

Teacher stress and inclusion: Perceptions of pre-service teachers

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The purpose of this study was to determine pre-service teachers' perceptions regarding the management of behaviours in inclusive classrooms. An additional purpose was to gather data on the relationships between the teacher candidates' demographic information and their beliefs about managing misbehaviours in inclusive school environments. Survey research was chosen to acquire the pre-service teachers' perceptions. The population for this study was pre-service teachers in the Bachelor of Education program at a small university in northern Ontario, Canada.

Kremer-Hayon and Ben-Peretz (1986) concluded that most teachers are concerned with physical survival in class, discipline, and classroom management problems. In 1988, Zeidner commented that "adequate classroom discipline is generally regarded to be one of the most essential aspects of education as well as an absolute prerequisite to achieving instructional objectives and safeguarding students' psychological, social, and physical well-being" (p. 69).

Classroom management is commonly referred to as the application of standards set in the classroom for promoting positive student behaviour. It has been identified as a critical skill for beginning teachers and pre-service teachers (Adler, 1996; Armstrong & Savage, 1990; Clement, 2002; Jones, 2000). Further, Brock and Grady (1996) found classroom management and discipline were consistently ranked as major problems by beginning teachers and principals.

Teacher education programs should provide teachers with the classroom management skills necessary to cope with the demands of teaching in inclusive classrooms. The awareness of the realities of teaching should be integral to the education of teachers (Platt & Olson, 1990; Wong & Wong,

2004; Wong, 2005). Classrooms in Canada have changed with the policy of inclusion prescribing that children with disabilities be taught in regular classrooms. Every province in Canada has policy or legislation that entrenches the rights of students to attend a school that meets their educational needs in a setting that is as close to a regular classroom as possible for that student (Hutchinson, 2003).

Literature Review

Classroom management research has been significantly influenced by the work of Kounin (1970), who focused on the environmental conditions that influence behaviour. Kounin concluded that management strategies that worked with regular students also worked for students identified as emotionally disturbed. His work altered the focus from reactive to proactive strategies, and from teacher personality to environmental and strategic components of management. More currently, McCormack (2001) states:

the focus has shifted from a primary concern for discipline as a response to misbehavior to a concern for a more holistic approach using effective classroom organization and management. This shift has required a rethink of teacher education programs to offer pre-service teachers a relevant integration of classroom management issues, concepts, and strategies during teacher education and throughout induction and in-service years. (p. 12)

As most research indicates, beginning teachers are inclined to solve survival problems with traditional methods of classroom management and teaching. Hart, in 1987, attempting to gauge the anxiety of student teachers, developed four factors she identified as evaluation anxiety, classroom control anxiety, teaching practice-requirements anxiety, and overall anxiety. She noted that the level of anxiety in all cases correlated highly with the degree of disruption that existed in the classroom. In her study, she reported that 39% of students experienced anxiety regarding classroom control and discipline.

While some people appear to be natural teachers, all can become more effective teachers with classroom management skills, resulting from training, experience, and support. Jones (1996) emphasized the comprehensive nature of classroom management by identifying five main features:

- An understanding of current research and theory in classroom management and students' psychological and learning needs;
- the creation of positive teacher student and peer relationships;
- the use of instructional methods that facilitate optimal learning by responding to the academic needs of individual students and the classroom group;
- the use of organizational and group management methods that maximize on-task behaviour;
- the ability to use a range of counselling and behavioural methods to assist students who demonstrate persistent or serious behaviour problems. (p. 507)

The development of classroom management strategies and skills is generally acquired over a number of years (Berliner, 1988; Jones 2000). For the novice teacher, it tends to be intermittent as new contexts are experienced (Bullough & Baughman, 1995; Cambone, 1994). Novice teachers' perspectives on classrooms tend to be idiosyncratic and incomplete and they reconceptualize their pedagogical understandings during student teaching (Jones & Vesilund, 1996).

Classroom management continues to be the most common concern cited by beginning and experienced teachers (Jones, 1996; Pigge & Marso, 1997; Veenman, 1984; Wesley & Vocke, 1992; White, 1995, Wong, 2005) as well as student teachers (Clement, 1999; Clement, 2000; Clement, 2002).

Lack of student discipline, and classroom management organizational skills were identified by pre-service teachers as areas that did not go well during student teaching (Rancifer, 1992). Gibbons and Jones (1994) found novice teachers reported that, in the early stages of their placement, their

concerns were primarily content-oriented, while toward the end their concerns were about classroom management. Thomas and Kiley (1994) also found that first-year teachers' concerns tend to focus on classroom management and discipline.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to provide a database of perceptions among pre-service teachers at a small university in northeastern Ontario regarding the management of behaviours in inclusive classrooms. An additional purpose was to gather data on the relationships between the teacher candidates' demographic information (i.e., age, gender, and background experience) and their beliefs about management issues.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was pre-service teachers in the Bachelor of Education program at a small university in northern Ontario, Canada. The sample consisted of student teachers who, at the time the data was collected, had been enrolled for three months of an eight month program. Candidates in the primary junior teaching division prepare to teach students aged 6 to 11, junior intermediate candidates prepare for ages 9 to 16, and the intermediate division covers ages 12 to 18. By design, there is an overlap of ages and grades across different divisions. Entrance requirements for the program dictate that all students have successfully completed at least one degree. During this one year program students are required to take a Classroom Management class that deals with the major issues on the topic. Additionally they must complete a Special Education/Educational Psychology class that discusses exceptional students, with a small percentage of time spent on managing their behaviours. These students had two practice teaching placements, one of which was an observation-only placement and the other a two week graded placement. The questionnaire was completed and returned by this sample. There were 428 returned questionnaires from the distribution of 620 surveys, yielding a response rate of 69%.

Methodology

Survey research was chosen to acquire the pre-service teachers' perceptions. As Gay and Airasian (2000) stated, survey research is intended "to obtain information about the preferences, attitudes, practices, concerns, or interests" (p.11) of a group of people. It often provides information on how widespread these preferences, attitudes, practices, concerns, or interests are or how strongly participants feel about them. Survey research is commonly used to identify possibilities for further research or changes to educational practice. This method allowed data to be collected from a large number of informants.

To construct an instrument that would be valid for the study, a matrix was developed in order to establish the relationship of each statement on the questionnaire to the research question that was posed. The literature on classroom behaviour management was searched for similar research studies and examined to determine what was found with respect to question wording or elements needed for inclusion. An attempt was made to ask a question in different ways or at different points in the questionnaire to check for consistency.

Specific objectives to be achieved by the questionnaire were defined, the method of data collection was chosen, the population was defined, and the sample for the study was identified. A Likert-type scale, commonly used to measure attitudes, knowledge, perceptions, values and behaviour changes was selected. Respondents were asked to express agreement or disagreement on a 4-point Likert-type scale, for example in Part A, 1 = not applicable, 2 = not confident, 3 = somewhat confident, and 4 = confident. In this way a numerical value was calculated from all the responses¹. Specific attention was paid to the foundation of the questionnaire items in the literature and their relationship to the research objectives of this study. Attention was given to the questionnaire format in relation to length, the general design, and clarity of instructions.

¹ Tables 1 to 5 list the questionnaire parts and specific items. Contact the author for full questionnaire details.

A cover letter was formulated to clearly explain the purpose of the study and to encourage the respondents to participate. Approval for the study was given by the University Ethics Committee on November 16, 2004.

Analysis of the Data

Evaluation of the reliability of the questionnaire and its subscales was calculated using Cronbach's coefficient Alpha, a numerical coefficient of reliability which estimates the internal consistency by determining how all items on a test relate to all other test items and to the total test on the construct tested. The reliability of the scale was found to be $r = .91$, which attests to the internal consistency of the responses. Since Anastasi (1982) suggested that reliability coefficients in the .80s or .90s are desirable, the questionnaire was deemed to be reliable.

Statistical tests available in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) were used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were used to profile the sample of pre-service teachers. The dependent variables, such as age and gender, were gathered from the demographic information supplied by informants. Data from the returned surveys were listed in a frequency distribution and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency, mean and standard deviation of the distribution of the scores for each section of the survey. The analysis of the relationships between the data and the dependent variables in the demographic section (i.e., age, gender) included the generation of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and used Bonferonni post hoc analyses to determine mean differences. The level of statistical significance was set at $p < .05$ ².

Results of the Study

Managing the Classroom

In the first section of the survey, teacher candidates were asked to report on their confidence level in dealing with general classroom situations.

² Significant *F* values will be reported where appropriate. Contact the author for full statistical details.

Given that most students would be teaching in a regular classroom with students who have special needs, and would have to manage the needs of these students while still meeting the regular program requirements, this was a logical place to start. The discussion of the results is couched in terms of common overall tendencies implied by the mean scores. Tables 1 to 5 display the mean and standard deviation for each part of the questionnaire.

Table 1
Part A: General" Mean and SD of Item Responses

		Mean	SD
1.	Meeting all students' needs	1.82	.56
2.	Meeting most students' needs	2.52	.55
3.	Understanding tasks associated with a child's condition	1.75	.64
4.	Obtaining resources to meet the needs of children	2.00	.69
5.	Empathizing with parents	2.39	.73
6.	Responding to a student's unique personality	2.30	.57
7.	Maintaining the safety of children at school	2.41	.59
8.	Meeting the parent(s)' expectations	2.04	.64
9.	Meeting the curriculum expectations	2.26	.65
10.	Meeting administration's expectations	2.17	.60
11.	Meeting your own expectations	2.30	1.16
12.	Implementing behavioural plans for students	1.92	1.65
13.	Implementing student contracts	2.12	.90
14.	Using a time-out procedure	2.30	.85
15.	Implementing and maintaining reward systems	2.34	.71
16.	Making continual observations	2.33	.61
17.	Recording observations	2.23	.67

Table 2
Part B1: Behaviours Witnessed: Mean and SD of Item Responses

		Mean	SD
19.	Short attention span	2.62	.56
20.	Inappropriate social skills	2.19	.72
21.	Limited speech ability	1.83	.95
22.	Poor communication skills	1.97	.82
23.	Attention seeking	2.62	.80
24.	Hyperactivity	2.35	.74
25.	Daydreaming	2.14	.79
26.	Withdrawing	1.93	.88
27.	Symptoms of depression	1.92	1.16
28.	Manipulation of others	2.11	.90
29.	Over-affection towards strangers	2.11	1.06
30.	Unaware of danger	2.11	1.20
31.	Impulsivity	2.21	.85
32.	Poor mobility	2.15	1.67
33.	Interfering with the learning of others	2.49	.93
34.	Temper tantrums	2.15	1.16
35.	Aggression towards peers	1.99	.92
36.	Aggression towards adults	2.00	1.16
37.	Aggression towards self	2.00	1.23
38.	Aggression towards objects	2.04	1.16
39.	Opposition to authority	2.00	.84
40.	Rude gestures	2.03	1.05
41.	Verbally rude to others	2.04	.81
42.	Swearing	2.03	.98
43.	Unpredictability	1.98	.99
44.	Poor social skills	1.92	.87
45.	Running away	2.40	1.40
46.	Avoidance	2.04	1.10
47.	Crying	2.21	1.12
48.	Sexually explicit behaviours	2.51	1.41
49.	Easily led	2.09	1.01

Table 3
Part B2: Dealing with Individual Student Behaviours and Needs:
Mean and SD of Item Responses

		Mean	SD
51.	Short attention span	2.56	.55
52.	Inappropriate social skills	2.08	.61
53.	Limited speech ability	1.77	.82
54.	Poor communication skills	2.03	.69
55.	Attention seeking	2.22	.64
56.	Hyperactivity	1.98	.69
57.	Daydreaming	2.28	.67
58.	Withdrawing	1.94	.73
59.	Symptoms of depression	1.72	1.28
60.	Manipulation of others	1.85	.77
61.	Over-affection towards strangers	1.92	.95
62.	Unaware of dangers	2.14	.85
63.	Impulsivity	2.00	.75
64.	Poor mobility	2.09	.96
65.	Interfering with the learning of others	2.33	.60
66.	Temper tantrums	1.98	.83
67.	Aggression towards peers	2.15	1.19
68.	Aggression towards adults	2.01	.81
69.	Aggression towards self	1.85	.86
70.	Aggression towards objects	2.12	.81
71.	Opposition to authority	1.91	.71
72.	Rude gestures	2.24	.73
73.	Verbally rude to others	2.28	.63
74.	Swearing	2.33	.65
75.	Unpredictability	1.86	.76
76.	Poor social skills	1.99	.67
77.	Running away	1.86	1.01
78.	Avoidance	1.89	.78
79.	Crying	2.18	.94
80.	Sexually explicit behaviours	1.72	.93
81.	Easily led	2.05	.78

Table 4**Part B3: The Classroom-Large Group Behaviour: Mean and SD of Item Responses**

		Mean	SD
83.	Constantly monitoring behaviours	2.26	.58
84.	Negative class responses to distressing health or hygiene issues	1.96	.77
85.	Negative interpersonal relationships among students	2.02	.62
86.	Negative physical/sexual attraction among students	1.75	.83
87.	Whole class teaching disrupted by a child	2.25	.60
88.	Making time available for others students	2.40	.61
89.	Monitoring other students when attending to a child	2.07	.65

Table 5**Part C: The Likelihood of Coping Strategies Employed in Inclusive Education: Mean and SD of Item Responses**

		Mean	SD
91.	Discussing situations with your principal	2.53	.61
92.	Discussing situations with the child's parent(s) or guardians	2.74	.46
93.	Seeking help and resources from a resource teacher	2.85	.40
94.	Seeking professional help for the child	2.19	.65
95.	Reducing the number of support personnel visiting the class	1.49	1.15
96.	Increasing the number of support personnel visiting the class	2.26	.65
97.	Leaving the child to work independently for extended periods of time	1.49	.65
98.	Enlisting the support of the other children in the classroom	2.38	.61
99.	Coming up with different potential solutions for difficult issues	2.62	.51
100.	Discussing the situation with specialist personnel, e.g., school psychologist	2.63	.55
101.	Discussing the situation with colleagues	2.59	.61
102.	Implementing accommodations	2.67	.51
103.	Implementing modifications	2.65	.55
104.	Implementing alternative expectations	2.56	.58
105.	Seeking the advice of a mentor	2.74	.46

It was the expectation of the researchers that the expressed level of confidence in November would be lower than at the conclusion of the program. It was surprising to learn, however, that in most areas the teacher candidates were already feeling somewhat confident in their

abilities, as shown in Table 1. This may have been due to the hands-on experience in regular classrooms recently obtained while out on practice teaching placement. Teacher candidates also reported being somewhat confident in their ability to obtain resources to meet the needs of students in the classroom, in responding to a student's unique personality, in maintaining the safety of children at school, and in implementing behavioural plans for students while still teaching to the Ontario curriculum expectations for that grade level. Interestingly, while the candidates reported that they were somewhat confident in their ability to meet the needs of all students in the classroom, they expressed strong confidence in their ability to meet the general needs of most students.

What is worthy of note is that the candidates reported they were only somewhat confident when it came to meeting their own needs. One has to wonder if by November teacher candidates are already experiencing commitment into a profession which places the needs of the students above all else. Teaching is a service profession. As such, it is not uncommon to subjugate personal needs for the sake of students' learning. One has only to consider the late nights spent marking, the weekends preparing activities, or the financing of classroom materials from the pockets of teachers, to see the altruistic nature of those who choose teaching as a profession. The expressed confidence level related to personal needs harkens back to the coping skills teachers require to avoid stress and burnout. It would be enlightening to examine how this manifests itself in the pre-service education program, especially considering its level of development less than three months into the programme.

Behaviours Witnessed

Pertaining to the actual classroom behaviours witnessed, candidates reported that short attention spans, attention seeking behaviours, and traits of hyperactivity were the most frequently observed. Issues such as inappropriate social skills, manipulation of others, interfering with the learning of others, daydreaming, and being withdrawn were reported as occasionally observed, as illustrated in Table 2.

The preliminary analysis indicated that pre-service candidates who are in training to teach grades 7 through 12 (ages 12-18) expressed less confidence implementing behavioural plans than those hoping to teach grades 4 through 10 (ages 9-16), $F(2, 412) = 3.52, p = 0.03$. It is unknown if this is a reflection of the necessary adaptability required to be able to teach grades 4 to 10 which cross both the elementary and secondary panel, or a result of specific experiences gained in the recent practicum. Candidates training to teach ages 12 through 18 reported fewer incidences of running away and crying. Both the junior intermediate and intermediate senior groups reported more incidents of withdrawn behaviour than those candidates enrolled solely in the elementary panel. Interestingly, when it comes to identifying behaviour as symptoms of depression and withdrawal that fall within the realm of mental health, pre-service candidates indicated the lowest frequency of occurrence, $F(2, 412) = 9.83, p = .01$. Other studies such as Brackenreed and Richardson (2007) confirm the tendency of teachers to be unable to identify behaviours indicative of mental illness.

The expressed confidence by those intending to work with ages 9 to 16 may be a reflection of the type of person who chooses to work with learners in this age group. School attendance in Ontario is mandated up until the age of 16. By choosing to work with learners between the ages of 9 and 16, the candidates have dedicated themselves to working with some individuals who believe they do not have to stay in school much longer. This, combined with the natural physiological and hormonal changes that occur in early-adolescence, can add to the potential for an increase in behavioural concerns for these grades. Perhaps the type of person attracted to working with these students is more accepting of the potential dynamics and recognises the necessity of behaviour plans in helping students reach their academic potential. This is an area that also requires further research.

Dealing with Specific Student Behaviours

Reporting on their perceived abilities to deal with specific student behavioural issues, no group of student teachers expressed strong

confidence. Given that it was November, this was understandable. In all but four situations, however, the candidates reported that they were somewhat confident at this point in the year. This supports the confidence level finding in the first section of the survey.

The four areas where they reported that they were not confident were in their ability to deal with students who have limited speech abilities, symptoms of depression, students who are prone to running away, and students who engage in sexually explicit behaviours, as shown in Table 3. Candidates also reported that negative physical and sexual attraction among students in the classroom was also an area where they felt they were not confident, demonstrated in Table 4.

Supporting the presupposition that experience in placement affects self-confidence, candidates training to teach ages 12 through 18, who reported experiencing the highest incidences of running away in the last section of the survey, also report the most confidence in dealing with this situation, $F(2, 414) = 2.99, p = .05$. In initiating behavioural plans, those opting to train for the elementary panel expressed less confidence than those training for ages 12 through 18 when dealing with aggression towards self and aggression towards peers. Those training for the elementary panel were also less confident dealing with issues of aggression towards objects, rude gestures, and swearing, F values from 4.25 to 6.1, $p \leq .02$. This seems to suggest that experience gained during practicum is vital in the preparation of teacher candidates.

Candidates training to work in the elementary panel also reported finding it difficult to make time available for other students when dealing with a child who requires accommodations or modifications. This may be partly caused by the nature of the elementary classroom as being more centre-and-discovery based than some secondary subject areas.

Likelihood of Candidates to Use Coping Strategies

Candidates reported a willingness to discuss situations with the principal, the child's parent(s) or guardians, the resource teacher,

specialist personnel, colleagues and mentor teachers. For those willing to engage in discussions with others, candidates reported a willingness to come up with potential alternate solutions, or implement accommodations, modifications, or alternative expectations based on these discussions, as exhibited in Table 5. There were significant differences among those training for different ages, F values from 3.52 to 16.58, $p \leq .03$.

The secondary school candidates training to teach ages 12 through 18 were the least likely to ask for help. They were also the least likely to willingly implement program modifications or alternative expectations to aid student learning. Those training to work in elementary schools were the most likely to implement modifications for students and those training for the middle years, ages 9 through 16, were most willing to consider implementing alternative expectations, F values from 6.82 to 13.87, $p = .01$.

In having other individuals help in their classroom, all candidates expressed a lack of confidence. They were less likely to seek professional help for the child, increase the number of support personnel visiting the classroom, or enlist the support of other students in the room, than they were to attempt to deal with the situation on their own. Interestingly, the concept of reducing the number of support personnel previously assigned to the class or allowing the student to work independently for a while were not considerations, $F(1, 413) = 5.00$, $p = .01$.

These findings seem to indicate that, at this point in their training, teacher candidates believe that coping with the students in the classroom is their responsibility. They seem to be hesitant to have another individual working with a child in need. Whether this is due to a lack of confidence in their abilities resulting in not wanting to have other adults witness them, or a sense of classroom proprietorship is unknown. It may also be that this is a symptom of "indoctrination" into the teaching profession that encourages a service attitude. If support already exists, however, they will not consider any alteration that may decrease the established level of one-to-one care. As this may interfere with the ability

to best meet the needs of a student in the classroom, further research into this area is necessary.

Relationship of Sex and Age to Results

We cross-referenced gender and age to see if these affected the perspectives of our student teachers to manage behaviours in inclusive classrooms. First, we will discuss the relationship of gender to the results followed by a discussion of the relationship of age to the findings of the study.

The relationship of sex to the candidates' perceptions. Further research is needed when contemplating if the gender of the candidate affects his/her ability to manage behaviours in inclusive classrooms. In terms of expressing confidence in meeting the needs of students in the inclusive classroom, males expressed more confidence than females, $F(1, 415) = 11.18, p = .01$.

In actually dealing with a specific individual's behaviours, male confidence did decrease but remained higher than that reported by females in most categories. There was no difference in reported confidence levels when dealing with issues of limited speech ability, daydreaming, symptoms of depression, poor mobility, temper tantrums or avoidance. In perceived ability to constantly monitor behaviours and other students when attending to a specific child's needs there was also no reported difference by gender. Females were slightly more confident than males when dealing with disrupted teaching and making time for others, F values of 8.95 ($p = .01$) and 5.80 ($p = .02$).

When examining the likeliness to engage in coping strategies, in most instances female candidates ranked higher than male. Male candidates were more likely than females to enlist the support of the other children in the classroom. There was no reported difference between males and females being willing to discuss situations with the principal, seeking professional help for the child, discussing the situation with specialist personnel, or discussing the situation with colleagues. Females were more likely to engage in coping strategies, such as seeking help and

resources from a resource teacher. Females were also more willing to implement modifications or alternative expectations, F values from 11.39 to 12.17, $p = .01$.

Our research seems to indicate that female candidates are more willing to initiate coping strategies which increase direct support in the classroom, while male candidates are more likely to initiate strategies which decrease direct support. Further research into this area is necessary.

The relationship of the candidates' age to perceptions. Students enter the faculty of education at a variety of ages, ranging from their early twenties to their sixties. It is therefore necessary to consider the effect of age on perceptions of managing behaviours in inclusive classrooms.

This research found candidates aged 41 to 45 differed consistently from all other age groups. They more often reported witnessing withdrawal, symptoms of depression, over-affection towards strangers, aggression towards adults and self, unpredictability, and avoidance than any other group. They also reported fewer issues of dealing with short attention, F values from 2.69 to 3.98, $p = .01$. The cause for this reported difference remains unknown and thus warrants further research.

The only other reportable finding for age pertained to the youngest candidates. Those aged 20 to 25 differed significantly from those aged 26-30 in their willingness to discuss situations with the principal. The younger teacher candidates were less willing to seek help from the principal than those aged 26 to 30, $F(6, 408) = 3.64$, $p = .02$.

Conclusion

In most areas the teacher candidates were already feeling somewhat confident in their general abilities. What was interesting is that the candidates reported they were only somewhat confident when it came to meeting their own needs. This indicates that, as early as three months into a teacher preparation program, pre-service teachers are expressing concern about their ability to cope with the stresses of a classroom.

This study shows that after two and a half months in a Faculty of Education, candidates exhibit a sense of proprietorship over their classroom. They are also exhibiting early signs of perfectionism and unwillingness to appear in need of help. The fact that overall candidates expressed a preference not to have other adults in their classrooms and admitted they were not likely to seek help from another adult is a concern. These future teachers will need to rely on the expertise of mentors to continue their learning over their beginning years. In Ontario there is a high teacher attrition rate for those within the first five years of their career (Ontario College of Teachers, 1999). The Ontario government, in trying to deal with this, has supported mentor programs in the schools (Government of Ontario, 2005). If, however, the new teacher is hesitant to use this support, the existence of these mentors decreases in significance. Further research in this area is necessary as this potentially interferes with the ability to best meet the needs of students while also contributing to teacher retention issues.

In Ontario there is a concern regarding a decrease in the number of male applicants to faculties of education. The difficulties lie not in the candidacy or application profile of males, but simply in the fact that fewer and fewer are applying. This is especially true for candidates for the elementary school program. This study found that, though males express more confidence, when it came to dealing with individual student needs female candidates were more willing to implement accommodations, modifications or alternative expectations. What is also interesting is that males in the program are more likely to engage in coping strategies that decrease external support in the classroom while females are more willing to engage in those that increase support. In light of the increase of students with special needs in the regular classroom, and the accompanying increase in external involvement in the education of students, an individual who has the tendency to decrease support would find this a challenge. The profession may not appear as appealing as it once did. To verify this supposition, this area requires additional cultural studies research.

Our research suggests that experience gained during practicum is vital in the preparation of teacher candidates. Candidates learn how to deal with situations best in hands-on approaches.

The purpose of this study was to determine pre-service teachers' perceptions regarding the management of behaviours in inclusive classrooms and gather data on the relationship between teacher candidates' age and gender and beliefs about management issues. The findings of this research point to many areas that require further examination. Different possibilities for further research have been indicated.

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