secondary student. Both learning disabled and non-learning disabled groups attended to their teachers about equal amounts of time. The attention of both groups lasted about equal lengths of time. Students with learning disabilities and students without learning disabilities attended equally to the teachers' initial instructions. However, students without learning disabilities attended about twice as much when the teacher gave content information to the students. Also, the amount of time given to students with learning disabilities was close to nonexistent, a total of two minutes for all students with learning disabilities collectively.

Due to federal laws and state mandates, mainstreaming students with learning disabilities has become part of American education. The role of the regular classroom teacher is crucial to the success of mainstreaming. It is important that students with learning disabilities
are placed into regular classes with careful thought and consideration. Class size, teacher attitude, and number of students with learning disabilities as opposed to number of students without learning disabilities must be considered before placement is made. The results of this study will hopefully be an aide in decision making for regular classroom placement.

Method

Setting
The setting for this study was Charleston High School, Charleston, Illinois. Charleston is a rural farming community that houses Eastern Illinois University. Located in east central Illinois, Charleston has a population between 18,000 and 20,000 people.

Charleston High School is a four year public secondary school with an enrollment of over 850 students. The learning disabilities resource room program at Charleston High School has an enrollment of 48 mildly handicapped students. The resource room program mainstreams students into regular classes part of the school day.

Subjects
The subjects for this study were the teachers at Charleston High School. Of the 55 teachers, 37 had students with learning disabilities in their classrooms. Thirty-six of the 37 teachers were selected for observation. The building trades teacher was not observed due to scheduling and transportation difficulties. Teachers in the following departments were observed: Foreign Language (1), Vocational Shop (6), Science (3), English (4), Social Studies (3), Home Economics (2), Business (2), Math (2), Driver's Education (2), Health (1), Band (1),
Art (2), and Physical Education (7).

**Procedure**

**Data Collection.** Data was collected by fifteen students enrolled in Special Education courses at Eastern Illinois University. These observers were trained in the use of ten-second momentary time sampling procedures. In using momentary time sampling, the observer records the behavior of the subject precisely at the end of each ten-second interval. Observers were cued to observe and record data through the use of a pre-recorded tape and a tape recorder fitted with earphones. All class sessions that were observed were fifty minutes in length with the exception of third hour which is fifty-five minutes in length. The extra five minutes was time used for announcements. A total of 377 hours of observation occurred over an eight-week period yielding 96,664 recorded data entries.

Observers recorded teacher behaviors in the five following categories:

- **Absent:** The teacher was not present in the classroom.
- **Monitor:** The teacher was watching the students, taking attendance, using audio-visual materials, or working at his desk.
- **Presentation:** The teacher was lecturing, writing on the board, reading to the class, or answering general questions.
- **Assistance to Students with Learning Disabilities:** The teacher was talking to, listening to, or individually working with a student who received services through the learning disabilities program.
- **Assistance to Students Without Learning Disabilities:** The teacher was talking to, listening to, or individually working with a student who did not receive services through the learning disabilities program.
Reliability. In 25% of the observations, two observers were present to provide for a reliability check. During these sessions, one tape recorder was fitted with two sets of earphones to allow each observer to record data independently, but at precisely the same time. An exact internal check was made of the observers observations. Agreements and disagreements were counted. To obtain an estimate of reliability, the formula, Reliability = Agreements/(Agreements + Disagreements) x 100 was used. A final reliability of 92% was obtained.

Analysis. The data collected was converted into a percent format. The percent of time each teacher spent in providing assistance to the student with learning disabilities and the percent of time each teacher spent in providing assistance to students without learning disabilities were calculated. These results were compared through the use of a Z test.

Results

In the 377 hours of observation, the overall percentage of students without learning disabilities in the classes observed was 18.06. The overall percentage of students with learning disabilities in the classes observed was 1.85. Figure 1 represents the relative percent of intervals teachers displayed the five observed behaviors. In units of time,

Insert Figure 1 about here

teachers averaged 1 minute of absent behavior, 19 minutes of monitoring behavior, 14 minutes - 50 seconds of presentation behavior, 12 minutes - 50 seconds of assistance to students without learning disabilities behavior, and 2 minutes of assistance with students with learning
disabilities behavior.

Figure 2 represents the percent of time teachers spent in assisting each individual student. Teachers spent 1.4% of the time (42.5 seconds) assisting students without learning disabilities and 2.4% of the time (72.7 seconds) assisting students with learning disabilities. When the difference was compared through the use of a Z test, the results were not significant at the .0694 level. Although the results were not significant at the .0694 level, significance was approached.

Discussion

The results of the Z test used in this study indicates that regular classroom teachers do not spend a disproportionate amount of time assisting students with learning disabilities. The subjects of this study spent 42.5 seconds assisting students without learning disabilities as opposed to 72.8 seconds spent in assisting students with learning disabilities. While this difference was not significant at the .0694 level, significance was approached.

Due to federal laws and state mandates, mainstreaming has become part of the American educational system. Students with learning disabilities are mainstemed into regular classes for part of the school day and the regular classroom teacher carries the major responsibility for the successful integration of the students with learning disabilities. Corder (1981), Damborg (1981), and Baum and Frazita (1979) concluded in their studies that regular classroom
teachers were concerned with amount of time used to work with handicapped students at the expense of time needed to meet the educational objectives of the class. These concerns felt by regular classrooms can be somewhat alleviated with the results of this study.

Although the study results were not significant at the .0694 level, significance was approached. This is very important to remember when scheduling students with learning disabilities into regular classes. The results of the study do not give counselors and learning disabilities teachers the freedom to randomly schedule students with learning disabilities into regular classes. This study did not address two other important factors in scheduling students with learning disabilities. One factor important to student scheduling is the quality of the regular teacher's interactions with the student who has learning disabilities. Another factor to be considered in scheduling students with learning disabilities is the number of students that can be successfully integrated in one regular class period without overburdening the regular classroom teacher and upsetting the equilibrium of the regular class. These factors must be taken in consideration with the amount of teacher time spent with students who have learning disabilities when selecting classes with students who have learning disabilities.

Due to the present economic situation, many school districts are facing financial crisis. Administrators are expected to provide federal and state mandated special education programs with less funding from the federal and state governments. A quick look at this study's results may mislead administrators and school boards into thinking that students with learning disabilities can be fully and randomly placed into the
mainstream of regular classes. Again, scheduling of students with learning disabilities into regular classes cannot be done on just the results of this study. The quality of teacher interactions with students who have learning disabilities and the number of students with learning disabilities that can successfully be integrated into one class period must also be considered.

Like many other studies conducted in the area of special education, this particular study raises more questions than provides answers as to why teachers do not spend a significant amount of time more with students who have learning disabilities. Do regular classroom teachers spend little time with students who have learning disabilities because the learning disabilities teacher will spend a bigger block of time with the student in the resource room? Another question that can be raised is if regular classroom teachers are not spending a significant amount of time in the regular classroom with students who have learning disabilities, is special education class placement necessary?

Perhaps the most crucial question raised in this study is the quality of the special education resource program. Is the resource teacher scheduling the students with learning disabilities into regular classrooms where the student with learning disabilities can function at an optimum level without causing the regular classroom to spend a disproportionate amount of time with this student? And does the resource teacher provide the consultations with regular classroom teachers and the tutoring, if needed, with the students with learning disabilities to make the regular class placement a successful placement?
Due to state mandates, many of these questions cannot be answered. State mandates would not allow the denial of special education for any students which is what would have to be done in order to answer these questions.

In conclusion, the results of this study were not significant at the .0694 level. Regular classroom teachers do not spend a disproportionate amount of time assisting students with learning disabilities. It is suggested that further research be conducted in two areas: the quality of teacher interactions in assisting students with learning disabilities and the number of students with learning disabilities that can be successfully be integrated in one regular class period without overburdening the teacher and upsetting the equilibrium of the class.
References


Retardation, 1976, 14, 3-10.


TEACHER BEHAVIORS OBSERVED

- Absent: 0.02
- Monitor: 0.38
- Presentation: 0.29
- Assistance Non Learning Disabled: 0.25
- Assistance Learning Disabled: 0.04