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TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSION

By  
Dawn Giacchi

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the  
Master of Arts Degree  
Of  
The Graduate School  
At  
Rowan University  
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Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved: 5/6/03

## ABSTRACT

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TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSION  
2002/03

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The purpose of this research is to identify teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and factors that may effect their attitudes. The factors that were evaluated were: grade level taught, number of students in class, type of school, experience with special needs children, success with special needs children, administrative support, additional support services, level of education and years in the profession. Teachers in grades Kindergarten to twelfth (n=33) completed the "Survey of Teachers' Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming Special Needs Children". A correlation on the data showed that administrative support was significantly correlated with teachers' against inclusion score. Higher levels of administrative support are related to more positive attitudes towards inclusion. The other factors were found to be not significant. A descriptive analysis showed that many of the factors were going in the direction predicted. The descriptive analysis was starting to show support but not enough to show significant correlations.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Need

The researcher currently works with children with disabilities who are included in the regular education classroom. Through working alongside regular education teacher she has experienced varying feelings by the teachers about the appropriateness of special needs children being in a regular classroom. Some of the teachers have very willingly bonded with the special needs child in their class and adapted instruction to meet his/her behavioral and educational needs. Other teachers have acted extremely negatively towards the special needs child and treated him/her like an outsider not attempting to interact with them or teach to them in a way that suits him/her best.

This research was therefore provoked by the desire to understand teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and factors that may effect their attitudes. Through this research it was the hope to be able to identify the factors that my differentiate teachers who welcome inclusion and those who oppose it. If factors such as education, school support and experience with special needs children are determining factors to positive or negative attitudes towards inclusion steps can be undertaken to increase positive attitudes for most teachers.

### Purpose

The purpose of this research was to identify teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. The purpose was not merely to identify their attitudes but to find out what factors are common to teachers who support or oppose inclusion. Factors such as: years in the

profession, grade of the child, number of students in class, experience or no experience with inclusion, success with special needs students, administrative support, additional support services, type of school and education are factors that will be evaluated.

### Hypothesis

The hypotheses in this study were:

- The teachers' attitudes towards inclusion would be different depending on the years they have been in the profession.
- The teachers' attitudes towards inclusion would be different depending on the level of administrative support.
- The teachers' attitudes towards inclusion would be different depending on the teachers having or not having experience with inclusion.
- The teachers' attitudes towards inclusion would be different depending on the level of education completed.
- The teachers' attitudes towards inclusion would be different depending on the availability of additional support services
- The teachers' attitudes towards inclusion would be different depending on the grade of the child.
- The teachers' attitudes towards inclusion would be different depending on the number of students in class.
- The teachers' attitudes towards inclusion would be different depending on the type of school (urban, suburban, and rural).
- The teachers' attitudes towards inclusion would be different depending on their success with dealing with special needs students.

## Theory

Beginning in the 1970's there has been federal legislation that requires students who have disabilities to receive a free and appropriate education. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 required that a recipient of federal funds provide for the education of each qualified handicapped person to the maximum extent appropriate for the needs of the disabled person. Section 504 said that the recipient must put a disabled child in the regular classroom unless it is shown by the recipient that the regular classroom is not satisfactory even with the use of supplementary aides and services. ([www.weac.org/resource/june96/speced.htm](http://www.weac.org/resource/june96/speced.htm)). Section 504 is an important mandate of Least Restrictive Environment and the use of supplementary aids and services for disabled students. The problem with Section 504 was that it did not define supplementary aids and services. ([www.uni.edu/coe/inclusion/legal/index.html](http://www.uni.edu/coe/inclusion/legal/index.html))

Public law 94-142 was the first law to have a significant impact on education. Public Law 94-142 was a landmark in special education. Although previous legislation was in effect PL 94-142 set requirements and guidelines for the states to provide education for all students with disabilities. Some of the requirements of PL 94-142 were: procedures for referring those who were suspected of having a disability, team development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) begins, time limits were set on how long the eligibility referral process could take, specialized instruction and placement in the appropriate educational setting, reassessment of student's eligibility and specific procedures for settling disputes (Bradley, D King, M., Tessier, D., 1997).

In 1986 former President Ronald Reagan signed Public Law 99-457. Public Law 99-457 stressed the importance of early intervention with young children. Public law 99-457

extended the age group from children from birth to age 5; where PL 94-142 extended only to children 5-21 years old. PL 99-457 says that children from ages 3-21 have the right to a free and appropriate education. PL 99-457 also provides incentives for working with families and toddlers (birth –age 2) with disabilities. In the legislation an Individualized Family Service Plan is required because it is stressed that it is highly important for the family to be involved in addition to several agencies. Children who have developmental delay but do not have a specific label can receive early intervention services (Bradley, King-Sears & Tessier- Switlick, 1997).

The most recent reauthorization of PL 94-142 was Public Law 101-467, signed in 1990 by former President George Bush. At this time the law was called “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act” (IDEA). IDEA included children with autism and traumatic brain injury into the disabilities it encompassed. IDEA reemphasized least restrictive environment and also transition services. Transition services were very important because many of the students with disabilities had poor outcomes when they left the public education system. The inclusion of transition services to the law made it necessary for educators to plan with students no later than age 16 about their future after public school. This may include: school partnerships with employers, vocational training, continuing education, adult services, independent living or community participation (Bradley et al., 1997).

In addition to the legislation passed in regards to children with disabilities there are several court cases that have also had an important impact on the education of children with disabilities. The federal court decisions provide a guideline to schools about what is expected of them in determining the appropriate placement of children with disabilities.



In the case Greer vs. Rome City School District (11<sup>th</sup> circuit court, 1992) parents objected that their daughter be put in a self-contained special education classroom. The courts decided in favor of the parents. The court specifically said, "Before the school district may conclude that a handicapped child should be educated outside of the regular classroom it must consider whether supplemental aids and services would permit satisfactory education in the regular classroom." In this case the school district only considered the regular education classroom with no supplementary aids and services, the regular education classroom with only speech therapy or the self-contained classroom. The school district also complained that the cost was too high to educate in the regular classroom. The courts said that a school can not refuse to educate a child in the regular education classroom because of additional cost. The court also said that a school does not have to provide a full time teacher for the special needs student. This case was important in saying that all viable options must be considered before putting a child in a self contained classroom ([www.weac.org/resource/june96/speced.htm](http://www.weac.org/resource/june96/speced.htm)). The court in Greer v. Rome City School District looked at three factors that should be considered for least restrictive environment. The court said that the school has to look at the educational benefits that a child would receive in the regular education classroom with supplementary aids and services and compare it to the benefits that a more restrictive environment would provide. The effect on the other students of having a child with disabilities in the classroom should be considered. The third factor is the cost of supplementary aids and services needed by the child to receive an appropriate education. The cost of the child with disabilities can not be so great that it impacts the education of the other children or the setting may not be appropriate (Bradley et al., 1997).

In 1993 there was a court case *Oberti v. Board of Education of Clementon School District*. In this case Rafael Oberti was a kindergartener whom had Down Syndrome and attended a regular kindergarten in the morning to increase socialization. Rafael Oberti began having behavioral problems in the class. The teacher did consult the psychologist for interventions but never had an IEP meeting to look at adding goals and objectives for the behavioral problems. The teacher also did not request additional special education services to deal with the behaviors. The following year Rafael was put in a self-contained classroom with some mainstreaming. When his parents became discouraged because he was not being mainstreamed they brought the case to the federal court (Bradley et. al., 1997).

In the *Oberti v. Board of Education of Clementon School District* the court found the Rafael had the right to be educated in the regular education classroom despite his behavioral issues. The court found that the school had only made negligible efforts to include him. The court said that the school did not have sufficient supplementary aids and services for Rafael. The school did not have a curriculum plan, no behavior management and did not provide sufficient special education support to the teacher (Bradley et al., 1997).

In 1994 there was a case called *Clyde K. and Shelia K. v. Puyallup School District*. This case involved a fifteen year- old student, Ryan, with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder and Tourette's syndrome who was receiving special education in the regular education classroom with a special education resource room assistance. As time went on Ryan displayed use of obscenities, non-compliance, assault and harassing other students. The inappropriate behavior led to him being suspended from the classroom. His parents

at first agreed to a separate placement but then changed their minds and wanted another IEP meeting and a due process hearing. The court found in favor of the school saying that the school made sufficient attempt to keep Ryan in the regular education classroom and there was sufficient evidence that showed he was harmful to the other students and a separate placement would be more appropriate (Bradley et al., 1997).

### Definitions

Listed below are the definitions that pertain to the information and research presented in this paper. These definitions will help to clarify unfamiliar words throughout the paper.

*Inclusion* is the instruction of students with disabilities in the regular education classroom. Inclusion does not require the child to be ready to enter the regular education classroom but develops the classroom to support the educational, behavioral and social needs of students who are disabled (Bradley et al., 1997). Inclusion brings the services to the child in the regular education classroom instead of moving the child to the services. Inclusion requires that the child will benefit from being in the classroom rather than keeping up ([www.weac.org/resource/june96/speced.htm](http://www.weac.org/resource/june96/speced.htm)).

*Mainstreaming* is the participation in the general education environment when the child is academically/emotionally ready (Bradley et al., 1997). Mainstreaming is often referred to as the placement of a child in the regular education classroom for one or more periods.

An *Individualized Education Plan, IEP*, is a legally binding written document that establishes a program for a disabled child to benefit from education. The document should contain: the student's disability, a statement defining the student's present level

of performance, long and short term objectives, amount of time in general education, initiation date and duration of services, procedures used for evaluation and transition services. The IEP process includes identification and intervention, evaluation, IEP development, implementation and a yearly review ([www.geocities.com/EnchantedFores/1142/iep.html](http://www.geocities.com/EnchantedFores/1142/iep.html)).

*Supplementary aides and services* are services that are provided so a child with disabilities can receive instruction in the regular education classroom. The aids and services are such things as intensive short-term special instruction, readers for those who are visually impaired, special education assistant, an assistant to help a disabled student in and around school and during transportation and specialized and modified instructional equipment for use in school ([www.uni.edu/coe/inclusion/resources/glossary](http://www.uni.edu/coe/inclusion/resources/glossary)).

The term *free appropriate public education* is “special education and services that is provided at the public expense, under public supervision and direction and without charge. The education has to meet the standards of the state educational agency and include preschool, elementary or secondary school education”(20 U.S.C., section 1401 (a) (18)).

The *least restrictive environment* is an environment that places a child with disabilities in an educational environment that meet their individual needs. This environment should be in as close proximity as possible to their peers who are normally-developing. The federal law says that children with disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate are educated with children who are not disabled. The law also states that special classes, separate schooling and removing the students from the regular classroom should only be

done when education in the regular classroom can not be satisfactorily achieved even with supplementary aids and services (20 U.S.C., section 300.55 (b)(1)(2)).

*Due process* provides parents or the school system a way to appeal the decisions made at the IEP meetings. Parents are able to object to the educational classification, program or placement that the school offers their child (Bradley et al., 1997).

*Traumatic Brain Injury* is an acquired injury that leads to total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment. This injury is either open or closed head injury that can lead to impairments in language, memory, cognition, attention, reasoning abstract thinking, judgment, problem solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities information processing and speech (20 U.S.C., section 300.7 (b)(12)).

*Autism* is a developmental disorder that affects verbal and nonverbal communication, social interaction and stereotyped/ repetitive patterns of behavior, interest and activities. This disorder is evident before the age of 3.

*Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder* is a disorder where the individual has inattention, or hyperactivity or inattention and hyperactivity. Inattention and hyperactivity must be present in two or more settings.

*Tourette's Disorder* is a disorder where an individual has multiple motor tics and one or more vocal tics. A tic is a sudden, rapid, recurrent, non-rhythmic, stereotyped motor movement or vocalization. In Tourette's disorder the tics occur almost every day for more than a year.

### Assumptions

The researcher assumed that the teachers filling out the survey would work hard to answer the questions truthfully. One of the assumptions of the researcher was that many

of the teachers who were surveyed were from the same school. Some of the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion may have influenced the other teachers' attitudes. Also the teachers who work in this one school may have had similar experiences in the school with regards to the children and support of the school. Their opinions therefore may reflect the attitudes of teachers in this particular school and not be a true representation of all teachers' attitudes.

Another assumption was that the way the teachers' attitudes are measured is through a survey on teachers' attitudes that the teachers filled out themselves. The teachers may have answered questions according to what they think the researcher wanted them to answer or they may answer according to how they think they felt but this is not truly how they feel or act.

### Limitations

One of the limitations was that the sample of teachers came from the northeast region of the country. This sample therefore may not be representative of teachers' attitudes towards inclusion from all areas of the country.

Another limitation was if the teachers surveyed were not evenly distributed between lower, middle and upper socioeconomic school districts the results may not be a good representation of teachers' attitudes.

### Overview

The following chapters of this thesis looked at other research that has been done on teachers' attitudes on inclusion. The research that was reviewed looked at teachers' attitudes on inclusion when they have the support of the principal, counselors, school psychologist and other teachers. Research also looked at the differences in teachers'

attitudes when they have experience with inclusion in their classroom and when they have not. Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion was evaluated in several studies when they have additional special education classes. The type of disability a student has and its effect on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion also was reviewed.

Chapter 3 of the thesis explained the design of the study. This part of the thesis defined the sample and the test that the researcher used. For this study the test was a survey that the teachers filled out themselves on their attitudes towards inclusion. The researcher also designated which statistical test she used to analyze the results of the study.

Chapter 4 of the thesis presents the findings from the data that was gathered and analyzed. In this section the hypotheses was accepted or rejected and the data was interpreted.

In Chapter 5 the thesis was summarized and conclusions about this research was stated. Finally implications for further research and revisions that are recommended for the study were discussed.

## Chapter 2: Review of Literature

The following chapter looked into some of the research that has been done involving teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. This chapter looked at teachers' self-efficacy, support of school personnel, additional special education classes, experience and in-service trainings and their effect on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion.

### Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion and Teachers' Self-efficacy

William Bender and Cynthia Vail (1995) conducted research that looked at teachers' attitudes toward their own efficacy and toward mainstreaming. The research that was conducted asked 127 mainstream teachers in grades 1 through 8 to fill-out a self-evaluation. The teachers who were subjects in this research were from 11 schools in three different districts in Georgia. There were eight elementary schools and three middle schools.

To assess the teachers' attitudes on mainstreaming a six-question likert scale was used. The items were rated from a 1 (strongly disagree) to a 5 (strongly agree). All the items were added to form a composite score that revealed the teacher's beliefs in regards to the benefits of mainstreaming for students with and without disabilities. The higher the composite score was, the more positive was the teacher's attitudes towards mainstreaming. The questions that were included in the survey assessed mainstreaming attitudes in general and mainstreaming practices in the teacher's school. Sample questions were: "I believe that mainstreaming has been successful in my school." And "I support mainstreaming the handicapped." (Bender & Vail, 1995)

In the research conducted to assess teacher efficacy, the Teacher Effectiveness Scale



by Gibson and Dembo was used. The Effectiveness Scale has 16 items that result in two different scores. A high score on the first measure implies that a teacher believes that he or she can make a difference in a student's life despite problems in a child's home life. A high score on the last measure indicates that a teacher believes that his or her teaching effectiveness is limited by problems in a child's home life. (Bender & Vail, 1995)

The results of the research showed that 13% of the teachers did not support the concept of mainstreaming. Another 23% of the teachers surveyed felt no strong commitment to mainstreaming. Correlations between grade level of the students and teacher efficacy was significant. The correlation between grade level and mainstreaming attitudes was not significant ( $r=.17$ ;  $p<.07$ ) but it suggests some relationship between the teachers attitude and grade level. Teachers who taught higher grade levels had more negative attitudes toward their own teacher efficacy and possibly toward mainstreaming. Personal efficacy correlated negatively with class size. From this it is suggested that teachers who have a larger size class have less positive views of their instructional effectiveness. The number of students with disabilities in the class nor years of experience with students with disabilities correlated with mainstreaming attitudes (Bender & Vail, 1995).

#### Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion and Student Disability

Rory McNally, Peter Cole and Russell Waugh (2001) conducted a study that examined regular classroom teachers' attitudes to the need of additional classroom support (curriculum and personnel) for students with mild or severe intellectual disabilities, who were integrated into the regular classroom. In this study 72 female elementary school teachers were surveyed. A short vignette describing a hypothetical

student was randomly assigned to each teacher. In each vignette the student's intellectual ability was defined as either, average, mild or severe and the student's effort was also defined as either low, moderate or high. The teachers responded to a seven-point Likert scale and a magnitude scaling instrument.

A univariate analysis was used to test for differences between groups on the seven-point magnitude scaling instruments. The Scheffe test for multiple comparisons was used to look at the differences between the three levels of ability and effort. The results of the study showed that there was a significant difference between all of the levels of ability with regard to the need for additional personnel support. Teachers perceived that students who had average ability would need significantly less additional personnel support than students with mild ability (MD=1.2423,  $p<.0040$ ) and severe intellectual ability (MD=2.2111,  $p<.000$ ). Students who had mild intellectual disability were perceived needing significantly less additional personnel support than students with severe intellectual ability (MD=.9688,  $p<.024$ ). In terms of curriculum support the findings show teachers perceive that students who have average intellectual ability need significantly less additional curriculum resources than students who have mild intellectual ability (MD= 1.7083,  $p<.000$ ) or severe intellectual ability (MD=2.2500,  $p<.094$ ). (McNally et al., 2001)

The Scheffe's test was applied to the magnitude scaling instrument data. The Scheffe's test showed that regular classroom teachers perceive that students with average intellectual ability will need significantly less additional curriculum resources than students with a mild ability (MD=3.4363,  $p<.013$ ) or a severe intellectual ability (MD=5.9433,  $p<.001$ ). (McNally et al., 2001)

The results of this study show that regular classroom teachers do not take student effort into account when making judgments on the levels of support needed for the designated student. The regular teachers do not see a difference in the levels of need for additional curriculum support materials for students with mild and severe disabilities. Regular classroom teachers saw a significant difference in the need for levels of support for average, mild and severe intellectual ability students. The more severe the disability the more assistance for personnel was needed.

A multivariate analysis of variance was performed on the factors ability and effort for the variables of additional curriculum support and the need for additional personnel support. The SPSS MANOVA was used to analyze the main effects. There was no significant effect of effort ( $F=1.39, p<.001$ ) and there was no significant effect for the interaction of ability and effort ( $F=.535, p<.001$ ). The multivariate results yielded a significant effect for ability ( $F=19.866, p<.001$ ). (McNally et al., 2001)

Research has also looked at differences in teachers' attitudes towards mainstreaming children with certain kinds of disabilities. Differences in attitudes towards physically handicapped, emotionally disturbed, mentally retarded, and speech impaired children were looked at. Alexander and Strain's research found that teachers are most negative to mainstreaming emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded students. Through their research they found that knowledge about the disability, experience with children with disabilities and training in teaching students with disabilities are major factors effecting teacher attitudes (Alexander & Strain, 1978). Hannah and Pliner who did their research in 1983 looking at teachers' attitudes towards mainstreaming children with certain kinds of disabilities had results identical to Alexander and Strain.

### Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion and Support of School Personnel

Research was conducted by Cook, Semmel, and Gerber that looked at attitudes of 49 principals and 64 special education teachers in regards to inclusion of special needs children. This research was spurred by the review of 4 decades of research on attitudes towards inclusion conducted by Scruggs and Mastropieri. In Scruggs and Mastropieri's research they reported that 65% of regular education teachers supported the concept of inclusion but when the items were termed more specifically an average of 40.5% of the regular education teachers supported inclusion. When other factors were evaluated only 38%, 29%, 28% and 11% respectively said that they had adequate material support, expertise or training, time and personnel support for successfully carrying out inclusion in the classroom. This research said that positive attitudes towards inclusion may be increased by positive attitudes of other influential school personnel (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996).

In the research conducted by Semmel and Gerber questionnaires were given to special education teachers. Twenty-nine elementary and thirty-five junior high school special education teachers participated. The teachers were asked to rank their agreement to twenty-one statements regarding inclusion. The statements came from the Regular Education Initiative Survey. Forty-nine principals also ranked their agreement to statements from the Regular Education Initiative Survey. (Semmel, Abernathy, Butera & Lesar, 1991)

The data in this research was analyzed by Nonparametric bivariate procedures (Mann-Whitney U tests) to analyze the differences between principals' and special educators'

attitudes on seven specific items. Univariate means and standard deviations for each item were used to describe the attitudes reported by respondents. (Semmel et al., 1991)

The Mann-Whitney U tests indicated statistically significant differences ( $p < .05$ ) between the principals and special education teachers opinions on five of the seven items. Principals showed significantly greater agreement with statements that special education teachers should help with instruction of all of the students with learning disabilities in the regular classroom,  $Z = 2.17$ ,  $p = .02$ . Principals also showed greater agreement to the statement, teachers have the instructional skill to teach all students even those who have disabilities,  $Z = 2.41$ ,  $p = .01$ . Principals also showed significantly greater agreement to the statement that achievement levels of students with mild disabilities would increase if they were placed in the regular classroom,  $Z = 3.69$ ,  $p = .002$ . Principals showed significantly greater agreement to the statement that the regular classroom teacher with consultant services is the most effective environment for students with mild disabilities,  $Z = 4.14$ ,  $p < .001$ . Special education teachers reported significantly higher agreement to the statement, currently mandated resources for students with mild disabilities must be protected regardless of the setting of services,  $Z = -3.38$ ,  $p = .007$ . The discriminant function showed a correlation of .52, indicating that there was significant differences between the attitudes of principals and special education teachers on the seven items. (Semmel et al., 1991)

The results of the research show that principals and special education teachers hold significant differences of opinion in regards to inclusion. The findings show that principals supported the finding that children with mild disabilities improve their academic achievement when put in the most effective environment with consultation

services to a greater degree than the special education teachers. This finding is important due to the fact that special educators, those who have the most training and experience with special needs children show a greater lack of support towards inclusion (Simmel, et al., 1991).

C.J. Daane, Mary Beirne-Smith and Dianne Latham (2000) conducted a study to investigate the perceptions of elementary teachers (regular and special education) and administrators towards inclusion. The survey looked at the teacher collaborative efforts, instruction of students with disabilities, teacher preparedness for meeting the needs of the students with disabilities and achievement outcomes. The survey was given to 366 teachers and administrators.

In this study, a school in the Southeast was chosen which had been implementing inclusion without collaborative teacher and administration efforts or in-service training. The study surveyed 324 elementary regular education teachers, 42 special education teachers and 15 administrators. (Daane et al., 2000)

The results of this study were descriptive. The results found that administrators and teachers agreed that team teaching was taking place and that they cooperatively planned Individual Education Plans. Some teachers believed that they worked collaboratively but said that the regular education teachers were not part of the IEP process making it difficult to deal with the children with disabilities in the classroom. Special education, regular education and administration all indicated that there was collaboration. On the question if they perceived teachers to be comfortable with collaboration, all three groups responded that they did not. During interviews some of the reasons given for this was: conflict of personality, lack of planning time and limited time in the classroom by the

special education teacher. On the question if they felt that the inclusive classroom was the most effective environment for students who have disabilities, special and regular education teachers disagreed and the administrators agreed. The special education teachers who were interviewed said that it was necessary to have pull out services in place for some of the students. Teachers and administrators realized that the presence of students with disabilities in the general classroom caused the teacher to have additional work. Special education and regular education teachers indicated that there were more management problems for regular education teachers when they had students with disabilities in their classroom. The administrators disagreed. All three groups did agree that regular education teachers are not prepared to meet the needs of students with disabilities. All three groups disagreed with the statement that students with disabilities achieve more academic success in the regular education classroom but all agreed that they grew socially. (Daane et al., 2000)

#### Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion and Special Education Classes

A study was conducted by Deborah Sesow and Gary Adams (1982) to see if the number of Special Education classes, having special education in student teaching or having handicapped friends and relatives influences education majors' attitudes towards mainstreaming. In this study 49 Elementary Education majors were surveyed from the University of Nebraska. All of the students were graduating seniors who were currently doing their student teaching in a regular education classroom. The students were asked to respond to 11 attitudinal statements on a questionnaire on mainstreaming handicapped students in the regular education classroom. Before they answered the questionnaire they were asked to write down the number of special education classes taken, the number of

students with disabilities in their student teaching placement and the number of friends and relatives who had disabilities.

A stepwise multiple regression statistical analysis was done on each of the statements. The SPSS multiple regression program was used to do the statistical computations. The results of the study revealed that there was a significant difference on item 7 which stated, I would be uncomfortable with a mildly handicapped child in my classroom. Students who had a disabled student in their student teaching placement were more comfortable with have a student with disabilities in the classroom ( $F=5.52$ ,  $df1/47$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The sub analysis showed that the number of special education classes ( $F=4.49$ ,  $df 1/45$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and the number of friends and relatives with disabilities ( $F=4.31$ ,  $df 1/45$ ,  $p<.05$ ) were two variables which reached statistical significance. Question 10 stated, presently, the regular classroom teacher is adequately prepared to include a mildly handicapped child in his/her classroom. This statement was statistically significant on all three variables ( $F=5.89$ ,  $df 3/45$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The sub analysis showed that statistical significant difference was due to the number of special education classes taken ( $F=14.51$ ,  $df1/45$ ,  $p<.001$ ). No statistical significant differences were found for items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, and 11. (Sesow & Adams, 1982)

Stoler and Dennis (1992) conducted a study that looked at teachers' perceptions towards inclusion of students with disabilities in their classrooms. Variables that were considered in the study were number of special education classes taken and in-service trainings on special education. In this study 182 teachers were surveyed from nine high schools in six districts in a large suburban area. This study was a nonexperimental, descriptive research design. Of the 182 teachers surveyed 141 indicated that they had



never taken a class in special education and 2 teachers reported over twenty hours in special education. Only 11 teachers reported having more than ten hours of in-service training in special education while 141 teachers said they had never had training in special education.

A one-way analysis of variance and t test was used for the two independent variables. The first question looked at if there is a difference in the attitudes and perceptions of regular education teachers toward inclusion who have different educational backgrounds. A one-way analysis of variance on the overall perceptions of the teachers and each of the four subscales was used and found the results were statistically significant. This indicates that teachers with differing educational levels have different perceptions of inclusion. Teachers who had attained higher levels of education had less positive attitudes towards inclusion. The second question looked at if there is a difference in the attitudes and perceptions of regular education teachers towards inclusion who have differing amounts of special education courses and in-service training. A t test for two independent samples was used. A one-way analysis of variance was not used because the sample with special education classes was too small to analyze with this method. The t test for each subscale and overall perceptions of the regular education teachers revealed statistically significant differences in the perceptions of inclusion depending on the amount of special education classes. Teachers who have had special education classes had more positive attitudes towards inclusion than teachers who did not have any special education classes. The statistical analysis did not show a significant difference between teachers who had in-service trainings and those who did not. Overall the teachers with in-service training in

special education did show more positive attitudes toward inclusion than those without.

(Stoler & Dennis, 1992)

Anthony Van Reusen, Alan Shoho and Kimberly Barker (2000) conducted a study to measure 125 teachers from a large suburban high school completing a twenty-item, inclusion survey. The survey measured teachers' attitudes using a twenty-item, four-point, forced-choice Likert scale. The inclusion survey measured teacher attitudes in four domains: teacher training, academic climate, academic content/teacher effectiveness and social adjustment.

The results of the study were analyzed using an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent t-test to determine if teacher attitudes toward inclusion were effected by experience level, content of subject area taught, gender, or amount of special education training. The significance level used was  $p < .05$ . "The results found a significant difference between the overall attitudinal responses of teachers who reported adequate to high levels of special education training or experiences and those who did not receive special education training,  $F(3, 121) = 8.312, p < .001$ . Secondly significant differences were found in two of the four domains between attitudinal responses of teachers who have and adequate to high levels of special education training or experiences and those who report a minimum or low level of training or experience. The two domains were academic content/teacher effectiveness,  $F(3, 121) = 9.724, p < .001$  and teacher preparation,  $F(3, 121) = 10.018, p < .001$ . Third the teachers levels of social adjustment,  $F(3, 121) = .269, p < .8479$  and academic climate,  $F(3, 121) = .925, p < .4321$ , on the part of students with disabilities in general education classrooms were found to be insignificant

factors among differential levels of special education preparation among the teachers.”

(Van Reusen et al., 2001)

Of the sixty-eight teachers or 54% of the survey sample reported having minimal to no special education training or classroom experience in teaching or working with students with disabilities. Those teachers who had high levels of special education classes had a more positive perception of their ability to teach students with disabilities and deliver the curriculum content. Teachers who reported high levels of special education classes had significantly better attitudes toward inclusion than teachers with no or minimal special education training ( $F(3, 121)=8.312, p=.001$ ). The results of this study show that positive teacher attitude towards inclusion appears related to levels of special education classes and training. The teachers who had more positive attitudes on inclusion also had higher levels of special education classes. (Van Reusen et al., 2001)

Richard Shade and Roger Stewart (2001) conducted a study that looked at general education and special education teachers' attitudes towards inclusion before and after they completed an introductory class in special education. The hypothesis of this study was that after the special education class, special education and general education teachers would have more positive attitudes towards inclusion. The participants in the study were 122 general education majors and 72 special education majors. The course that they were enrolled in was Survey of Special Education. On the first day of the class the participants were given a 48-question inclusion inventory. This inventory asked questions about teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and their confidence in teaching them. After the class the students were given the same inclusion inventory. The inventory used a 5-point Likert scale.

The data in this study was analyzed using a dependent t test. The total gain test score was statistically significant for the general and special education majors. The general and special education majors' attitudes towards inclusion were positively changed after the special education course. (Shade & Stewart, 2001)

Rea Kirk (1998) conducted research that looked at the effectiveness of a course dealing with inclusion on the attitudes of teachers. In this study 59 teachers completed the course "The Psychology of Learning Encompassing the Exceptional Learner". The teachers completed a two part survey which included their attitudes and beliefs about people with disabilities and five questions about students with special needs.

In comparing the pre and post test answer question number one, "First thing that comes to mind" the response different learning styles came in third but this response was not even mentioned in the pre-test. Eleven percent of the responses in the pre-test was needing a special class or aide and this was not given in the post-test. On question number two, "Feelings as a Teacher" seven percent said students with special needs are the same as the other students but on the post-test no one gave this answer. In the post-test the use of different teaching methods for students with disabilities was given. On question number three and four, "What is needed for inclusionary teaching" twenty one percent said accommodating physical needs on the pre-test none said this on the post-test. On question number five, "explaining a special needs student to the class", on the pre-test teachers gave vague answers on the post-test the answers ranged from hold a class meeting to talk about feelings. In this survey numerals indicated appropriate responses. On the data a t-test was performed. The survey showed no significant statistical difference between means of pre and post- test responses. Despite the results were not

statistically significant the research indicated greater awareness of different learning styles, that curriculum and instructional adaptations will be needed and extra time and support will be necessary. (Kirk, 1998)

Alex Johnson and Carol Cartwright (1979) conducted research whether information or experience about the handicapped would improve teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. This study consisted of an experimental group of 29 prospective regular classroom teachers who are enrolled in Educational Adjustments for Exceptional Children, an informational class on mainstreaming. They also were enrolled in the class, Experience with Exceptional Children, a course that provides experience with disabled students. Twenty-seven of the teachers were enrolled only in the information class and 28 were enrolled only in the experience course. The participants filled out the Rucker-Gable Educational Programming scale before and after the courses.

The pre and post-test data was analyzed by an Analysis of Variance with Repeated Measures. The results showed that the information course and experience course combination did not pass the information only course or the experience course in improving general knowledge about mainstreaming. The information course and experience course combination and the information only course were equal in effectiveness ( $F=7.59$ ,  $df=2/81$ ,  $p<.05$ ). They were more effective than the experience only class in improving participants' attitudes. (Johnson & Cartwright, 1979)

#### Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion and Experience and In-service Training

Deana Jobe and James Rust (1996) conducted research on 162 classroom teachers to look at their attitudes towards inclusion. The 138 of the teachers had taught for over 6 years and 72 indicated that they had in-service training on inclusion. The factors of

gender, teaching experience, inclusion in-service training and special education teaching experience were looked at for their influence on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. The teachers were asked to complete the attitude scale, Opinions Relative to the Integration of Students with Disabilities.

The results of the Opinions Relative to the Integration of Students with Disabilities were analyzed by an analysis of variance, factor analysis, and the Pearson's correlation coefficients. The results showed that the mean score for teachers with less than 6 years of teaching experience (n=24) was 79.08, and the mean score for the more experienced teachers (n=138) was 74.66. An analysis of variance was used to see if the variables had an effect on the total score on the attitude scale. The interaction between inclusion in-service training and special education teaching experience was significant  $F(2, 147)=3.15, p<.05$ . None of the other factors reached significance. Teachers who had less than 6 years of teaching experience did not differ significantly from the attitudes of more experienced teachers. Teachers who had inclusion in-service experience related positively to factor 1 (Benefits of Inclusion) and 3 (Ability to Teach Students with Disabilities). Teachers who had inclusion in-service experience are slightly more likely than others to have positive attitudes towards inclusion (Jobe & Rust, 1996).

A study by Vaughn (1996) looked at inclusion and special teachers' attitudes on inclusion through the use of focus group interviews. The majority of the teachers who were interviewed, who were not participating in inclusion had negative attitudes about inclusion. These teachers also reported that they felt the administration were out of touch with classroom realities. The teachers voiced that inclusion might be more successful based on class size, adequate resources and teacher preparation. Villa (1996) found that

teachers who had experience with inclusion had favorable attitudes to the inclusion of children with disabilities. Their research found that after the implementation period when teachers have gained knowledge of how to implement effective inclusion practices they have increased commitment.

LeRoy and Simpson (1996) conducted research over a three year time span in Michigan. Their study showed that as teachers' experience with children with disabilities increased their confidence to teach them increased as well. Their research indicated that teachers who possessed negative or neutral attitudes at the beginning of having a special needs child in their classroom changed over time as their experience and expertise increased.

The research presented shows many relevant findings. Research on teachers' self-efficacy showed that teachers had more negative attitudes towards their own self-efficacy and possibly mainstreaming with the upper grades. Personal efficacy correlated negatively with class size. (Bender & Vail, 1995) All of the research that was evaluated found that teachers had different attitudes towards different disabilities. Teachers had more negative attitudes towards inclusion of students with emotional disturbances and mental retardation. Research on level of education of teachers showed teachers who had higher levels of education had less positive attitudes towards inclusion. Teachers who had special education classes showed more positive attitudes towards inclusion than those teachers who did not have any special education classes. Several studies found significant differences in teachers who had high levels of special education training and experiences compared to those who did not. Several studies, surveyed teachers who did not have a special education background then the teachers took an introductory class in

Special education and they were surveyed again. The post survey revealed positive changes towards inclusion. Research found that teachers who had less than 6 years of teaching experience did not differ significantly from the attitudes of more experienced teachers. It did show that teachers who had experience with special needs students had more positive attitudes after they experienced a special needs child.



## Chapter 3: Design of Study

### Sample

The sample in this study was 33 teachers from the regular education classroom. These teachers were from schools in the northeast region of the country. Age and sex of the teachers were not controlled and ages varied.

### Measures

In this study the “Survey of Teacher’s Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming Special-Needs Children” was used as the measuring device. This survey is a research measure. In the original survey that was administered there was 41 items. An item analysis was conducted and the 30 items that had the highest item scale correlation coefficients were chosen to form the final scale. Split half reliability of the 30 item survey was conducted and was found to be .92 (Larrivee, B., 1979).

### Design

The design of this study was correlational. The questions in the survey were split into questions that are for inclusion and those that are against inclusion. A mean score for and against inclusion was figured out. The teachers’ mean score for and against inclusion was correlated with nine variables. Due to the small number of surveys returned a descriptive analysis was also completed on the data.

### Testable Hypotheses

The hypotheses in this study were:

- Null Hypothesis: No difference would be found in teachers' attitudes depending on the years they have been in the profession.

Alternate Hypothesis: There would be differences in the teachers' attitudes depending on the years they have been in the profession. Teachers who have been in the profession for more years would have more positive attitudes

- Null Hypothesis: No difference would be in found in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on the grade level taught.

Alternative Hypothesis: There would be differences in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on the grade level taught. Teachers in the lower grades, k-3, would have more positive attitudes towards inclusion.

- Null hypothesis: No difference would be found in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on their level of education.

Alternative Hypothesis: There would be differences in the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on their level of education. Teachers who have higher levels of education would have more positive attitudes than those with lower levels of education.

- Null Hypothesis: No differences would be found in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on experience with students with disabilities.

Alternate Hypothesis: There would be differences in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on experience with students with disabilities. Teachers who have had experience with students with disabilities would have more positive attitudes than teachers without experience with students with disabilities.

- Null hypothesis: No difference would be found in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on the level of administrative support.

Alternate hypothesis: There would be differences in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on the level of administrative support. Teachers who have support from administration would have more positive attitudes than teachers who do not have administrative support.
- Null hypothesis: No difference would be found in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion based on availability of additional support services.

Alternative hypothesis: There would be differences in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on the availability of additional support services.
- Null hypothesis: No differences would be found in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on the number of students in class.

Alternate hypothesis: There would be differences in teachers' attitudes towards teachers attitudes towards inclusion depending on the number of students in class.

Teachers with fewer numbers of students would have more positive attitudes.
- Null hypothesis: No differences would be found in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on the type of school that they teach in.

Alternate hypothesis: There would be differences in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on the type of school they are teaching in. Teachers in rural schools would have more positive attitudes towards inclusion.
- Null hypothesis: No differences would be found in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on their success dealing with special needs children.

Alternate hypothesis: There would be differences in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on their success with dealing with special need students.

Teachers with higher levels of success would have more positive attitudes towards inclusion.

### Analysis

To test the hypotheses in this study a Pearson Correlation was used. This model was appropriate due to the fact that the research is trying to see if there is a relationship, either positive or negative, between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and teachers' years in the profession, grade level taught, number of special education classes taken, experience or no experience with children with disabilities, level of administrative support and availability of support services. A descriptive analysis was also completed because of the small sample. The descriptive analysis showed the direction that the results were going through graphs.

### Summary

Thirty-three regular education teachers were given the "Survey of Teachers' Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming." This is a 30 question survey that was answered using a 5 point likert scale. The teacher also answered some preliminary questions about the years in the profession, grade taught etc. From the results of the survey, a Pearson Correlation and descriptive analysis was done. It was evaluated to see if there is a relationship between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and teachers' years in the profession, grade level taught, level of education, experience or no experience with children with disabilities, level of success with special needs students, type of school, number of

students in class, level of administrative support and availability of additional support services.

#### Chapter 4: Analysis of Data

I rejected the null hypothesis, which stated, no differences would be found in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion depending on the level of administrative support. It was found that the level of administrative support was correlated with the teachers' against attitudes towards inclusion,  $r = .288$ ,  $p < .042$ . The teachers' against score went up with more administrative support. A high against score means that they were for inclusion.

A descriptive analysis of administrative support showed that the teachers' mean score against inclusion was the lowest for those who received very low support (group 1) followed by low (group 2), high (group 4) and then average (group 3). A low mean score against inclusion means the teachers were against inclusion. Teachers with a very low level of administrative support had the highest attitude against inclusion. The teachers mean score for inclusion showed similar findings. Teachers with very low levels of support (group 1) had the highest mean score for inclusion. A high mean score for inclusion means that the teachers' attitudes were against inclusion. (see Figure 4.1)

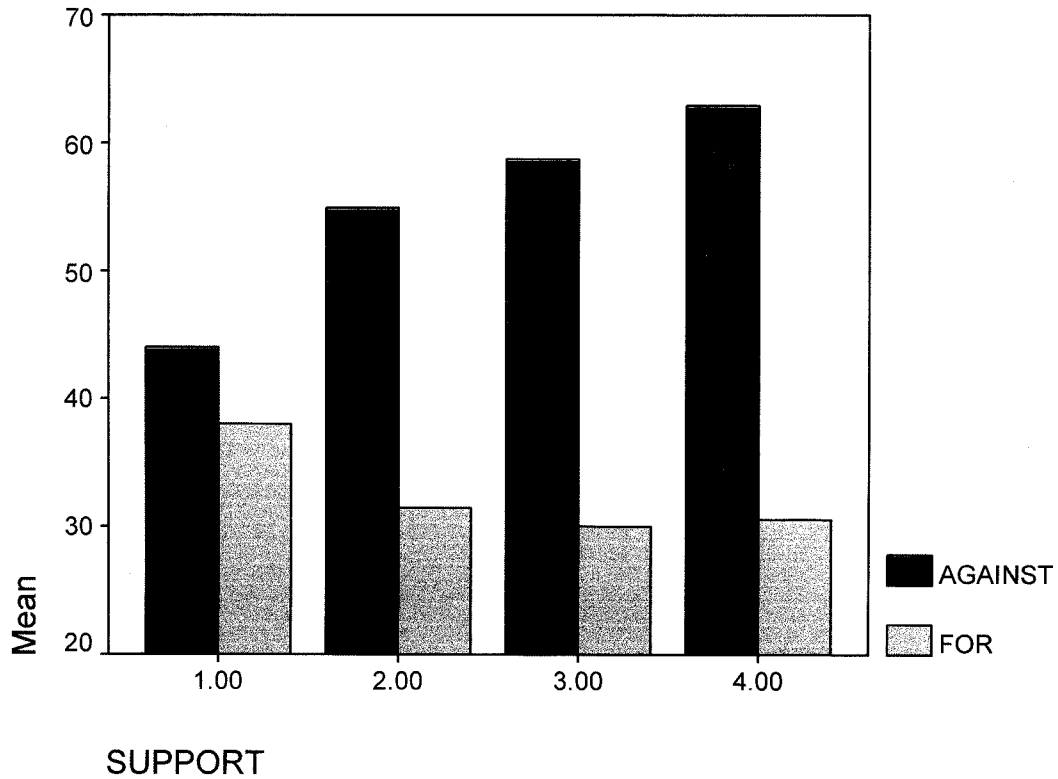


Figure 4.1

I failed to reject the following hypotheses: No differences would be found in teachers' attitudes depending on the years they have been in the profession, grade level taught, level of education, experience with students with disabilities, success with students with students with disabilities and availability of additional support services. On the remaining data the correlations were found to be non- significant. A descriptive analysis was preformed. The descriptive analysis revealed graphs which showed that the results were going in the direction predicted.

Even though many of the findings were not significant there was one interesting finding. The results showed that there was a negative correlation between teachers' attitudes for and against inclusion,  $r = -.411$ ,  $p < .001$ . As teachers' attitudes for inclusion went up teachers' attitudes against inclusion went down.

For teachers' years in the profession the descriptive analysis showed that as the teachers' years in the profession increased the teachers' mean score increased. The teachers' increase in mean score against inclusion means that their attitudes were for inclusion. The analysis on teachers' mean score for inclusion showed similar findings. As teachers' years in the profession increased their mean score for inclusion decreased. A decrease in mean score for inclusion means that their attitudes were for inclusion.

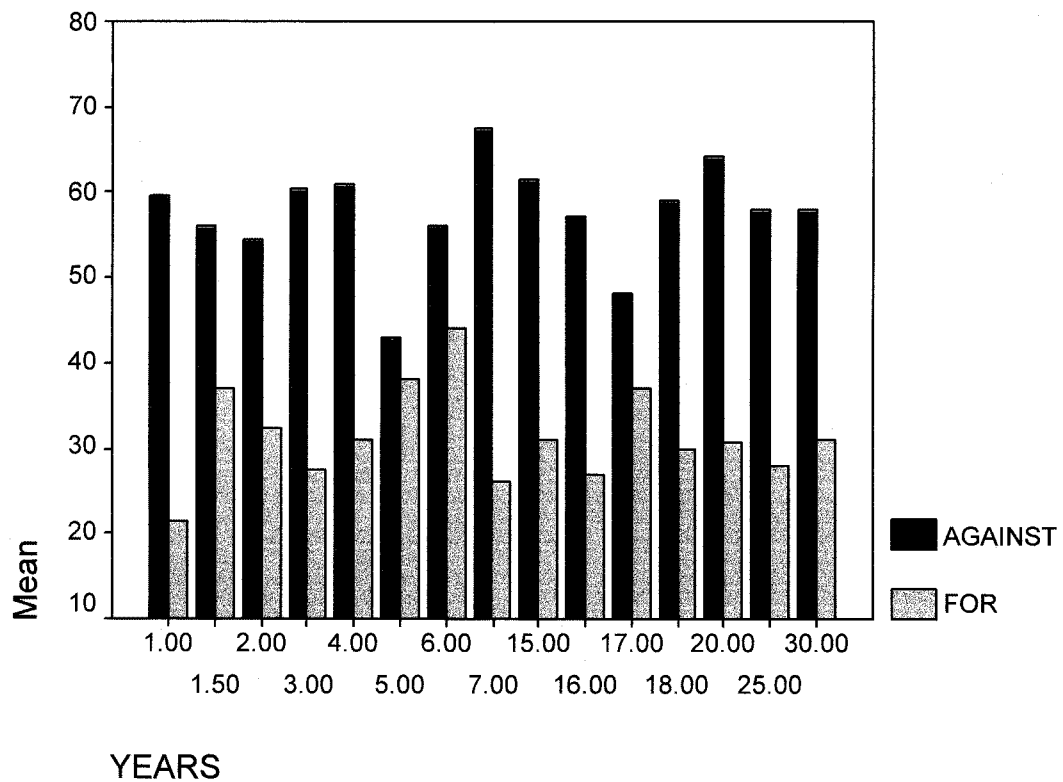


Figure 4.2

Descriptive analysis on the grade level taught showed that the lower grades (Kindergarten to sixth grades) had a higher mean score against inclusion than the upper grades (seventh to twelfth grades) which had a lower mean score against inclusion. The descriptive results on the means score for inclusion showed that kindergarten (group 1) and grades ten to twelfth (group 5) had the lowest mean score for inclusion with grades



first to nine being in the middle. Grades one to three are represented in figure 4.3 by group 2, grades four to six by group 3 and grades seven to nine by group 4. A low mean score for inclusion means that the teachers' attitudes are for inclusion.

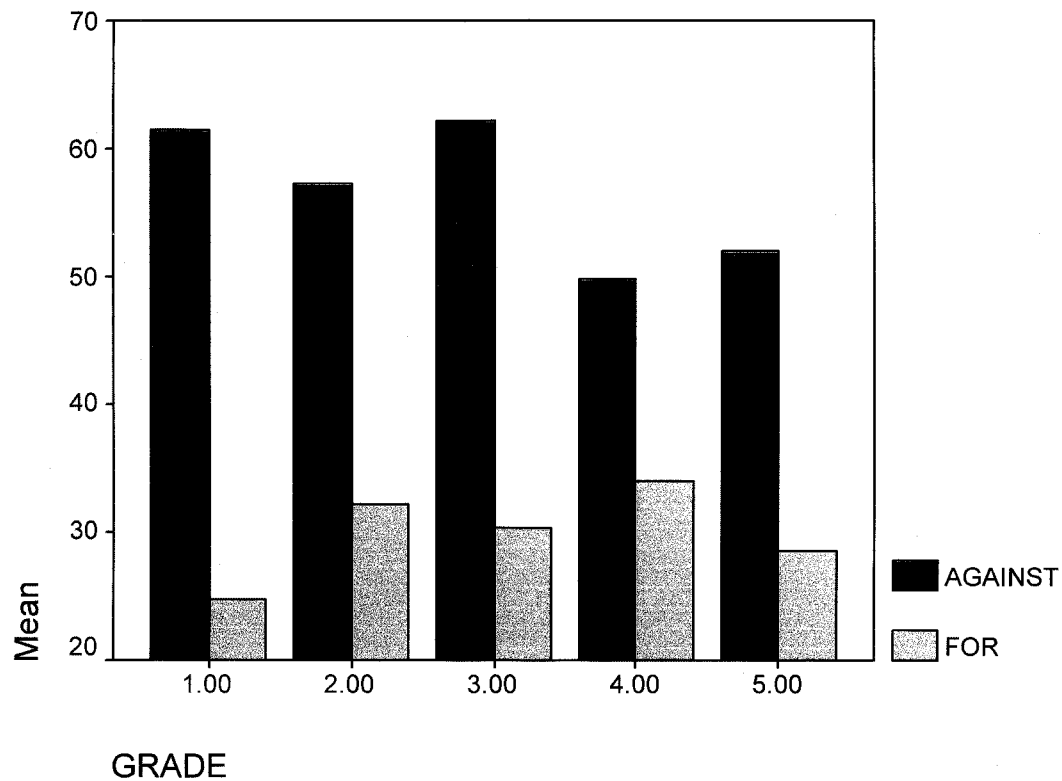


Figure 4.3

The descriptive analysis on type of school that the teachers taught in showed that Suburban schools (group 2) had the highest mean score for inclusion, followed by urban (group 1) and then rural (group 3). A high mean score against inclusion means that the Suburban schools had the highest negative teachers' attitudes towards inclusion followed by Urban. Rural schools had the most positive teacher attitude toward inclusion. The teachers' mean score against inclusion shows identical findings. Suburban schools (group 2) had the lowest mean score against inclusion, followed by urban (group 1) and then rural (group 3).

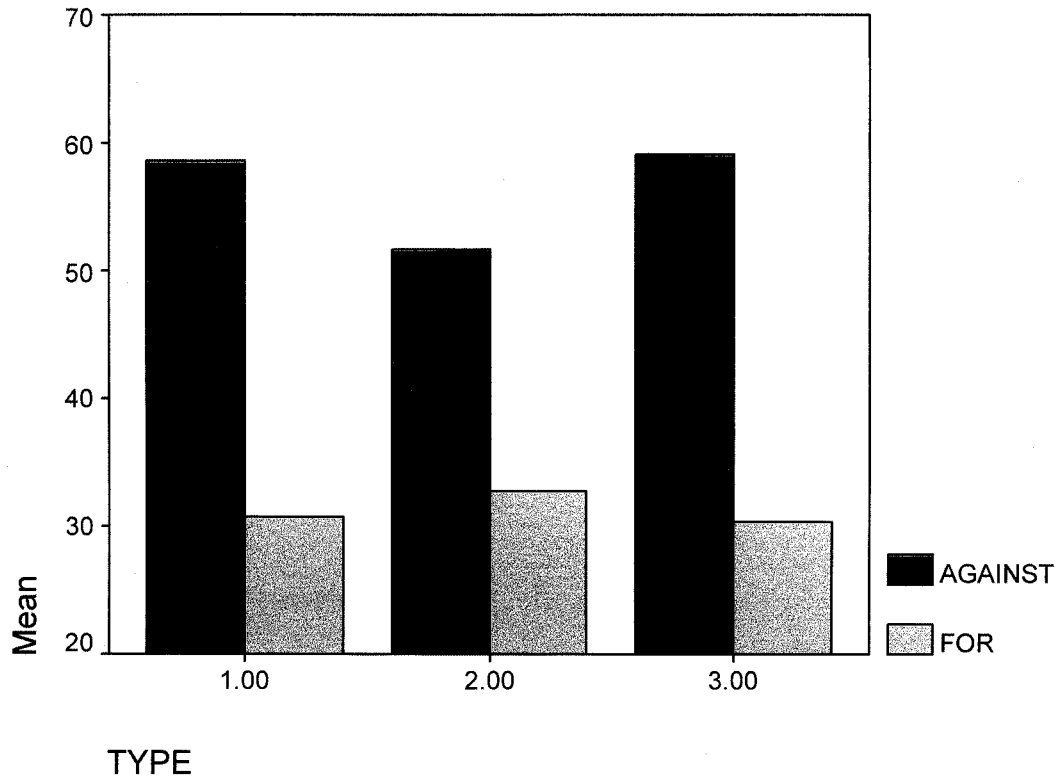
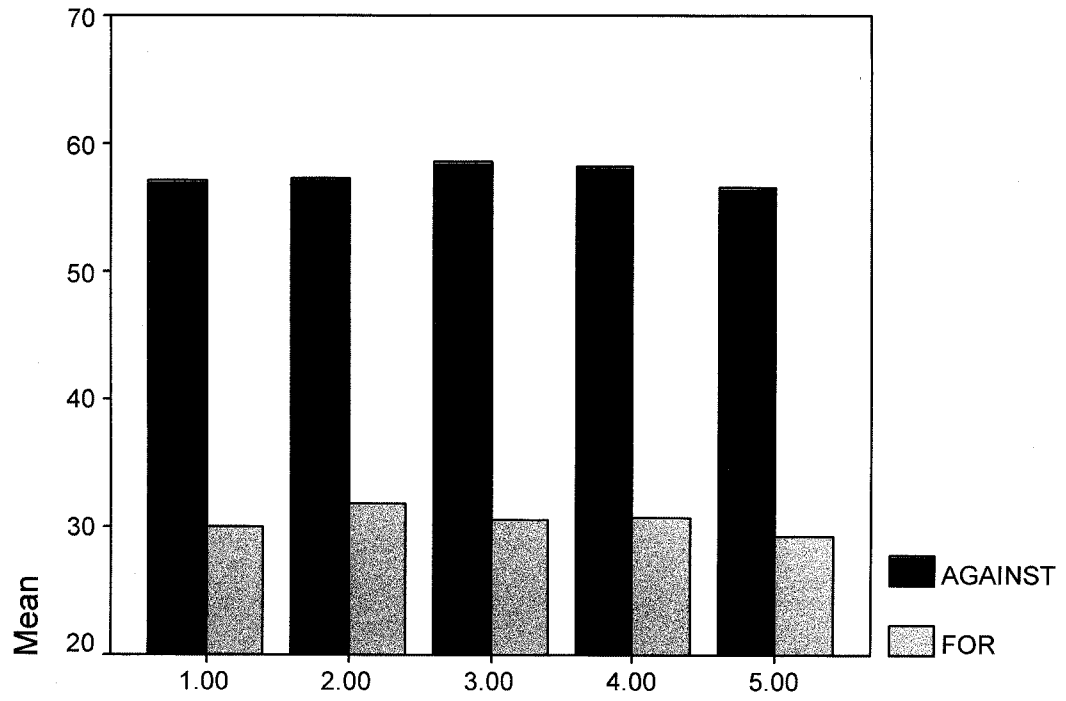


Figure 4.4

Analysis of the number of students in a teachers' class and teachers' attitudes towards inclusion showed that the highest mean score against inclusion was teachers with 21-25 (group 3), followed respectively by 26-30 (group 4), 16-20 (group 2), 11-15 (group 1) and 31-35 (group 5). The high mean score against inclusion showed that teachers with 21-25 students had the highest positive attitudes for inclusion. The mean score, for inclusion showed that teachers with the highest mean score for inclusion were those who had 16-20 (group 2) students in their class followed respectively by 26-30 (group 4), 21-25 (group 3), 11-15 (group 1) and 31-35 (group 5).



STUDENTS

Figure 4.5

## Chapter 5: Summary

This research was provoked by the desire to understand teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and factors that may effect their attitudes. The factors that were evaluated were: grade level taught, number of students in class, type of school, experience with special needs children, success with special needs children, administrative support, additional support services, level of education and years in the profession.

Research in the field of Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion, show that a variety of factors influence positive or negative attitudes towards inclusion. Previous research relevant to the research I conducted revealed that teachers with differing educational levels have different perceptions of inclusion. Stoler (1992) found that teachers with higher levels of education had less positive attitudes towards inclusion. Stoler also concluded that teachers who had special education classes had more positive attitudes towards inclusion than teachers who did not have any special education classes. There were not significant differences between teachers who had in-service training and those who did not. This research was supported by Anthony Van Reusen, Alan Shoho and Kimberly Barker (2000) who also found differences between teachers who had high levels of special education training. They also found significant differences between teachers who had, and did not have experience with special needs children. Several studies surveyed teachers before and after experience with special needs children or classes in special education. Teachers had more positive attitudes after experience and

classes. Teachers surveyed in several studies voiced that inclusion might be more successful based on class size, adequate resources and teacher preparation.

In the study presented in this thesis the “Survey of Teacher’s Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming Special Needs Children” was given to 55 regular education teachers. Of the teachers given the survey 33 teachers returned the surveys. The teachers answered 30 questions using a 5 point likert scale. The teachers also answered some preliminary questions about the years in the profession, grade level taught, type of school, level of education, experience with special needs students, success with special needs children, administrative support and support services.

After the survey was completed the 30 statements were grouped as either for or against inclusion. The numbers were added to make a mean score for and against inclusion. Of the 30 statements 12 statements were for inclusion and 18 statements were against inclusion.

A Pearson Correlation was done to see if there was a relationship between the for inclusion score and the factors and the against inclusion score and the factors. Due to the small number of surveys received back in addition to a correlation a descriptive analysis was also completed.

The results of the correlation showed that the teachers’ score for and against inclusion was negatively correlated,  $r = -.411$ ,  $p < .001$ . The teachers level of administrative support was correlated with the teachers’ against inclusion score,  $r = .288$ ,  $p < .042$ . The factors: grade level taught, number of students in class, type of school, experience with special needs children, success with special needs children, additional support services, level of education and years in the profession are not significant.

The descriptive analysis completed on the results produced graphs which showed that the data was going in the direction predicted. In the surveys there was not a lot of numbers represented in some of the categories. The descriptive analysis was starting to show support but not enough to show significant correlations.

### Discussion

This research was completed using a survey that was given to regular education teachers. Many of the teachers did not return the surveys in a timely manner. Due to the deadlines of this research the analysis had to be completed even though several additional surveys were not returned. The small number of surveys returned, led to a small number of participants being in the study. The low number in the survey was a possible cause to many of the factors being found not significant. When a descriptive analysis was completed the graphs showed results going in the direction predicted although the correlations were not significant. This leads to the possibility that if there were more participants the data may have showed significant differences for and against inclusion based on the factors in the study.

On the survey some of the questions had very low, low, average, high and very high to select from. Very few of the teachers selected very low or very high. This caused a lot of numbers to not be represented in some of the categories and possibly cause some of the results to be not significant.

In the survey there were 30 questions that were answered using a 5 point likert scale. The teachers were asked to select either strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree or strongly disagree to each statement. Some of the teachers surveyed selected undecided for many of the questions asked. This led to a neutral response being added to the

teachers mean score against or for inclusion. To many undecided scores may have caused many of the variables to be not significant.

The descriptive analysis showed that mean score against is lowest for grades 7-12. This is supported by research which showed that teachers who taught higher grades had more negative attitudes towards inclusion. In comments written and discussed with me from high school teachers that were surveyed they conveyed several difficulties of inclusion at the high school level. One of the teachers I conversed with was a Chemistry teacher. She mentioned the difficulties of having a child with a wheel chair in the room for a lab. She said in the school that she is in a wheel chair will not fit between the lab desks which make it impossible for one student to take part in this aspect of the class. Another student she mentioned had Tourette's Syndrome. She said that this student has difficulty doing labs because it is dangerous for him to use many of the chemicals and Bunsen burners because if he has a severe motor tic it can be a hazard to him and the other students. It was also mentioned that if a learning disabled student does not know basic math it becomes impossible for that student to do chemistry problems, algebra, geometry and physics.

The data in this research showed mixed results between number of students in the class and teachers' attitudes for and against inclusion. The descriptive analysis showed mean score against lowest for class size 31-35, then 11-15, 16-20, 26-30 and finally 21-25. The low against score meant the teachers were against inclusion. I did not review any studies previously done on class size and teacher attitudes. Teachers did mention to me, especially some who taught in urban schools with classes with 26-30 children, that they thought that inclusion would be more successful in schools where there were fewer

students and lower teacher to student ratio. They mentioned with a large class size it would be harder to give the student the extra attention he/she needed to succeed in the regular classroom and if they did it could be to the detriment of the other students. One teacher, who taught a class with 27 children remarked that a special- needs child would develop academic skills more rapidly in a special classroom due to more attention they would receive there because of better child/teacher ratio. Several teachers commented that if the student had his own aide this would change their opinion. In this study the class size of 21-25 students had the highest mean against score. This may be due to the fact that many of the teachers who filled out the survey that had 21-25 students were from one school in the suburbs and other factors may have altered their opinion such as administrative support and additional support services in that school.

The variable of type of school is closely linked to class size because schools in urban areas usually have a larger number of students. This appeared true in my research. Suburban schools had lowest mean scores against inclusion followed by urban and then rural. As previously stated many of the teachers who filled out the surveys that circled suburban were from the same school so other factors may affect their opinions. I did not review any previous studies involving type of school and teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. I personally believe that urban school teachers may have more negative attitudes towards inclusion because the students in that school may be from a lower socioeconomic and educational background, the teacher may not have parent support and parents may not help the student at home. A result of the students coming from lower socioeconomic and educational backgrounds may lead more children to come into school with learning disabilities.



All of the teachers surveyed said that they had experience with special needs children. Therefore teachers with experience could not be compared to teachers who did not have experience. The research evaluated found that teachers with experience had more positive attitude towards inclusion than teachers who had no prior experience. I agree with these findings and feel that if the sample was larger and was comprised of teachers without experience with special needs children as well, my results would agree with other research in the field.

In my research, descriptive analysis of the data showed that teachers who taught in schools with very low levels of support had the highest mean score for inclusion which means they are more against inclusion. Administrative support was also correlated with teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. In research reviewed, in one study, teachers had one set of opinions about inclusion and the administration had another. The teachers did not feel unified with their administration about the way to handle special needs students, services that they required and support the teachers needed. This non-unification led teachers to have more negative attitudes towards inclusion.

The level of additional support services did not show any relation with teachers attitudes towards inclusion. I disagree with these findings. I find that teachers have a more positive attitude towards inclusion when the teacher has services in the school to help the child with reading and math difficulties that the teacher may not know how to handle. A teacher can look to a resource room teacher, reading specialist and psychologist to not only help the child through pull out programs but also offer the teacher suggestions and appropriate materials. The teacher in my opinion will have more positive attitudes towards inclusion because they do not have to deal with the special

needs child on their own but have a support network and a team that can all work together to help the child.

In my analysis teachers level of education was not correlated with teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. These results are not supported by research I reviewed. Stoler (1992) found that teachers with higher levels of education has less positive attitudes towards inclusion.

Finally, descriptive analysis showed that teachers with more years in the profession had more positive attitudes towards inclusion. I disagree with these findings. It has been my experience that teachers who are new to the profession have more positive attitudes possibly due to having recent courses about special needs students and how to adapt curriculum to their needs. Most college education programs today require students to take a class in exceptional children. Teachers today come out of school with the notion that special needs children will be part of their classrooms. Teachers who have been in the profession for many years may have no training on special needs children and are use to teaching for years in classes were special needs students were not included. If these teaches have not changed their views and updated themselves it could lead to negative attitudes towards inclusion.

#### Implications For Further Research

The descriptive analysis showed that the research was going in the direction predicted therefore this definitely should be a study that should be done again. If this research were replicated in the future several modifications to the study should be done.

One of the main problems with this study was that the sample size was small. If I replicate this in the future, I would distribute double the amount of surveys due to the fact

that a small percentage of the people who receive the survey may return them. I would also allow ample time to return the survey. After starting to calculate the statistics on the data, I received several additional surveys back. If more time was allowed I could have used this data in my research. A larger sample size better represents the attitudes of teachers and would hopefully cause some more of the variables to be significant.

In distributing the surveys I would try to distribute the survey to a larger number of schools. In this research approximately 8 schools were used. Some of the data may represent attitudes of teachers at a particular school and not the attitudes of all teachers.

Regarding the actual survey I would change parts and add to the survey. I would eliminate the categories of very low and very high on some of the variables. Very few teachers selected very low or very high and this led to some categories having no data. Also many teachers selected undecided to many of the questions asked on the survey. I would also eliminate this because this neutral response altered the teachers true mean score for or against inclusion. Eliminating these to responses would hopefully cause some of the data to be significant in future studies.

In a future survey, I would add a question about how many special education classes the teacher took. In the research I reviewed special education classes appeared as a highly significant factor to teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. In the question part of the survey I would add the question, "If a special needs student has an aide he would be more appropriate for instruction in the regular classroom." This was a comment that many teachers wrote on their survey.

I would also add vignettes describing a child who is emotional and behavioral, one high functioning child and one low functioning child. I would then give each teacher an

identical survey to complete on each vignette. This would show me if teachers' attitudes are different based on the type of disability. Many teachers mentioned to me that filling out the survey was difficult because they did not know what kind of disability the child they were answering about had. They said that in their teaching career they had many students with disabilities and some were appropriate for inclusion and other children were not depending on the disability and the child.

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