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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews several studies on attitudes of regular and special educators toward inclusion of all children, regardless of disability, in the regular education environment and on attitude changes occurring as a result of staff development activities. Special education teachers (n=100) and regular education teachers (n=100) who were working for the Chicago (Illinois) Public School System and participated in an inservice training session on inclusion were given a questionnaire before and after the training. The majority of the teachers, in both special and regular education, revealed more favorable attitudes toward inclusion after their inservice training than they did before. Special education teachers showed an attitude gain on 8 of 12 questions, remained neutral on 3, and showed a slight drop on 1 question. Regular education teachers showed a positive attitude change on 11 of the 12 questions and a decline on 1. Both regular and special education teachers showed the greatest change on a question addressing the need for all teachers and administrators to become involved in inclusion. The study concludes that staff development is the key to the success of inclusion. (Contains 13 references.) (JDD)

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The Effect of Inclusion Training on Teacher Attitude Towards Inclusion

Mary Dickens-Smith

According to the Individuals with disabilities Education Act (IDEA), section 504, every child has the right to receive a free and appropriate education. The Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (PL 94-142) was enacted to extend the rights of disabled children. The law makes it clear that disabled children should be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE), and that handicapped children should not be removed from the regular education setting with non - disabled peers whenever their needs can be met through the use of supplementary aides and services. The problem is that special education children have been educated, for the most part, in segregated settings such as self - contained classrooms, cluster sites, and separate day schools. This process can be reversed when the focus becomes education within the least restricted environments.

Inclusion is a philosophy that embraces a solution for educating special education students and their non - disabled peers within the same setting and/or the least restrictive environment. However, this philosophy of inclusion is being rejected by many teachers. Both special education and regular education teachers must be prepared for this change which is inevitable. The teachers must understand what inclusion really means. Also they must be trained to work cooperatively with other teachers to educate non - handicapped and handicapped students within the same setting.

Research has shown that when educators were trained in techniques for including handicapped children and sharing responsibilities with other educators, they had a change of attitude. When both regular and special education teachers understand that the philosophy behind inclusion assumes that everything that is needed by the handicapped child for his/her success will be provided within the same setting with their non-handicapped peers, they were more accepting. This acceptance is based on educators having clearly defined roles with adequate support systems in place.

Most research has been done in the area of mainstreaming, which assumes that the handicapped child can be educated with his non-handicapped peers for certain subjects. It also assumes that no special assistance is needed for the child to be successful. However, regular educators have viewed this practice as added responsibility for them, and thus feel the same about inclusion.

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The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 clearly stated that all children with disabilities should be educated in the Least Restricted Environment. The law further stated that children with disabilities must be educated with non-disabled children to the maximum extent possible thus, the philosophy of including all children in the regular educational setting, whenever possible, was born. However, mainstreaming became the catch word and all the previous research was done on mainstreaming. Now the new catch word is inclusion.

The Chicago board of Education in a report (1993), defined inclusion as a philosophy of school communities that has as its goal the inclusion of all children, regardless of disability, in the regular education environment. Under this model, special education services are reorganized and are provided in conjunction with the regular education teacher. This model for serving children is not mandated. It should be utilized only after significant planning and training has taken place and IEP procedures have been followed.

When proper planning and training have not taken place, researchers are reporting negative results concerning attitudes towards inclusion. Margaret Wang (1985), summed it up well. Based on the Adaptive Learning Environment model, she stated that inclusion calls for the merger of special education and regular education into a system that will be advantageous to all students. She further stated that inclusion is a holistic system of educational support for the disabled student - Children who are placed into the least restricted environment are mainstreamed and or included in the regular program. This provides some obvious advantages. The advantages are: It prevents the stigma that comes from segregated placement, raises students' self esteem, reduces feeling of isolation, improves social skills, fosters peer friendships, exposes students to a richer and more diverse curriculum and enables students to learn from peers. (Blackman 1992; Peck Donaldson and Pezzole cited in Wheller, 1991; Putman, 1992)

Beverly Rainforth did a study on the effects of full inclusion on regular education teachers in a Johnson City, New York School. The Learning Disabled students were gradually integrated into regular classes over a five year period, starting at the kindergarten level. Teachers' perceptions were identified through semi-structured interviews, a questionnaire, direct observation, and review of extant data. Teachers expressed and demonstrated overwhelmingly positive effects of inclusion. Teacher attitudes and practices were organized into the following eleven themes: (1) teaching and learning about disabilities, (2) curriculum and materials, (3) success for all, (4) collaborative problem solving, (5) expectation of inclusion, (6) teams, (7) student assessment and individualized education programs, (8) flexibility, (9) learning to accept or overlook challenges presented by these students that can interfere with instruction but that are not easily resolved, (10) stress, and (11) accountability. The study concluded that inclusion did not produce entirely new effects but rather amplified or generalized attitudes, philosophies and

practices that has existed in the school (Rainforth, 1992).

Bang, Myong-Ye, and others (1993) found that factors related to the use of instructional strategies that facilitate inclusion of students with moderate and severe impairments in general education classes were the general education teachers' willingness to collaborate with the special education teachers and included the building principals' support. This combination positively related to the use of instructional strategies that facilitated inclusion.

Fishbaugh & Gum (1994) found that when all the special education students were placed in regular education classrooms at Garfield Elementary School and special education teachers began collaborating with regular education teachers within the regular setting, achievement test data demonstrated consistent academic gains made by regular education students. The special education students progress toward IEP goals and objectives demonstrated achievement of annual goals in all but one or two cases, and a phenomenal two or three years gain in several cases.

A research study conducted by Boyer & Bandy, (1993) with teachers in British Columbia yielded the following results: Out of the one hundred and thirty teachers who were surveyed, 32 teachers and 100 student teachers, the experienced teachers were most concerned about the extent of funding for special needs students in the inclusion programs. The students' teachers were most concerned about support services and personnel and the adequacy of preservice and inservice in aspects of specialization.

Burrello & Wright (1993) conducted a study using the cooperative teaching approach to integrate all special education and at risk students, including students with behavioral problems into general education setting. Following extensive staff training, after the second year, staff rated the program very positively. The key program components included teaming collaborating, cooperative learning, joint ownership, for student integration, effective teaching practices, and development of teacher skills in adapting and modifying the curriculum to meet the needs of students.

Thompson (1992) conducted an eight month in service training program designed to change teacher attitudes toward mainstreamed learning disabled students at the secondary level and influence their attitudes toward inclusion of the students in their classes. Initially the teachers were confused about the students classifications, (LD,EBD,EMH). Also, they did not understand Public Law 94-142, individual education plans, classroom modifications allowed to special needs students, nor their legal responsibilities. As the teachers gained in basic knowledge from 40 to 80 percent positive attitude changes were documented.

Jack Mayhew (1994) conducted a federally funded project. The project was conducted at the University of Utah where they attempted to promote collaboration among regular and special education teachers. The general educators were given a course, Educational Partnerships: Serving Exceptional Students (STEP). This course provided a fundamental understanding of exceptionalities, mainstreaming techniques, and professional collaboration. The university students in four educational departments engaged in collaborative activities during two academic quarters while working with at-risk or disabled students in the public schools. A questionnaire covering demographic information, attitudes toward mainstreamed students and perceptions of own knowledge about and ability to work with disabled students was administered to thirty-five elementary majors taking the Educational partnership course (SPED) and nine education majors in the (STEP) project before and after their course work. A third group of fourteen secondary school majors not required to take special education course work was given only a post-test. A significant gain from pretest to post-test for the total instrument was achieved by the SPED group but not by the STEP group. Both SPED and STEP groups showed significant increases at post-test in skills and knowledge base. There were no differences among the three groups in attitudes toward mainstreamed disabled students.

All of the preceding researchers found that with adequate staff development and support, attitudes of educators toward inclusion was positive even when it was not accepted before training. However, there were some researchers who found some negative results toward inclusion.

According to Elizabeth Pearman and others (1992), their study surveying the beliefs and attitudes of school district personnel in Colorado, found that there was a significant difference between attitudes of elementary and secondary teaching staff. Personnel felt a need for more time for cooperative planning, and that the issues of inclusion had created tension among the staff.

In a similar study, Ross & Wax (1993), through a survey and a follow-up interview, found that teachers' opinions concerning inclusion of students in a full-day classroom program was not favorable. All the teachers felt that they had been given additional responsibilities without the necessary technical and administrative supports. Teachers were most concerned about their lack of knowledge about specific language/learning disabilities; their unmet need for modeling of effective teaching strategies and collaboration with special education teachers and their lack of planning time and paraprofessional help.

Allan Bain and Howard Farris found that when they conducted a study on teachers attitudes toward including students for social skills training in school curriculum, 82% of the teachers supported inclusion but they showed a lack of willingness to be involved when respondents were categorized according to subject area at the school in which they taught.

More research is needed in which a clear distinction is made between inclusion and mainstreaming. All educators must be reminded that while inclusion is not the law, the law does state that children should be and have a right to be educated in the *Least Restricted Environment*.

Literature on inclusion training has shown that teachers developed a positive attitude change toward inclusion. Three to one, research studies on inclusion support the idea that staff development is the key component in promoting acceptance of handicapped children within the regular setting. Teachers who are less than enthusiastic before inclusion training become amenable to the idea once they understand their roles and expectations in the process. The fear of inclusion is eliminated to a great extent and positive attitudes are developed with proper training on the part of both the special and regular education teacher. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to measure the effects of inclusion training on Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion.

Procedures

Population/Sample

The population in this study is composed of two hundred teachers who work for the Chicago Public School System. One Hundred are special education teachers and one hundred are regular education teachers. There are approximately 22 males and 178 females in this study. Thirty special education teachers who participated in the inservice training were randomly selected for the sample.

A questionnaire containing twelve questions will be distributed to one hundred special education teachers as they arrive at an inservice training session on inclusion. They will be asked to complete the questionnaire before training, and they will be asked to complete the same questionnaire again after training. The same procedure will be followed with one hundred regular education teachers, as they arrive at an inclusion inservice at a subsequent meeting. The single-group pretest - post-test design will be employed. The instrument used will be a questionnaire consisting of twelve (12) items taken from the "Inclusion/Integration (REI) Training Sessions Participants Survey, Illinois Educational Services Center Six - Serving District 299 CPS, in collaboration with The Department of Special Education and Pupil Support Services, 1993 - 1994 School Year"

The findings will be tabulated in terms of *mean scores*. The t test with rotation group designs will be employed at the .05 level of confidence to determine if there is any statistical difference between the *pre - and posttest*.

Using the t test with rotating group designs, a test was done on scores from pretest and posttest to determine if there was a statistically significant correlation. Tables 2 and 4 summarize the statistical analysis. The questions were placed in order by magnitude of change from pretest to post test as illustrated by tables 1 and 3. Table 5 summarizes the statistical analysis of posttest - posttest of regular and special education teachers.

Findings

The data in tables 1 through 5 shows that the majority of the teachers in the study, both special and regular education teachers, agree with the research hypothesis and the current studies on Inclusion. Teachers for the most part, had a positive attitude change concerning inclusion after they received inservice training on Inclusion.

The operational hypothesis as defined by the "Inclusion/Integration (REI) Training Sessions Participants Survey, The Department of Special Education and Pupil Support Services, 1994 -1995", was accepted because the teachers were more strongly in agreement with most aspects of inclusion after the training than they were before the training. From pretest to posttest, the special education teachers showed an attitude gain in eight of the twelve questions. They remained neutral in three of the twelve questions but a slight drop in a posttest score was noted on one of the questions.

The regular education teachers showed a positive attitude change in eleven of the twelve questions, after the training on inclusion was concluded. The one question where there was a decline in the score, was concerned with the concept of inclusion being successful without the participation of regular education teachers.

The null hypothesis was rejected because the findings was contradictory to it. Teachers attitudes, without acceptance, improved towards inclusion after teacher training. Only three studies out of the many that were looked at reported that teachers remained negative towards including disabled students with non - disabled students after training was provided.

Questions six and seven of the study was pertaining to the mechanics of the study and less with attitudes towards inclusion and therefore, they may not be valid. Those questions ranked eight and eleventh on the questionnaire answered by the regular education teachers and tenth and twelfth on the questionnaire answered by the special education teachers.

Both regular and special education teachers showed the greatest change in attitude on question eleven which addressed the need for all teachers and administrators to become involved in inclusion.

The pretest - posttest for both special education teachers and regular education teachers was found to be statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence. The same results was realized when the posttest - posttest analysis was done comparing both sets of teachers' scores. In addition, most research studies that were looked at reported the same positive results concerning teachers attitudes towards inclusion.

More research needs to be done on teacher attitude towards inclusion with more opened ended questions. This might bring out more useful information concerning true feelings. Attitude changes are going to be needed to provide the needed support for the handicapped children. Since research seem to support positive attitude when teachers are trained and well prepared, enough research needs to be provided to convince the administration that more money should be spent in staff development to bring success to this already instituted program.

Staff development is the key to the success of inclusion. Team building is a key issue since both the regular and special education teachers will have to work together. Teacher strategies for dealing with special children must be developed within regular teachers to prevent fear of the unknown. Both the regular and special education teacher must fully understand their responsibilities and roles in the inclusion process. This can only be accomplished through proper training. It is important that researchers provide the necessary information to effect positive attitude changes.

Table 1
Items which showed change in Attitude After Inservice Training on
Developing Inclusion Programs.

			Special Education Teachers
Item	Pre*	Post*	Statement
11	2.13	3.73	Eventually, all teachers and administrators should be involved in the Inclusion/Integration (REI).
2	2.53	3.73	A cooperative effort between regular education teachers and special education teachers will reduce unnecessary labeling and placement of students.
3	3.0	3.8	Professional collaboration will remove barriers to achievement that special education students may face in the regular classroom setting.
10	3.0	3.53	There should be a combining of educational services (e.g. special education Chapter I, gifted education, regular education) to successfully implement Inclusion/Integration (REI).
1	3.0	3.53	I have a high level of understanding of the Inclusion/Integration (REI).
9	3.34	3.73	Regular and special education teachers need to work together to improve classroom discipline and reduce the number of special education students referred for placement in behavior disordered programs.
8	3.47	3.73	Regular and special education teachers need to work together to plan curricular modifications.
4	3.4	3.6	The goal of Inclusion/Integration (REI) should be to bring regular education teachers and special education teachers closer to the concept of better teaching for all students.

Item	Pre*	Post*	Statement
5	3.67	3.67	Teachers training institutions should be involved in all teachers in Inclusion/Integration (REI).
7	3.2	3.2	This workshop will/has increase(d) my knowledge and understanding of Inclusion/Integration (REI) relative to students involved in regular classroom.
12	2.13	2.13	The Inclusion/Integration (REI) concept can be successfully implemented even if all regular education teachers do not participate.
6	3.2	3.07	This workshop will/has increase(d) my knowledge and understanding of Inclusion/Integration (REI) relative to students with disabilities.

* These number were based on a 4-point scale where 4 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Agree, 2 = Disagree, and 1 = Strongly Disagree.

Table 2
t - Test for Non - independent samples

Statistic	Value
No. of Pairs of Scores	30
Sum of "D"	147
Mean of D"S	4.9
Sum of "D2"	1435
t value	5.4*
Degrees' of Freedom (d)	29

*Significance at the .05 level
Table t = 2.045

Table 3
Items which showed change in Attitude After Inservice Training Sessions on
Developing Inclusion Programs.

Item	Regular Education Teachers		Statement
	Pre*	Post*	
11	2.93	3.60	Eventually, all teachers and administrators should be involved in the Inclusion/integration (REI).
1	2.47	3.13	I have a high level of understanding of the Inclusion/Integration (REI).
3	2.93	3.53	Professional collaboration will remove barriers to achievement that special education students may face in the regular classroom setting.
10	2.93	3.47	There should be a combining of educational services (e.g. special education, Chapter 1, gifted education, regular education) to successfully implement Inclusion/Integration (REI).
2	3.0	3.53	A cooperative effort between regular education teachers and special education teachers will reduce unnecessary labeling and placement of students.
5	3.33	3.73	Teacher training institutions should be involved in all teachers in Inclusion/Integration (REI).
8	3.27	3.67	Regular and special education teachers need to work together to plan curricular modifications.
7	2.93	3.26	This workshop will/has increase(d) my knowledge and understanding of Inclusion/Integration (REI) relative to students involved in the regular classroom.

Table 5
Regular and Special Education Teacher Posttest
t Test for Non - independent sample

Statistic	Value
No of Pairs of Scores	30
Sum of "D"	63
Mean of D"S	2.1
Sum of D2	812
t Value	2.67
Degree of Freedom (d)	29

*Significance at the .05 level
t = 2.045

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