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The Difference in Attitudes of Regular and Special Education Teachers Toward Inclusion

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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2016

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M.A., Cabrini College, 2008

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Administrator Leadership for Teaching and Learning

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Abstract

Inclusion has been introduced throughout the educational community as a method to increase math and reading scores of underachieving schools on standardized tests. The problem was that teachers were not effectively implementing inclusion. Guided by Bandura's (1994) self-efficacy theory, which hypothesizes that a person's sense of efficacy provides information of their capability and the ability to assess their performance, the purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to determine if there was a significant difference in attitudes on inclusion between regular and special education teachers using the 4 subsections of the Scale of Teachers: Attitudes Toward Inclusive Classrooms through an online survey program. A *t test* was used to examine the attitudes of 50 regular and 50 special education teachers on inclusion in an elementary charter school after the special education subgroup failed to show progress on standardized tests over a 5 year period. Overall, the data indicated significant differences between regular and special education teachers' attitudes on inclusion. Both regular and special education teachers did not agree on Factor 1: advantages and disadvantages of inclusion and Factor 2: teacher feelings on inclusion. However, the teachers did agree on Factor 3: philosophical beliefs on inclusion and Factor 4: administrative issues on inclusion. This study's implications for social change included evidence to incorporate a unified vision for best practices for professional development as well as the importance of collaborative teaching at the undergraduate level, and a working knowledge of various learning disabilities, which may be used by school principals, teachers, parents, and policy makers to create an effective inclusion program.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my family, especially… to my husband, Tony, for his support, encouragement, and his constant love which have sustained me throughout this journey; to my children, Jesse and Janna, for their patience and understanding; to my siblings, Jerry, Ida, Barbara, Otha, Willie, Michael, Major, Billy, and Charlotte, for instilling the importance of hard work and higher education; to Jo-Ann Savoy, Erin Cunningham, and Yolanda McEachin, for their encouragements, faith, and their belief in me; and to my late parents, Logan and Anna Brown, both of whom believed in diligence, the pursuit of academic excellence, and the encouragement to reach your dream.

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I would like to acknowledge and thank my school division for allowing me to conduct my research and providing any assistance requested. Special thanks to Johnathan Hess for his statistical genius and to the members of the staff development and human resources department for their continued support.

Finally, I would like to thank the teachers and administrators in our school division that assisted me with this project. Their enthusiasm and readiness to provide feedback made the completion of this research an enjoyable experience.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Special education can be traced back to parent-organized advocacy groups in the mid-1940s (Copenhaver, 2005). These grassroots groups, such as the American Association on Mental Deficiency, United Cerebral Palsy Association, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and John F. Kennedy's Panel on Mental Retardation, established an increased level of school access for children with disabilities at the state and local levels during the 1960s (Autism Society 2010). Students who are served by special education were placed in separate classrooms and educated by special education teachers trained to meet their special needs (Bardon, Siperstein, Widaman & Parker, 2007). Often, they were classified as "mentally retarded" by state departments of education and called "retards" by their peers in the mainstream curriculum (Alexander & Alexander 2005). The prevailing school policy during the 1960s and early 1970s was that special education students should be excluded from regular school activities (D'Aniello, 2008). This policy was not repealed until the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, which was signed into law on November 29, 1975 by President Gerald Ford (Autism Society, 2010).

In 1990, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, was reauthorized and renamed The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; Snyder, 1999, p. 193). The IDEA of 1990 reinforced the original mandate that students with disabilities be educated next to students without disabilities, leading to the beginning of inclusion (Westling & Fox, 2009). To assist in this endeavor, the federal government provided monetary assistance to state and local agencies that were responsible for educating children with disabilities, "This law is designed to provide your child with the best

available education, resulting in what we all desire for our children – a more rewarding and enjoyable life" (Nauert, 2006, p. 19). The intent of the law created a pathway for the development of inclusion practices.

The implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 and the reauthorization of IDEA provided children with disabilities and regular education children, along with their parents and teachers, a unique challenge (Lee-Tarver, 2006). In addition to the requirement that children must pass standardized tests before advancing to the next grade level, these acts also require the full inclusion of children with disabilities into the regular classroom; moreover, these requirements resulted in changes in the way services are delivered to children with disabilities and assumed that every child can learn and that children with disabilities can positively benefit from more interaction with peers and more contact with the regular education curriculum (Yell, Katsiyannas, & Shiner, 2006).

A controversial issue related to the NCLB is that it has made general education teachers responsible for the education of the students with disabilities (NCLB, 2001). Regular and special educators must work collaboratively as part of a coherent system in planning and delivering instruction (Burns & Ysseldyke, 2009). School districts see the need to create more effective professional development opportunities to learn about inclusion. In order to provide learning opportunities, there is a need to specifically identify general education teachers' needs and begin to establish methods, solution strategies, and effective staff development for them (Smith & Smith, 2006).

Statement of the Problem

In this study, I examined the attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in an elementary charter classroom. The elementary charter school, located in Pennsylvania, had not achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the past 5 years at the time of the study because its special education students did not meet Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) state standards on their overall scores in reading and math. The school scored 15% in reading with a required state score of 72% and 23% in math with a required state score of 67% in 2013. The lack of adequate growth is a significant concern because the special education subgroup is identified as a target for the success or failure of AYP and may identify the school as in need of improvement or intervention from the state. Therefore, inclusion was introduced in the hopes of gaining positive change in reading and math scores.

Acquiring empirical evidence on the effectiveness of this intervention on special education students prompted this quantitative quasi-experimental research study. This study was influenced by the inadequate inclusion practices that have influenced teachers' attitudes in an urban charter school system in Philadelphia since the inception of inclusion. Pudlas (2007) indicated, "Simply stated: attitude matters. If teachers betray a negative attitude (are turn off) toward students with diverse learning needs, it is highly unlikely that those students will perceive themselves as valued members of the community" (p. 7). Current studies in the field of education conducted by educators revealed mixed reports on regular and special education teachers' attitudes in the inclusive classroom (Agbenyega, 2007). In the Agbenyega (2007) study, the research

findings "suggest that … teachers do not regard students with disabilities as belonging in regular classes and would prefer them being educated in existing special schools" (p. 51). Another study indicated that exploring the feelings teachers have about inclusion is important to determine teachers' needs and how schools can provide teachers with the guidance, support, and information to facilitate instruction to all students (Beattie, Jordan, & Algozzine, 2006).

Nature of Study

The nature of this study was to examine the attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward inclusion an inclusive environment. In this quantitative quasi-experimental study, I determined the differences between the four subsections of the survey on Scale of Teachers: Attitudes Toward Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC) and between regular and special education teachers. The teachers were randomly chosen as the participants.

The STATIC (used with permission) is comprised of 20 Likert Scale questions, addressing four constructs (also referred to as subsections): (a) advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education, (b) teacher feelings toward inclusive education, (c) philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education, and (d) administrative issues on inclusive education. The STATIC represented a numeric description of attitudes, trends, or opinions of the participants in the study (Creswell, 2009, p. 145). The Likert Scale questions ensured that data collected from the survey may be quantified, making descriptions of the participants possible.

The participants in this study were drawn from three charter schools managed by an educational management organization (EMO) in Pennsylvania and located in an urban environment in the southeastern section of Pennsylvania. The participants were selected according to their qualifications in an inclusive school setting. The inclusion criteria were as follows: (a) being a general or special education teacher for at least 1 year, (b) been teaching at the elementary school level, and (c) have special education students in their classroom. The study included 50 special and 50 regular education teachers who were randomly selected as qualified participants teaching in an urban elementary charter school in southeastern Pennsylvania. As of January 6, 2012, the charter school system had a total of 2,382 students enrolled. The school completed its first academic year using inclusion for all grades. The teaching experience ranged from 1 to 13 years of experience.

A *t* test was used to analyze differences between the four subsections of the survey on STATIC and between regular and special education teachers. A qualitative design was considered for providing a means to explore and understand a social or human problem building from particulars to a general theme conversely, this type of study looks at individual meaning through interviews and observations and employs a flexible structure (Yin, 2008). Though effective, a qualitative approach was dismissed due to the study's objective, which does not include observations and direct interviews.

A letter was sent to the superintendent of the charter school district participating in this study requesting permission to conduct this research. Once permission was received, I met with the principal and the teachers to enlist their assistance in completing the survey. The survey was distributed to all general education and special education

teachers during the spring of 2014 via an online survey generator. The sampling for the study was random to ensure validity as teachers' names were replaced with numbers, and then a random number generator was used to select the sample.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions (RQs):

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion?

$H_0$1: There is no significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion.

H_a1: There is no significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion.

RQ2: Is there a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education?

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education.

H_a2: There is a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education.

RQ3: Is there a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to teacher feelings toward inclusive education?

$H_0$3: There is no significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to teacher feelings toward inclusive education.

H_a3: There is a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to teacher feelings toward inclusive education.

RQ4: Is there a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education?

$H_0$4: There is no significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education.

H_a4: There is a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education.

RQ5: Is there a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to administrative issues on inclusive education?

$H_0$5: There is no significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to administrative issues on inclusive education.

H_a5: There is a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to administrative issues on inclusive education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental design was to examine the attitudes of regular and special education teachers on inclusion with data collected from an elementary charter school. I determined the differences in their attitudes on inclusion through the STATIC survey. Information as to the nature of the differences in attitudes between regular and special education teachers was provided after a thorough examination of the survey items. The teachers responded to the 20 questions on the STATIC survey on inclusion which addressed four factors relative to inclusive education: (a) advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education, (b) teacher feelings regarding inclusive education, (c) philosophical issues regarding inclusive education, and (d) logistical concerns of inclusive education (see Appendix A). The findings of this study extended current knowledge of the determining factors that may influence attitudes toward inclusion and encourage social change by determining what specific factors contributed to differences in attitudes of teachers toward inclusion.

Theoretical Framework

According to Bradley et al. (1997), effective planning is the greatest challenge facing educators today. Bandura's (1994) self-efficacy theory hypothesized that a person's sense of efficacy helps an individual in two ways: (a) provides information to the individual of their capability and (b) helps an individual assess their performance. According to Bandura, an individual's level of self-efficacy is influenced by four main sources of information. These include: (a) social persuasions from others that reinforce their ability to succeed, (b) an individual's prior experiences, (c) observing others completing similar tasks, and (d) self-reflective conclusions regarding an individual's strength and weaknesses. Bandura continued by explaining that people must feel confident in their chosen profession in order to sustain the motivation and determination necessary to succeed. People tend to avoid situations when they lack the confidence or competence (Bandura, 1977). The success or failure of inclusion rests solely on teachers including their belief in the school's and their own personal efficacy (Viel-Ruma, Houchins, Jolivette, & Benson, 2010). Many teachers find themselves beleaguered day in and day out by disruptive and non-achieving students. Eventually, their low sense of efficacy to fulfill academic demands takes a "stressful toll" (Bandura, 1995, p. 21), which may result in a diminished sense of school commitment, leading to less time spent in the content area and perceived inefficacy.

In contrast, teachers who exhibit a strong sense of instructional efficacy promote intrinsic educational interest, find or create academic achievements throughout the school year, and thus, possess a sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1998). In a school system where there is a collective feeling of capability and a positive atmosphere for development,

teachers feel a sense of academic success (Bandura, 1995). The STATIC addresses self-efficacy by providing a means for the participants to self-reflect on their individual capability and assist in performing a personal assessment on their performance (Cochran, 1997).

Successful inclusion requires consideration of multiple and varied factors, but teachers comprise the central force that impact the success of inclusive practice (Pajares & Urdan, 2006). Effectiveness can be impacted by a teacher's belief in their ability to meet the needs of the students they teach (Lamberson, 2006; Usher & Pajares, 2008). A teacher's self-efficacy is equally as important when considering instructional effectiveness due to Bandura's (2006) theory that involves people's beliefs and attitudes as vitals components in the prediction of behavior.

There are several challenges regarding effective instruction in an inclusive environment. These challenges include (a) lack of necessary time available for the increase in instructional planning, (b) lack of experience in implementing individualized, small group instruction within a large group, and (c) deficits in teachers' skill level (Schulte et al., 2004). Bandura (1994) noted that self-confidence is enhanced through a strong sense of efficacy. People who feel competent and confident in their capabilities are more likely to accept difficult challenges (Bandura, 2004). Through in-depth survey questions, I sought to discover if teachers' understanding of their own self-efficacy contributed to their attitudes toward professional development on inclusion.

Definition of Terms

During the course of this investigation, numerous keywords and phrases were used that were distinctive to this study. The following terms were used operationally in this study:

Collaboration: A systematic process where people work and communicate together interdependently to analyze and interpret data or a situation (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008). For the purposes of this study, collaboration involves "teachers who work together interdependently to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve results for their students, their team, and their school", in conjunction with a team of teachers who use collective inquiry to gain information on student performance (DuFour et al., 2008, p. 16).

General education teacher: An individual who is certified to teach in one or more of the high school subject areas and trained to deliver the curriculum determined by the local or state education agency (Parent Information Center, 2006).

Inclusion: The primary instruction and provision of services for a child with a disability are provided with appropriate additional supports for the student and the teacher, in an age-appropriate, general education class in the school the child would have attended if not disabled (Alexander & Alexander, 2005, p. 507).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): The IDEA is the federal law governing the education of children with disabilities. The IDEA and its regulations define least restrictive environment (LRE) and require all states to demonstrate they have policies and procedures in place to guarantee they meet the federal LRE requirements. The IDEA guarantees children with disabilities a Free Appropriate Public Education

(FAPE) in the LRE. This education must be specifically tailored to meet the needs of each individual child between the ages of 3 and 21 requiring specialized instruction and related services in school (Alexander & Alexander, 2005, pp. 492–493).

Least restrictive environment (LRE): A LRE is defined as the educational setting in which a child with disabilities can receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) designed to meet their educational needs while being educated with peers without disabilities in the regular educational environment to the maximum extent appropriate. The definition of LRE in the IDEA is: to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities are educated with children who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment may occur only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily (Alexander & Alexander, 2005, pp. 505–506).

Self-efficacy: "Beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 2006, p. 3).

Special education: Specialized instruction tailor-made to fit the unique learning strengths and needs of students with disabilities with a major goal to teach the skills and knowledge the child needs to be as independent as possible (Copenhaver, 2005, p. 23).

Special education teacher: "A person, including an itinerant teacher, certified or licensed to teach students with disabilities" (Burns & Ysseldyke, 2009, p. 13).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

In the context of the study, I made two assumptions based on numerous studies on motivation (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006; Whitehurst & Howells, 2006). The first assumption was that the teachers that participated in this study provided accurate and honest responses to the survey questions. My second assumption was that the use of the survey provided adequate information to examine the perceptions and attitudes of the teachers in regards to students in the general education classroom.

Limitations

I identified the following limitations in this study. First, I lived within the district that was being studied. The issue rests on the possibility that I may know some of the participants; however, I conducted an anonymous online survey and names were not used throughout the data collection and data analysis process. Secondly, there was also a chance that the teachers may not provide truthful responses in fear that their administrator may find out their responses. Thirdly, the study was focused on only three charter elementary schools in an urban environment in Pennsylvania out of over 55 charter schools in the city so this study may not apply to rural or suburban schools.

Delimitations

For this study, I identified the following delimitations. The study was conducted in a charter school system in southeastern Pennsylvania making the sample population very small. The teachers had less than 5 years' experience and may share similar attitudes because they lack experience and may not be prepared.

Validity

The STATIC's content was supported by the literature during its development. Each variable included on the STATIC was identified by previous studies of comparable nature. Internal consistency and construct validity is specified by the item-to-total correlation coefficients ranging from .26 to .70 (Cochran, 1997, p. 16).

Significance of Study

In this study, I examined the attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in an elementary charter school classroom. The significance of this study lies in the fact that it added to the body of literature on inclusion within metropolitan inner-city schools to better service the demographic they represent and that it may provide insight in achieving AYP for the special education population. Examining the teachers' attitudes may positively motivate teachers to better assist the needs of all students. This study was important because of the growing need of teachers to effectively provide instruction in an inclusion setting to address the lack of academic progress in standardized tests.

The results may assist educators, professional developers, and principals gain deeper insight into issues faced by inclusion teachers. To ensure those inclusion classrooms are successful by understanding how inclusion teachers feel, new programs and methods can be developed to educate teachers and staff to meet the state mandated needs of special education students. Teachers' success is vital as federal teacher reforms are continually enforced (D'Aniello, 2008). D'Aniello (2008) stated:

> The combination of standards-driven accountability systems and federal regulations have resulted in a strong need for teacher educators to prepare all

> future teachers, in both general and special education classroom to be responsible for educating all students, including students with diverse needs. (p. 310)

The goal of the study was to provide a clear view on how to generate better or much stronger educators who will eventually lead to successfully educating the needs of all students. The long-term effects may lead to having a society where individuals are aware of their career and academic goals which will enable the breakdown of the paradigms of our society.

Inclusion has been deemed important for academic achievement (Huefner, 2006; Kaye & Aserlind, 2005; McKellar, 2005), student motivation (Grolnick et al., 2009), and college enrollment (Perna & Titus, 2005); however, many teachers may not think inclusion is important. This study may uncover important factors about inclusion. Researchers, professors, and principals can ultimately develop professional development assistance to change the educational community's way of thinking. This study contributed to the practice of positive social change by providing hope for the advancement of special education students.

Conclusion

Inclusion is a vital ingredient in academic achievement (Florian, 2007). Schools struggle to implement inclusion, despite the fact that schools are required to accommodate students with special needs (Duchnowski, Kutash, Sheffield, & Vaughn, 2006). Inclusion in general education classrooms is necessary to ensure that a student with disability receives the appropriate services needed to overcome any educational challenge that may arise; however, the consequences need to be weighed carefully when

including students with disabilities into the general curriculum, the stigmatizing accommodating can be damaging due to teacher expectations and attitudes towards the special education needs of the learners. On the other hand, some researchers have noted that general educators do not feel prepared or confident in their own abilities to meet the needs of special education students; this lack of self-efficacy could be detrimental in the arena of inclusion (Miller, 2009; Winter, 2006).

The remainder of this study was divided up as follows. In Chapter 2, I will provide a review of literature which details the history of inclusion related to students diagnosed with special needs; research on inclusion, Bandura's social cognitive theory, behaviors linked to special needs, teacher attitudes, school/teacher/child interpersonal communication; asking the question are we ready to implement inclusion; factors and barriers of inclusion; and a conclusion. In Chapter 3, I will discuss the methodology used for the study, the design of the study, the precise research questions being investigated, the means of soliciting and selecting participants, the sample size, the role of the researcher, the validity and reliability of the research design, the steps of the data collection and analysis, and finally, the relevant ethical considerations. In Chapter 4, I will discuss the findings of the study, and in Chapter 5, I will interpret the findings as well as discuss implications for social change and provide my recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Even though inclusion is more frequent, infrequent teacher training and research have been devoted to assisting the administration and general education teacher meet the NCLB mandates by 2014. Consequently, inclusion has become an increasingly important trend for school district across the United States (Burstein, Sears, Wilcoxen, Cabello, & Spagna, 2006). In Chapter 2, I will provide the platform from which this study was based. After careful review and intensive research, I concluded that the following four areas should be investigated in the literature to convey the grounds for teachers' attitudes in an inclusive environment for students: (a) advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education, (b) teacher feelings toward inclusive education, (c) philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education, and (d) administrative issues on inclusive education.

In this chapter, I will provide information on the key features and historical origin of inclusion and research on the theory of self-efficacy will also be presented to launch the basis for this study. Similarly, I will discuss the research on regular and special education teacher attitudes that I explored through the literature, specifically the STATIC survey. I used the Walden University database, the Internet, EBSCO Host, ProQuest, ERIC, and the Questia On-Line Library to locate and analyze scholarly practical and theoretical articles and books. The following keywords were used in the search: *teacher attitudes, inclusion, general education teacher, special education teacher, teacher perceptions, stereotype,* and *education*. The topics for the review of literature were chosen in order to provide detailed information in reference to the history and research on inclusion, behavioral problems related to special needs students, social acceptance, and teacher attitudes.

The Historical and Legal Foundation of Inclusion

In the last 3 decades, the philosophies guiding special education have changed and continue to change, particularly in the United States. A number of parent-organized advocacy groups surfaced after World War II, which started the history of special education in the United States (Osgood, 2008). The American Association on Mental Deficiency was one of the first organizations, which held its first convention in 1947 (Nauert, 2006). Fueled by the Civil Rights Movement, a number of other parent organizations were formed, including the United Cerebral Palsy Association, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and John F. Kennedy's Panel on Mental Retardation in the early 1950s (Miller, Burns & Flower, 2007). An increasing level of school access was

established for children with disabilities at the state and local levels during the 1960s (Florian, 2007). Prior to the IDEA, treatment of special education in America was pretty uninviting. In fact, many children with disabilities were denied access to public education altogether (Burns & Ysselkyke, 2009). For example, in 1970, U.S. schools educated only one in five children with disabilities, and many states had laws that excluded children with major disabilities, such as blindness, deafness, and mental retardation (Westling & Fox, 2009). The transformation to improve the students' treatment is based upon the idea that students with disabilities should receive their education in the LRE (Duchnowski, Kutash, Sheffield, & Vaughn, 2006). Furthermore, in the United States, the requirements that education is provided in the LRE were put forth in the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) in 1975. According to the EHA, students with disabilities (ages 5–21) are required to be educated with their peers without disabilities to the maximum extent possible regardless of the severity and nature of their disabilities (Osgood, 2008). Therefore, the term, *mainstreaming,* surfaced at that time to describe the practice of educating students LRE for students with disabilities (Howard, 2008).

The concept of mainstreaming was that students would spend part of the day receiving instruction in a general education classroom. In a study conducted by What Works Clearinghouse (2012), the researchers identified English language learners with learning disabilities that qualified for mainstreaming by scoring mid-basic level on the California Standards Test in English language arts. Their study was conducted in 15 schools in California's Santa Ana Unified School District and determined that the major benefit of mainstreaming was to allow students with disabilities to receive special

education services in a self-contain classroom while simultaneously participating with typically developing peers in nonacademic activities, allowing students with and without disabilities to learn from each other. The students also attended extracurricular nonacademic activities, such as music, art, physical education, lunch, and recess. Initially, the mainstreaming philosophy underscored that students with mild disabilities should receive their education in a general education environment but did not take into account students with moderate or severe disabilities (Westling & Fox, 2009).

In 1990, the EHA legislation was amended and renamed as the IDEA, which also supported educating students with disabilities in their neighborhood public schools alongside their peers (Autism Society, 2010). It was at this juncture that mainstreaming was substituted by the practice and term of inclusion (Yell, Katsiyannas, & Shiner, 2006). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) mandated again that students with disabilities should be educated with typically developing students in general education classes to the greatest extent possible (Peckham-Hardin & Downing, 2007). Additionally, IDEIA reemphasized that students with disabilities can only be placed in separate or alternate classes or schools when the severity or nature of their disability prohibits the student from receiving an appropriate level of education in a general education classroom with supplementary services and aides (Howard, 2008). Therefore, this law guaranteed the right of all students with disabilities to receive their education in the LRE.

View and Implementation of Inclusion

Though the methods and views of inclusion differ among stakeholders (Engelbrecht et al., 2007), the implementation of inclusion among stakeholders was significantly influenced by the core concept of inclusion and the perceptions of students with special needs. Engelbrecht et al. (2007) conducted a study in the United States and South Africa to determine the views of inclusion from parents of disabled children. The collaborative research at a Midwestern university in the United States and three South African universities was to compare the parents' perceptions of inclusion across three cultural and geographical regions. Special education directors in the United States along with support groups, district personnel, and principals identified participants in South Africa. Only informed parents that were willing to share their experiences about inclusion were selected to participate in the study. Parents participated in two focus group discussions in the United States that were conducted in two school districts (one rural and one mixed with urban and rural schools) in different parts of a Midwestern state. In South Africa, parents from the Western Cape and Gauteng provinces participated in six focus group discussions from urban school districts.

The researchers interviewed parents of children in all cases who were in self-contained settings or fully included in general education classes (Engelbrecht et al., 2007). The question leading each interview was, "Tell me about your experiences regarding your child's inclusion" (Engelbrecht et al., 2007, p. 48). The leading question was followed by specific questions about their collaboration with their teachers, acceptance by general-education peers, and questions about placement process and the choices that parents made regarding placement. The researchers facilitated each focus

group interview with one at each focus group in the United States and two researchers at each discussion group in South Africa. All interviews had an approximate duration of 90 minutes and were transcribed by the researchers. The results indicated that barriers to effective family and school partnerships, parent advocacy, experiences, and parent perceptions were amazingly similar on the two continents. (Agbenyega, 2007).

In a comparative 2007 study by Bardon et al. (2007), 5,837 randomly selected students were surveyed by the authors on their attitudes toward the inclusion of peers with intellectual disabilities (ID). Their findings, with a margin of error of +/- 1.4%, indicated that youth (a) did not want to interact socially with a peer with ID, specifically outside of school; (b) believed that ID students cannot participate in academic classes, only nonacademic classes; (c) had the perception that students with ID were not mildly impaired rather moderately impaired; (d) in school and in their classrooms, had limited contact with students with ID; and (e) perceived inclusion as having both positive and negative effects. The researchers used a structural equation model that showed that their willingness to interact with ID students and their support of inclusion was greatly influenced by the youth's perceptions of the competence of students with ID.

Benefits of Inclusion

The inclusion of a student with a disability in a regular education classroom is often a misinterpreted concept, and societal views on inclusion vary; however, there is a body of research that suggests that successful implementation of inclusion has been successful in schools (Carter & Kemp , 2006, 2007; Cross, Hutter-Pishgahi, Shelton, & Traub, 2006). The Shelton et al. (2006) study's involved several young students with

substantial disabilities who received their inclusive education in typical community settings, such as childcare centers and preschools. The study focused on the early-childhood education personnel and specialists' practices that lead to successful implementation of inclusion. Their data analysis revealed four components common of the research sites: (a) adaptations, (b) parent-provider relationship, (c) therapeutic interventions, and (d) attitudes. The researchers concluded that having clear distinguishable and optimistic attitudes toward inclusion was a common factor of parents and providers who supported the choice to include the student with severe disabilities in regular education classrooms. While the term, *attitudes,* is somewhat difficult to clearly define, they opted to define it as the provider or parent's expression of a negative or positive perspective of what is occurring in an inclusive environment. Furthermore, the researchers noted that the success of the students with severe disabilities who were included in the programs was greatly influenced by general education teachers. The researchers noted that teachers expressed genuine gratification at the impact they and their colleagues had on the overall growth, development, and learning of the child as compared to their initial feelings of hesitation about welcoming the students with disabilities.

In contrast, Kemp and Carter's (2006) study critically assessed the two skills designated by teachers, the relationships between selected skills and teacher perception of integration success, and the relationships between teacher perception and child performance on selected skills. Thirty-three students with intellectual disabilities were examined on the basis of on-task behavior and direction following skills for one term in

regular kindergarten. The teacher's perceptions were measured two times, one after a term, and the second at the end of the year. The researchers determined school success, as nominated by teachers, was commonly related to self-help skills, classroom skills, and social skills. Teachers that rated students as being more successfully assimilated had better on-task behaviors and reacted better to group directions than those students who were rated as less successful; however, questions surfaced about the interpretation of research that relies completely on perceptions of teachers because there was a less than favorable relationship between the direct and indirect measures of classroom skills.

In a different study, Kemp and Carter (2007) outlined research data relating to 24 students' academic ability with disabilities, which were included in regular-education classes for a minimum of 18 months and examined the contribution of academic skills to the successful implementation of inclusion of students with disabilities. Collection of norm-referenced literacy measures were conducted on all 24 students while work samples were collected on 19 students to compare to other collected samples on average teacher nominated peers in their classes. Furthermore, the teachers were questioned about their perceptions of numeracy skills and literacy when compared to average grade peers and their perceptions of the success of the assimilation through an interview process. The researchers concluded that "though most students performed below their peers on all aspects, some students, even those diagnosed with ID, performed close to and on occasion, above the expectations for their age and grade" (Kemp & Carter, 2007, p. 3). Additionally, there was a progressive statistically significant relationship between the direct measure of academic skills and the independent observers who rated the work

samples and between the direct measurement of academic skill and the classroom teacher's perception of those skills; moreover, the researchers noted that although the relationship between teacher success and academic ability was found there was no significant relationship between academic ability and the level of disability as measured at the preschool level.

Barriers of Inclusion

Notwithstanding the body of research suggesting various suggestions of inclusion, there is also a body of research describing the failures of inclusion (Buell, 2009; Eriks-Brophy et al., 2006; Mamlin, 2008; Travers & Ring, 2005). This body of research, in respect to schools, examined the barriers and failures of inclusion and focused on the deeper issues and views of an inclusive culture by society. The goal of Mamlin's (2008) study was to discover what inclusion looked like and what impact inclusion had for its participants when implemented as part of a district-wide restructuring initiative. Major indicators were identified as essential factors for a successful inclusive education: administrator preparation, teacher and staff input, and collaboration among teachers. Mamlin's study began at the beginning of a restructuring effort at an elementary school that was designed to support more inclusive practices. The school's efforts were focused on the teacher and students who were diagnosed with mild to moderate disabilities and were previously receiving services in a self-contained setting. Though the findings did not imply any movement of the special education students to general education, the participants called their efforts "inclusion." The researcher determined that the two

themes that accounted for their failure to understand and implement inclusion were leadership and the culture of segregation.

In contrast, Travers and Ring (2005) stated that the purpose of their study was to assess a student with severe learning disabilities in a mainstream primary school in rural Ireland with only four teachers. The qualitative research used a multi operational approach to data collection. The study focused on peer's perception and the impact on peers, the pupil's perception, and on curricular and social access. The study revealed several quandaries in attempting to achieve successful implementation of inclusion. These results included apprehensions over non-disable student's lack of knowledge and understanding of learning disabilities, teaching materials, teacher's perceptions of meeting the needs of special needs students, and the extent of the student's social inclusion.

A study by Eriks-Brophy et al. (2006) found that most students with hearing loss are orally educated in inclusive settings. In their study, students with hearing loss, their parents, and itinerant teachers of deaf students were utilized to identify barriers and facilitators of school inclusion. The results highlighted the significance of exploring aspects to individual students with hearing loss in preparation for their inclusive education in general classroom settings while supporting the concept of respectful partnerships and commitment from numerous sources among main stakeholders.

One hundred eighty-nine family childcare providers were the focus of a study by Buell (2009). The purpose of the study was to examine the attitudes and experiences of participants that are willing to care for students with disabilities. Childcare providers with

previous experience caring for students with disabilities were more likely to agree to care for students in the future. Explanations for a lack of desire to care for the disabled students along with the differences in supports and services needed to care for the disabled students were examined. Family childcare providers responded to nine separate questions measuring the attitudes inclusion correlated with (a) number of completed training hours in 1 year, (b) educational level, (c) experience with caring for a student with disabilities, and (d) willingness to care for a child with disabilities.

In the study by Booth (2008), providers willing to care for a child with disabilities disagreed with the statement that children with disabilities should not be in a family childcare environment consequently children with disabilities can only be cared for with extra assistance. Additionally, children with disabilities need to be in specialized, separate facilities as caring for a child with disabilities is more difficult than caring for other children. The question about willingness to care for a child with disability was significantly related to six of the questions concerning appropriateness. Moreover, providers who are willing to care for a child with disabilities were more likely to agree that there are benefits to having a child with disabilities with children with typical skills and that the choice of providers should rest on the parents. Providers also agreed that children with disabilities should receive some of their services with children without disabilities and that extra help should be provided.

Of the providers that agreed that children with disabilities should be in separate facilities, they also agreed that children with disabilities should not be in a family childcare environment. Those providers, Booth (2008) that agreed with the previous

statement had a positive association with the number of completed training hours in the previous year. There was also a positive correlation between the providers' disagreement with the statement that children with behavior issues can benefit from children with typical skills and the number of completed training hours in the previous year. Though the caregiver's education level was not associated with any variables, completed training hours were positively related to providers' willingness to care for children with disabilities. The study also provided the caregivers a list of possible supports and asked to report on the supports they felt would have the greatest impact. The supports were (a) adaptations to the environment, (b) specific teaching strategies, (c) special equipment funding, (d) effective behavior-management strategies, and (e) current information about disabilities (D'Aniello, 2008).

To accurately assess the difference that experience may affect the reported need, the providers, (D'Aniello) 2008, were divided into two groups: providers with experience caring for a child with disabilities (n = 61) and providers without experience (n = 24). Various supports and resources necessary to effectively care for a child with disabilities were also reported. Though the two groups had similar responses, the providers with experience more regularly reported needing supplemental assistance (41% vs. 13%) than the providers with no experience. Notwithstanding the difference, the preponderance of the providers suggested that all of the supports that were listed would greatly increase their ability to provide effective care for a child with disabilities. The researchers also provided a list of 10 reasons to select from if providers indicated that they were unwilling to provide care for a child with disabilities. The providers with and without experience

caring for children with disabilities were asked to check as many reasons as applicable out of the 10 provided reasons. The three most often checked were (a) caring for a child with disabilities would limit care for other children, (b) lack of current knowledge on disabilities, and (c) the necessity to purchase special equipment (Buell, 2009).

Despite the disparities of study objectives and research topics among the reviewed literature on inclusionary failures and barriers, research indicated that stakeholder and teacher perceptions of individuals with inclusion and disabilities continues to be the compelling force in the effective implementation of inclusionary practices. At the vanguard of the issues, access to effective educational supplies, number of the special needs students enrolled in a regular education classroom and teacher readiness continues to obstruct the full effective inclusion of students with disabilities.

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusion

Students with special needs should be included, whenever possible, in the regular education classroom to ensure that they are receiving a free and appropriate public education in accordance to IDEA mandates (Villa, Thousand, Nevin, & Liston, 2005). If adhering to this mandate is not feasible, then they must be educated in the setting that provides the maximum opportunities for interaction with students who do not have special needs (Villa et al., 2005). Inclusion advocates and parents who pushed for an increased movement towards more inclusive programming for students with special needs pushed through federal court cases, which resulted in these mandates. Before concluding that they cannot be served in regular education classrooms, LRE litigation

requires that students with special needs at least have an opportunity to participate in regular education classrooms (Yell, Katsiyannis, & Shiner, 2006).

One of the most vital variables in the education with students with disabilities is teacher attitudes (Parasuram, 2006). Niemeyer and Leatherman (2005) stated that attitudes were made up of three key components: behavioral, affective, and cognitive, and they are ideas or thoughts that mirror feelings and effect behaviors related to a specific object. The behavior component stems from a tendency to react a certain way when in contact with a child with a disability (e.g., move toward or away from the child). The affective component is derived from the cognitive comprehension of a disability, which can illicit feelings that can cause them to either exclude the child with a disability form typical activities or motivate people to become involved in working with a child with a disability. The cognitive component originates from thoughts and knowledge about the causes of the behavior of students with disabilities that are in an inclusive setting. The three components, behavioral, affective, and cognitive, interact with each other and influence the person's perception of the world. These components suggest that teachers and stakeholders form attitudes towards children with disabilities and subsequently toward inclusion based solely on their previous experiences, various factors in the classroom, and a child's characteristics.

In the city of Mumbai, India, Parasuram's (2006) study assessed the attitudes of general educators toward inclusion and disabilities of students with disabilities into regular schools. This study used two attitude scales, which investigated if variables found in the participants' background could have an impact on their attitudes toward inclusion

of students with disabilities into regular schools and toward people with disabilities. The analysis of the data determined that prior acquaints with a person with a disability was the only variable that affected teachers' attitudes toward inclusion while some of the other variables affected teachers' attitudes toward disabilities.

Theoretical Background

Many educational theorists have made significant contributions to the expanding field of education, specifically the study of inclusion and attitudes. Their contributions have led to the development of educational archetypes that have positively influenced society, students, and teachers. At the epicenter, inclusionary thoughts and measures of attitudes can be traced to the theoretical writings of Bandura and the social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1998) made significant contributions to the study of human and social development and by critically examining Bandura's theories; one can find that the need to understand the attitudes toward the special education students and the role of inclusionary practices at schools is vital.

Bandura's Social-Cognitive Theory and Self-Efficacy

Bandura first introduced self-efficacy in 1977 (Bandura, 1977). This idea led Bandura to develop his social-cognitive theory in 1986 (Bandura, 1986). Bandura's work on self-efficacy contributed to a better understanding of many social learning theories (e.g., Bandura & Walters, 1963; Miller & Dollard, 1941) due in part because it provided the missing piece, the impact of one's belief, and to one's behavior. Unlike the other behaviorists at that time, Bandura's theory assimilated the self- reflective and cognitive

processes of human behavior (Bandura, 2001). Other theorists argued that the main catalysts for human behavior was personal, behavior, or environmental; Bandura's social-cognitive theory proposed that human behavior results from the interaction of environmental, behavioral, and personal influences (Maron, Cohen, & Naon, 2007). According to Pajares (2002):

> Bandura altered the label of this theory from social learning to social 'cognitive' both to distance it from prevalent social learning theories of the day and to emphasize that cognition plays a critical role in people's capability to construct reality, self-regulate, encode information, and perform behaviors (p. 2).

According to Bandura (1986, p. 391), self-efficacy refers to "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required attaining designated types of performances." The role of self-efficacy is important giving that the broader theory involves people's beliefs and attitudes as vital components in the prediction of behavior (Usher & Pajares, 2008). Economic and social-economic factors in conjunction with educational and family structure do not directly affect human behaviors (Bandura, 1986). Pajares (2002) clarified, "Instead, (economic, socio-economic, educational, and family factors) affect (human functioning) to the degree that they influence people's aspirations, self-efficacy beliefs, personal standards, emotional states, and other self-regulatory influences" (p. 7). One's self-efficacy principles can also influence other factors, such as a person's motivation and determination of goals; it can also influence whether failures are motivating or demoralizing (Bandura, 1997; Maddux, 1995; Schwarzer, 1992).

Every human has a set of core abilities, including the ability to self-reflect, learn, and symbolize (Bandura, 1986). During the process of symbolizing, humans, in effect, model behaviors from others (Viel-Ruma, Houchins, Jolivette, & Benson, 2010). Symbolizing also help humans to be better problem solvers and conduct the ongoing process of forethought (Shelton, Hutter-Pishgahi, Traub, & Cross, 2006). According to Pajares (2002), forethought allows humans to "anticipate the consequences of an action without actually engaging in it" (p. 8). Humans' self-reflective and self-regulatory mechanisms allow them to adjust their own behavior based on their self-observations and judgments. Bandura (2001) believed that success will only be achieved when people believe in themselves and in their capabilities. Confidence may be derived from an increased awareness of the attitudes teachers have toward inclusion. This study may provide insight on teacher attitudes on inclusion that may lead to reflective discussions by educators.

Implications of Bandura's Theory for Education

Bandura's social cognitive theory has five major premises for teacher education. First, students are both influenced and influence by the teacher education program. It is an error in judgment to assume that what was covered in class was absorbed; it is the students' processing of the information that matters. Second, educators must realize that previous observational learning shape the students' expectations and beliefs about learning. Third, to facilitate change and to stimulate learning, the teacher should present a framework, at the students' learning level for thinking and learning. Fourth, learning

must be viewed not only as a cognitive skill but also as a behavioral and performance skill. Lastly, the development of the perceived self-efficacy should be the ultimate goal of the teacher as they are providing inclusive education.

The Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusion (STATIC)

Of the many possible contributing causes influencing teacher attitudes toward inclusion and the potential social impact of this study's inquiry, it is of paramount importance that the selection of an instrument that can decipher and assess the forces that drive teacher attitudes toward students with disabilities and their placement. To accurately obtain the researcher's objectives, the STATIC was selected. Developed by Cochran at Missouri Southern State College, the STATIC's original purpose was to study teacher attitudes toward inclusion with the newly developed instrument to psychometrically measure teachers' attitude toward special needs (Cochran, 1997). In Cochran's study, 516 participants responded out of 1,400 teachers. The respondents were from five school districts in the state of Alabama.

> The author's primary intent of the development of the STATIC was to
>
> (a) examine differences in teachers' attitudes toward students with special needs,
>
> (b) identify the relationship between teachers' attitudes toward inclusion and their attitudes toward disabled persons in general, (c) examine the effects of teachers' attitudes on performance of special education students; (d) guide placement decisions for special education students; (e) screen prospective teachers prior to employment; (f) shape teacher education programs; and (g) diagnostically focus

> remediation on specific dimensions of attitude requiring modification (Cochran, 1997 p. 2).

Cochran (1997) used an exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the STATIC and revealed that it is feasible to measure the teachers' attitude on inclusion as prescribed by the STATIC. Dissimilar to other scales measuring one's attitude toward inclusion, Cochran's STATIC assessed one's personal beliefs to students with disabilities and inclusion. Additionally, Cochran's STATIC described one's professional peer support, level of confidence, and one's level of frustration when dealing with students with disabilities. Unlike other instruments, the STATIC provided a means to successfully address the researcher's objectives while preserving the theoretical foundations of the study. The STATIC essentially provided data on possible influences while effectively analyzed teacher attitudes on inclusion.

Literature Related to Method

Agbenyega (2007) used a 20-item Attitudes Toward Inclusion African Scale to examine the concerns of teachers' toward inclusive education of students with disabilities in Ghana. Five "Inclusive Project" and five "Non-Project" coeducational basic schools in three different localities: coastal, suburban, and central business areas in the Greater Accra metropolis participated in the survey for a total of 100 teachers. Four factors were revealed through an analysis of the responses: (a) professional aptitude, (b) resource issues, (c) needs of students, and (d) student behaviors. In an attempt to extend the understanding of their concerns and attitudes, interviews were conducted on a small sample. The researcher determined that teachers believed students with disabilities should

not be in regular schools, especially those students with sensory impairments, and they also believed that policymakers impose inclusive education. The researcher determined that a lack of sufficient orientation, lack of qualified assistants, lack of available resources, and a lack of teacher readiness accounted for the negative attitudes, beliefs, and concerns that the teachers were expressing. Positive teacher attitudes and a willingness to embrace inclusionary practices can be achieved through initial and continuous training, current and effective materials, and qualified human resources.

Pre service and in-service teachers' attitudes toward inclusionary practices as mirrored by the teachers' behaviors were examined by a study by Niemeyer and Leatherman (2005). There were two types of participants in this study, two pre service and two in-service teachers in inclusive pre-kindergarten classrooms. As part of a public school program, the participants were selected from a pool of teachers that were in an inclusive pre-school classroom in three different countries. According to Niemeyer and Leatherman (2005), data were reduced into manageable chucks, which allowed the researchers to interpret the data and formulate insights and meanings from the actions and words of the participants by designing each phase of data analysis. As the interviews evolved from the written transcription, they were analyzed for themes. Relationships between comments made in the interviews and behaviors in the classrooms were examined through written observation notes. Various data sources were compared to the emergent themes through triangulation. The match between the emergent themes was increased due to the triangulation of data sources, which was related to the study's research questions: how were teachers' attitudes toward inclusion mirrored by their

behavior in the classroom and what are the components that affect teachers' attitudes toward inclusion? Based on the comparison of responses from the initial and follow-up interviews and behavior "field notes and observations", a description of the four teachers' attitudes evolved. The results revealed that previous experiences in inclusive classrooms influenced the teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. Additionally, the teachers also impacted inclusive practices with all children with and without disabilities. Though the teachers implemented inclusive practices, they stated that support from resource personnel, support from administrative, and appropriate pre-service training were vital components in providing an effective inclusionary education (Niemeyer & Leatherman, 2005).

In a study by Issawi, Glaubman, and Lifshitz's (2004), the attitudes toward inclusion of students with six types of disabilities and the effects of an intervention program on sense of efficacy among Palestinian (n = 192) and Israeli (n = 66) teachers were examined. The study also focused on how attitudes toward inclusion and sense of efficacy were correlated and how their attitudes were related and differed to the general attitude toward regular education teachers (n = 125) and inclusive (n = 103) teachers. Behavioral, emotional, and cognitive were the three components that comprised the intervention that was adapted to meet the needs of the teachers. Results revealed, as theorized, that for all types of disabilities, the Palestinian teachers indicated significantly lower willingness to include students with disabilities when compared to the Israeli teachers. Special education's personal nature and the stigmatizing effect combined with the national orientation of the Palestinian teachers caused a conflict that may explain their

negative attitudes toward inclusionary practices with students with mental and sensory impairments before the introduction of the intervention. Additionally, the intervention was more valuable to regular education teachers when compared to special education teachers. Subsequently, the correlation between a sense of efficacy and attitudes was increased following the intervention.

Literature Related to Different Methodology

In a study by Peckham-Hardin and Downing (2007), the researchers' intent was to determine if stakeholders (i.e., parents, teachers, and administrators) believed an inclusive placement was a good educational program for students with moderate to severe disabilities. All of the 58 participants interviewed had moderate to severe and multiple disabilities (i.e., 23 teachers, 18 parents, and 17 para-educators) and represented nine elementary students, five middle-school students, and four preschool children. The data were analyzed using a constant comparison methodology across the target student, the students' age, and the role of the stakeholder. The findings revealed that parents, teachers, and para-educators reported benefits of inclusion for students with and without disabilities. Additionally, the results highlighted the major component in the belief of an inclusion education as concrete communication between school and home. Subsequently, the research found six areas the teachers stated were needed for successful implementation of inclusion: (a) a modified curriculum, (b) unique teaching strategies individualized for each student, (c) collaboration, (d) teacher support, (e) highly qualified teams, and (f) positive learning environment.

Idol's (2006) comparative study used four elementary and four secondary schools as a means to determine the degree of inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classes, the ways in which students with disabilities were supported in the LRE, and the differences and similarities in how special education services were delivered. Staff perceptions of regular and special education teachers, instructional aids, and principals were examined by conducting interviews in each school. The results included the amount of time students spent in general education classrooms and narratives of the extent of inclusion in each school. Additionally, the rates of student referrals for special education consideration, the attitudes of all staff toward collaboration and inclusion, the skills of the staff related to the inclusion of the special education students, and the roles of special education teachers were also mentioned. The findings also encompassed the qualitative responses of educators toward inclusion; the performance of all students on a standardized statewide test and an account on the impact inclusion may have on other students. Generally, educators had a positive outlook toward educating students with disabilities in a general education setting. Nevertheless, many educators preferred to have students with disabilities supplemented by continuing to have resource room services or an instructional aide, and a special education teacher with the student. Almost all agreed to use an instructional aid to assist all students, including those students without disabilities. Most of the educators reported that they felt positive about working in collaborative groups and felt they had the support of the administration to offer inclusive educational programs.

Though inclusion of students with disabilities has gained momentum in academic circles, the drive toward the understanding of the impact of inclusive practices on society and the school community has propelled inclusive research in recent years. In an attempt to influence views on inclusion and students with disabilities, Miller, Burns, and Flower's (2007) meta-analysis of disability approached the issue by placing non-disabled people in situations that were aimed for them to experience what it is to have a disability. Miller et al. surveyed 41 studies in a meta-analysis and 10 studies dealing with disability simulations. The 41 meta-analysis studies were sorted by emotional and behavioral disturbance, orthopedic impairment, specific learning disability, hearing impairment, visual impairment, autism, other health impairment, and national definitions of mental retardation. There were no studies that addressed autism, mental retardation, and emotional and behavioral disturbances or any combination, including these disability categories; however, two studies addressed more than one disability, three studies addressed visual impairment, and five studies address the orthopedic impairment category. Coding was completed upon the completion of categorizing the impairments and computations on the median and weighted effect sizes were computed (Miller et al., 2007). The data proposed that changing attitudes and/or behavior related to students with disabilities rests in the interaction with students with disabilities. Additionally, the data suggested that students without disabilities demonstrated greater reception of their peers with disabilities irrespective of whether their groups included a child with a disability when students were in classes that engaged in ongoing small group projects with students with disabilities (Miller et al., 2007).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I reviewed literature related to attitudes, specifically teacher attitudes on inclusion, inclusion benefits, inclusion barriers, study instruments, theoretical foundations of the study, and literature related to the method. In the chapter, I explained the enactment and subsequent enforcement of laws pertaining to inclusionary educational practices, seeking to develop a community of learners by educating the disabled and non disabled students together in an age-appropriate, general education classroom in their immediate neighborhoods (Osgood, 2008). Conversely, the studies examined in this chapter generated mixed results on teacher attitudes on inclusion of the special education students in regular education classrooms.

Current research described regular education teachers in urban schools expressing negative attitudes toward inclusive education (Buell, 2009); although studies addressing regular education teaches in rural schools described a mixed response to inclusion and its practices (Carter & Kemp, 2006). External components and theories on attitudes influencing human attitudes toward others were also presented in this chapter. People's attitude toward an object establishes a predisposition, which was reflected in their response to the object in either a positive or negative manner (Siperstein, 2007). By acknowledging a person's uniqueness and accepting their individuality, humans can address their attitudes toward an object, situation, or person (Niemeyer & Leatherman, 2005). Once the individual acceptance is achieved, that person can address their basic needs and the needs of others.

Teacher perceptions drive beliefs (Bandura, 1977), and teacher beliefs are powerful determinants of teacher practice (Pajares, 2002). Pajares (2002) stated there are "strong relationships between teacher's educational beliefs and their planning, instructional decisions and classroom practices" (p. 326). The need for this study was based on the value of determining teacher attitudes and gaining accurate data that provided further insight on the practice of an inclusive education. The information gained from this study can be useful in the planning and implementation of in-service, teacher and administration training, staff development, and parenting classes; thus, it could benefit teachers, parents, and students within the community. Furthermore, the significance of this study lies in the fact the previous research did not exclusively examine attitudes of teachers, including students diagnosed with special needs into the general education

It is important to understand problems, obstacles, and challenges general educators face during inclusion, but just as vital to have clearly defined sets of effective practices (Marom, Cohen, & Naon, 2007). Although teachers are becoming more comfortable with the inclusion process, collaboration and co-teaching between general education and special education remain problematic (Meadan & Monda-Amaya, 2008). For inclusion to be rewarding and successful for all students, attitudes of the participating teachers must be positive regarding the inclusion of students with special needs. To reach the goal of maintaining positive attitudes on inclusion, a focused understanding of the current status of teacher attitudes was needed. The study may provide insight on teacher attitudes on inclusion, which may lead to increased level of positive attitudes.

In Chapter 3, I will describe the methodology that I used in this study. The chapter will be comprised of seven sections: (a) research design and approach, (b) setting and sample, (c) instrumentation and materials, (d) data collection and analysis, (e) protection of participant's rights, (f) role of the researcher, and (g) conclusion.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

Teaching our students with disabilities has had a tumultuous history. Its origin can be traced to parent advocacy groups with a concern on how to provide the least restrictive learning environment for their children (Howard, 2008). Though the term has changed over time, inclusion is the current term used today to describe integrating students with disabilities into regular education classrooms to receive instruction (Bardon, Siperstein, Widaman, & Parker, 2007). The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to reveal the difference in attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward the implementation of inclusion in an elementary charter school classroom. At the time of the study, the study site consisted of three elementary charter school in Pennsylvania had not achieved AYP for the past 5 years because the special education subgroup had not met the assessment standards in reading and math for the PSSA. Inclusion was introduced as an intervention to address this issue. The problem was that teachers were not effectively implementing inclusion.

The results of this study may influence school administrators and teachers to create more effective professional development opportunities to learn about inclusion. The study was confined to one geographic location in southeastern Pennsylvania. The 100 randomly selected qualified participants responded to 20 questions within the STATIC survey. The results were tabulated and analyzed using the *t test*.

In this chapter, I will address the research design and methodological approach for this study, which were derived from the research questions. In this chapter, I will also provide a description and justification of the design, along with the setting, participants, and how they were chosen. It also includes a brief description defending the sampling method, materials used in the study, as well as a description of the data collection and analysis. Chapter 3 also includes measures taken for the protection of participants' rights, the role of the researcher, and a conclusion.

Research Design and Approach

Creswell (2009) noted that a quantitative descriptive approach is one in which the investigator primarily uses post positivist claims for developing knowledge and employs strategies of inquiry, such as experiments and collection of data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical data. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) stated that quantitative researchers seek explanations and predictions that will generalize to other persons and places; the intent is to establish, confirm, or validate relationships and to develop generalizations that contribute to theory. This quantitative quasi-experimental study evaluated the differences between regular and special education teachers' attitudes on inclusion using the STATIC survey.

The key research question guiding this study was: Is there is a significant difference in the attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward the implementation of inclusion? The null hypothesis for the key research question was: There is no significant difference in the attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward the inclusion. The alternative hypothesis for the key research question was: There is a significant difference in the attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward the inclusion. Subsequent research questions were: Is there a significant difference in attitudes of regular and special education teachers in relation to:

2. advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education?

   $H_0$2: There is no significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education.

   H_a2: There is a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education.

3. teacher feelings toward inclusive education?

   $H_0$3: There is no significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to teacher feelings toward inclusive education.

   H_a3: There is a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to teacher feelings toward inclusive education.

4. philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education?

   $H_0$4: There is no significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education.

   H_a4: There is a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education.

5. administrative issues on inclusive education?

   $H_0$5: There is no significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to administrative issues on inclusive education.

   H_a5: There is a significant difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to administrative issues on inclusive education.

This study used summated Likert-type survey items to ascertain the teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. Johnson and Christensen (2008) suggested that a summated rating scale composed of multiple items designed to measure the same idea or construct is preferred over a single-item stem in one rating scale. A single score for each participant was derived from the summed ratings of each item. Johnson and Christensen also stated that the key advantage of using multiple-item rating scale (Likert-scale) compared to a single-item rating scales is that multiple-item scales provide more reliable scores

producing more variability, which in turn helps the researcher make more specific distinctions between the participants.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) noted that using a survey has the advantage in that participants can respond with the assurance that their responses will be anonymous, allowing them an opportunity to be truthful, especially when discussing controversial issues. Researchers can use surveys to gather information about the attitudes, beliefs, values, feelings, thoughts, and behavioral intentions of research participants. Johnson and Christensen (2008) defined a survey as a self-reporting data collection instrument that each participant fills out as part of a research study.

This quantitative quasi-experimental study incorporated the *t test* because it was used to evaluate five mean differences between regular and special education teachers. Johnson and Christensen (2008) defined qualitative research as exploratory and inductive. A qualitative research model was initially considered but would have been incompatible with the overall goals of this study because I was not developing an initial understanding of inclusion but determining if there was a consensus on inclusion. According to Creswell (2009), a quantitative approach is used to test objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. Controls for alternative explanations and the ability to generalize and replicate the findings are indicative of quantitative research. An ANOVA was considered for this study, which can determine if differences in mean values between three or more groups are by chance or if they are indeed significantly different; however, this study only had two groups. Therefore, the ANOVA was rejected. Given the scope of this research and my goal of determining teachers' attitudes toward

inclusion in an urban setting between special and regular education teachers, adopting a quantitative scientific method with a *t test* would ensure the study's goals were met.

Setting and Sampling

The participants in this study were drawn from three of the five charter schools located in an urban environment in the southeastern section of Pennsylvania. Two schools were excluded from the study as they did not meet the study's participant target of grades K–5. One of the excluded schools was a high school, and the other was a cyber-school. As of November 16, 2014, the charter school system had a total of 3,780 students enrolled comprised of 87% Hispanic, 9% African American, 2% Other, 1% Caucasian, and 1% Asian. Of those students, 1,765 were in high school grades (9–12), and 175 were in cyber-school (K–12), both of which were not included into this study. The remaining students were comprised of 1,880 (K–5 grade) students. The names of teachers that are providing inclusive settings for students with special needs were provided by the school district's Human Resources Department.

Participants were general and special education teachers that were in an inclusive environment in an urban charter elementary school in southeastern Pennsylvania at the time of the study. The schools had completed their first academic year using inclusion for all grades. The teaching experience ranged from 0–5 years of experience. This quantitative quasi-experimental study used the STATIC survey to generate and collect data (Cochran, 1999). In order to maximize the probability that the sample represented the population, the STATIC survey was sent to every general and special education teacher who instructed students with special needs and who participated in the inclusive

classroom. The participants were selected according to their qualifications in an inclusive school setting. The inclusion criteria were as follows: (a) being a general or special education teacher for at least 1 year, (b) teaching at the K–6 elementary school level, and (c) had special education students in their classroom.

I used a random strategic sampling plan, which included 50 special and 50 regular education, randomly selected, qualified participants from 200 qualified teachers teaching in the urban elementary charter schools employed by a school district in southeastern Pennsylvania. Participants were assigned a number and randomly selected by an online random number generator. Qualifying teachers were identified as currently teaching in an inclusive environment where the special education students were in a regular education classroom on a full time basis.

Instrumentation and Materials

The instrument that I used in this study was the STATIC (see Appendix A). A written response from Dr. Cochran granted me the permission to use the STATIC survey (see Appendix B). The time to complete the survey was approximately 20 minutes. The STATIC was developed by Cochran (1997) to measure the attitudes of teachers who teach students with special needs. It was also used to compare the regular and special education teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. The STATIC questionnaire was comprised of 20 items. There were four subscales comprising the STATIC questionnaire and they used a six-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. The STATIC addressed four factors related to inclusive education for special needs students: (a) advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education, (b) teacher feelings

toward inclusive education, (c) philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education, and (d) administrative issues on inclusive education.

Table 1

Summary of the Content by Factor Loading of the Scale of Teacher's Attitude Toward Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC)

Item	Item Content
	Factor 1: Advantages and Disadvantages of Inclusive Education
7	special education students should be in special education classes
11	special education students should learn social skills from general education students
12	special education students have higher academic achievements when included
13	achievement is difficult for special education students when included
14	special education students have high self-esteem when included
15	special education students hinder academic progress of general education classes
20	special education students should be in the general education classes
	Factor 2: Teacher feelings Regarding Inclusive Education
1	confidence in ability
2	confidence in training
3	frustration/tolerance when teaching special education students
4	anxiety towards teaching special education students
9	problems teaching children with cognitive deficits
	Factor 3: Philosophical Issues Regarding Inclusive Education
5	all children can learn
6	special education students can learn
10	handling behavior problems
16	training for teaching special education students
	Factor 4: Logistical Concerns of Inclusive Education
8	accommodating the physically disabled
17	making special physical arrangements
18	materials/equipment easily acquired
19	principal supportive

Note. From "The development and psychometric analysis of the scale of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusion (STATIC)," by H. Keith Cochran, 1997. University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL. Reprinted with permission.

An instrument's validity and its reliability are considered to be the two most important psychometric properties of a test or assessment procedure (Johnson &

Christensen, 2007). These properties over periods of time assure that the study achieves and maintains a high degree of stability while measuring the variables of the study (Yin, 2008). Validity refers to the accuracy of the interpretation that one can make from the test/survey scores (Johnson & Christensen, 2007, p. 132). Furthermore, Leedy and Ormrod (2010) defined validity of a measurement instrument as the extent to which the instrument measures what it is designed to measure. To affirm the validity of the STATIC instrument, a confirmatory factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted to assess its factor structure using a random sample (Cochran, 1998). Cochran (1998) found that the four factors that were being measured by the STATIC instrument corresponded to the Advantages and Disadvantages, Teacher Feelings, Philosophical Issues, and Logistical Concerns subscale scores of the study.

Similarly, Leedy and Ormrod (2010) stated that reliability is defined as the consistency with which a measuring instrument gives rise to specific results when the subject is being measured has not changed. They continued and noted that in order to measure something accurately, researchers must measure it consistently. Reliability for STATIC was calculated using Cochran's alpha. This coefficient ranges from 0 to 1 and describes the consistency of responses to the scale items; the noted alpha coefficient is .05 (Crocker & Algina, 2008).

Data Collection and Analysis

The study's independent variable was group, regular education teachers versus special education teachers. The dependent variable was the participants' attitudes toward inclusion as measured by the STATIC. The data were measured by the four factors to

determine the differences in teacher attitudes toward inclusion. The four factors related to inclusive education for the special need students ware addressed by the STATIC: (a) advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education, (b) teacher feelings toward inclusive education, (c) philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education, and (d) administrative issues on inclusive education. The STATIC items related to advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education were 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 20. The items related to teacher feelings of inclusive education were 1, 2, 3, 4 and 9. The items related to philosophical issues of inclusive education were 5, 6, 10, and 16. The items related to logistical issues were 8, 17, 18, and 19. Items 3, 4, 7, 9, 13, and 15 were stated in a negative direction; reverse coding was used when entering the data into the SPSS program (e.g., 1 = 6, 2 = 5, 3 = 4, 4 = 3, 5 = 2, 6 = 1). A sum score of the items for each factor was calculated once the appropriate items are reversed-coded. These sums were considered factors representing attitudes toward inclusion of regular and special education teachers.

The data were obtained by administering the STATIC to the participants. The researcher obtained a list of qualified teachers from the community partner and e-mailed each qualified teacher a consent form with a 2-week deadline for participants to return the form (Appendix C). The participants, upon receipt of the form, provided a web link to an online commercial survey service (i.e., Survey Monkey) via e-mail through the online system. I obtained permission from the principal and the superintendent of the school before the research began. Additionally, the participants were given 2 weeks to complete the survey. The survey required approximately 10 to 20 minutes to complete. The

potential participants were also informed that they may discontinue participating without any consequences during any part of the study. The participants were sent a reminder delivered through an e-mail message after 1 week and a final reminder 2 days before the survey due date.

Once I received the data, I calculated the results using the International Business Machines' Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Version 21 (IBM SPSS). I compiled basic summary data, such as mean and standard deviation. These descriptive statistics were used to describe each group means for different attitude components towards the special education students. This study used statistical analysis, and the data regarding responses to the survey were coded and logged into an SPSS database. The *t test* (at the .05 confidence level) was used to determine the different between elementary regular and special education teachers' attitude toward the special education inclusion students. The *t test* compared the mean scores between two groups on multiple dependent variables (Li & Lomax, (2011). The means of these variables (five comparisons) were simultaneously compared between two groups (regular and special education teachers who serve special education students in an inclusive classroom).

Protection of Participants' Rights

I ensured that participant's rights were protected. According to Creswell (2007), the researcher understands the value of keeping data safe. The permission was provided to prospective participants, and a waiver was signed. When conducting this study, which included human subjects, a number of ethical concerns must be taken into consideration (Cozby, 2009). I, before, during, and after the study, did not have any influence on the

promotion or dismissal of any of the participants. The researcher obtained approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB; Approval # 01-26-15-0143831) before any data were collected. Once approval had been granted, I provided each of the participants with an informed consent form describing the key components of this study. These components of informed consent included the purpose of this research and expected interval and procedures; a distinct statement conveying that the participants had the option to decline or withdraw from the research prior to and once the research began; a distinct statement conveying that there were no consequences of declining or withdrawing; adequate information to inform the decision to participate, including potential risks, potential discomfort, or any rationally expected adverse effects that participation may have; a statement of the potential benefits; a statement explaining the confidentiality limits; information regarding any incentives offered; and contact information in case questions arise about the study. The data will be safeguarded for 2 years after the completion of the study by uploading it to a secure online, password protected encrypted web site specializing in securing data.

Role of the Researcher

Throughout this study, I had several roles that needed to be completed in order to make this study successful. In Stage 1, I distributed information and consent forms for the study. I informed potential participants how confidentiality would be maintained. After collecting consent forms, I distributed surveys to all participants and reminded them of the timeline for completion. I collected and analyzed the data pertaining to the participants' beliefs regarding the teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. Data analysis was

based on information collected from the survey. I garnered written permission from Dr. Cochran to use the STATIC questionnaire prior to conducting this study (Appendix B). There were no interactions with participants, and no direct contact took place during the study in an effort to avoid any form of bias. Any contact initiated by a participant was disclosed within the results of this chapter.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I described seven areas: (a) research design and approach, guided by Bandura's (Bandura, 1977) theory of self-efficacy leading to a quantitative descriptive design; (b) setting and sample, described demographic data and type of school environment; (c) instrumentation and materials, detailing the STATIC and its components; (d) data collection and analysis, composed of procedures on specific data that was collected and analytical tool; (e) protection of participant's rights, noting specific procedures to protect participants by using a random number generator; (f) role of the researcher, listing specific roles and timelines throughout the data collection phase; and (g) conclusion. A quantitative measure was used to properly investigate teachers' attitudes toward inclusion in an urban elementary charter school community, including the use of the STATIC. In Chapter 4 of this study, I will present the results of the survey data from participants using the *t test*.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to identify the difference in attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in an elementary charter school classroom using the STATIC survey. Subsequently, for the study I used four additional research questions to determine the difference in attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward inclusion. The additional research questions were in relation to: (a) advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education, (b) teacher feelings toward inclusive education, (c) philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education, and (d) administrative issues on inclusive education, which resulted in five comparisons. The study's independent variable was group, regular education teachers versus special education teacher. The dependent variable was participants' attitudes toward inclusion as measured by the STATIC. In this chapter, I will present the results of the data analysis conducted with a *t test* with a .05 confidence level obtained from the STATIC survey used in this study. The specific results of the *t test* for each hypothesis are displayed in Tables 2 through 6, followed by a conclusion.

Research Tools

The instrument that I used in this study was the STATIC survey, used with permission from Dr. Cochran (See Appendix A). The STATIC was developed by to measure the attitudes of teachers who teach students with special needs (Cochran, 1997). In the case of this study, it was also used to compare the regular and special education teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. The STATIC questionnaire was comprised of 20

items. There were four subscales comprising the STATIC questionnaire and they used a six-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. The STATIC addressed four factors related to inclusive education for the special needs students: (a) advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education, (b) teacher feelings toward inclusive education, (c) philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education, and (d) administrative issues on inclusive education. The survey was administered to the participants anonymously through an online survey service (Survey Monkey). The participants were sent a reminder e-mail to complete the survey 5 days before the survey closed.

Tables and Figures

Table 2 addresses the key research question guiding this study, which was to determine the differences in the attitudes of elementary regular and special education teachers toward inclusion. Regular education participants had a mean score of 4.69, and special education participants had a mean score of 5.01. The *t test* value was 5.788, and the *p*-value was less than 0.0001, which indicated that the $H_0$1--there was no significant difference between regular education and special education teachers' attitudes toward inclusion, was rejected because the *p*-value was below the .05 confidence level. Subsequently, the $H_1{}^A$--there is a significant difference between regular education and special education teachers' attitudes toward inclusion--was accepted.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for All Factors by Group

Group	*M*	*SD*
Regular Education	4.69	1.26
Special Education	5.01	1.21

As indicated in Table 3, Factor 1 addresses RQ1 which was to examine the difference in attitudes between elementary regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to the advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education. Regular education participants had a mean score of 4.12, and special education participants had a mean score of 4.46. The *t test* value was 3.351, and the *p*-value was 0.0008, which indicated that the $H_2{}^0$--there was no significant difference between regular education and special education teachers regarding advantages and disadvantages of inclusion--was rejected. Subsequently, the alternative hypothesis--there is a significant difference between regular education and special education teachers' attitudes toward inclusion regarding advantages and disadvantages of inclusion--was accepted.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Factor 1 by Group

Group	*M*	*SD*
Regular Education	4.12	1.36
Special Education	4.46	1.32

In Table 4, Factor 2 addresses the RQ2 which was to determine the difference in the attitudes of elementary regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to teacher feelings toward inclusive education. Regular education participants

had a mean score of 4.79, and special education participants had a mean score of 5.46. The *t test* value was 7.922, and the *p*-value was 0.0001, which indicated that the H_3^0--there was no significant difference between regular education and special education teachers' feelings regarding inclusive education--was rejected. Subsequently, the alternative hypothesis--there is a significant difference between regular education and special education teachers' attitude toward inclusion in reference to teacher feeling regarding inclusive education--was accepted.

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Factor 2 by Group

Group	*M*	*SD*
Regular Education	4.79	1.09
Special Education	5.46	0.77

In Table 5, Factor 3 addresses the RQ3, which was to determine the difference in the attitudes of elementary regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education. Regular education participants had a mean score of 5.36, and special education participants had a mean score of 5.39. The *t test* value was 0.335, and the *p*-value was 0.737, which indicated that the H_4^0--there was no significant difference between regular education and special education teachers regarding teacher feelings toward inclusive education--was accepted because the *p*-value was above the .05 confidence level.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for Factor 3 by Group

Group	*M*	*SD*
Regular Education	5.36	0.81
Special Education	5.39	0.97

In Table 6, Factor 4 addresses RQ4, which was to determine the difference in the attitudes of elementary regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to administrative issues on inclusive education. Regular education participants had a mean score of 4.90, and special education participants had a mean score of 5.03. The *t test* value was 1.045, and the *p*-value was 0.295, which indicated that the H_5^0--there was no significant difference between regular education and special education teachers regarding administrative issues on inclusive education--was accepted because the *p*-value was above the .05 confidence level.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for Factor 4 by Group

Group	*M*	*SD*
Regular Education	4.90	1.20
Special Education	5.03	1.28

Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the results of the current study. The chapter displayed the results of the five research questions. For Research Question 1, overall, there were significant differences between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion.

The data analysis also revealed that, for Research Question 2, there were significant differences between regular and special education teachers in relation to the advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education. For Research Question 3, there were significant differences between regular special education teachers in relation to teacher feelings toward inclusive education. The analysis also revealed that, for Research Question 4, there were no significant differences between regular and special education teachers in relation to philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education. The analysis revealed that, for Research Question 5, there were no significant differences between regular and special education teachers in relation to administrative issues on inclusive education. The data analysis was completed using a *t test*, and the results were presented systematically and summarized through the use of descriptive and inferential statistics that analyzed each research question and its corresponding factors in the survey as it pertained to attitudes on inclusion. The results were presented in Tables 2 through 6 along with specific information per research question for all factors. I will provide interpretations of the results in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental design was to examine the attitudes of regular and special education teachers on inclusion with data collected from an elementary charter school using a STATIC survey. The problem was that elementary charter schools in Pennsylvania had not achieved AYP for the past 5 years because the

special education students did not meet PSSA state standards on their overall scores in reading and math. I determined the differences in their attitudes on inclusion through the STATIC survey, which addressed the central research question to determine the differences in the attitudes of elementary regular and special education teachers toward inclusion. Subsequent questions were used to determine the difference in attitudes between regular and special education teachers toward inclusion in relation to: (a) advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education, (b) teacher feelings toward inclusive education, (c) philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education, and (d) administrative issues on inclusive education. From 200 regular and special education teachers, 50 regular and 50 special education teacher participants were chosen from a charter school management company that ran three schools using a random generator. An online survey was sent to the randomly chosen participants anonymously along with an e-mail describing the survey and their responsibilities as a participant. A reminder e-mail was also sent anonymously 5 days before the survey ended.

The data were collected, analyzed, and presented in Chapter 4. The data expressed that overall there was a significant difference between regular and special education teachers mean scores in terms of attitudes toward inclusion on Factor 1: advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education and Factor 2: teacher feelings toward inclusive education. There was no significant difference between regular and special education teachers mean scores on Factor 3: philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education and Factor 4: administrative issues on inclusive education.

Interpretation of Findings

Overall, there were significant differences between regular and special education teachers' attitude on inclusion. With Factor 1: advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education, there was a significant difference between regular and special education teachers' mean scores. As a teacher and researcher, the results from Factor 1 were not expected. I thought the participants would agree that the advantages of inclusion outweigh the disadvantages and would provide motivation to institute inclusion. I also believed that a class with both the special and regular education students would enrich and encourage the class and subsequently increase the students' academic comprehension. Evidently, my belief was not the case as there was significant differences even though there are numerous studies that indicated that there were clear advantages to inclusion schools as evident by the student's academic achievement (Carter & Kemp, 2006, 2007; Cross, Hutter-Pishgahi, Shelton, & Traub, 2006; Shelton et al., 2006) as described in Chapter 2 of this study.

With Factor 2: teacher feelings toward inclusive education, there was a significant difference between regular and special education teachers' mean scores. As a teacher, I fully understand the feeling of anxiety when teaching in an inclusive setting; however, I also know that my anxiety was based on lack of experience and training. Both of them can be addressed within the school through professional development and peer observations. In my experience, lack of confidence and frustration when teaching special education students and anxiety are common when instituting a new instructional strategy. Teachers with low levels of self-efficacy may feel inadequate and inefficient in their

knowledge and practical skills. They may also spend unnecessary time on nonacademic issues, give up more quickly, criticize students, and are less likely to adapt instructional strategies (Bandura, 1986). Teachers with high levels of self-efficacy tend to commit more time to academic accommodations, learning, and offer help to students in need (Viel-Ruma, Houchins, Jolivette, & Benson, 2010). Teachers with high levels of self-efficacy are also more motivated and persistent even when challenged with curriculum changes and the special education students. On the other hand, teachers with high levels of self-efficacy may not see a need to adapt as some may have the ability to perform effectively but choose not to (Bandura, 1977). These results were aligned with a study by Travers and Ring (2005) and a study by Buell (2009) that described how teacher's confidence differed depending their training and understanding of inclusion.

With Factor 3: philosophical beliefs of teachers regarding inclusive education, there was no significant difference between regular and special education teachers' mean scores. As a teacher, I understand the passion for teaching and felt that all children could learn and academic progress is possible. Both special and regular education teachers agreed that in-service training should be required for all regular education teachers, and in-service training or professional development should be an integral part of an educator's arsenal. I was not surprised with the results. In a study by Beattie, Jordan, and Algozzine (2006), they described the importance of professional development, especially for regular education teachers on inclusion. The researchers detailed how professional development should maintain the pace of inclusion as new strategies were vetted through teacher experiences; however, the study also indicated that the above mentioned strategy

was not the current practice in most school districts. In another study conducted by LaPorte (2010), the researcher described how teachers felt that the special needs students can learn in every classroom environment. These results indicated that teachers understand and agree that all students, regardless of their disability, can learn. This understanding may be the first step in full acceptance of inclusion.

With Factor 4: administrative issues on inclusive education, there was no significant difference between regular and special education teachers' mean scores. In my experience, accommodating the physically disabled students, having teaching materials readily available, and having the support of the principal are essential in implementing an inclusion environment. A study conducted by Howard (2008) described how the NCLB guaranteed the right of all students with disabilities to receive their education in the LRE. In another study by Mamlin (2008), the researcher described the relationship of staff and administration support in the success of inclusion. The study provided data on the difference in attitudes teachers had when they felt the support of their principal. The results were not surprising; as a teacher, I also felt that having these supports and resources added to my professional growth as an inclusion teacher because it allowed me the freedom to try new activities in my classroom without the worry of retribution for not following traditional methods.

Recommendations for Action

Based on the participants' responses to the survey, my recommendation for action would be in the form of professional development with the goal to inform teachers about the advantages of inclusion. Specifically, teachers should attend professional

development describing various learning disabilities that may create a need for inclusion, such as dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, autism, dysgraphia, and other disabilities that hinder learning. Further training in identifying students' strengths and weaknesses and teaching methods to compensate for the disabilities is also recommended. Knowledge of these learning disabilities may foster a deeper understanding and acceptance of inclusion (Theriot & Tice, 2008).

I highly recommend implementing strategies to overcome learning disabilities in a realistic classroom environment. Specifically, teachers should be attending professional development on classroom management strategies, redirection of off-task students, and training on how students' can learn despite their disability. Training may also include modifying lesson plans and direct instruction that aids in learning for students with disabilities.

Another recommendation is professional development on creating and editing an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in reference to inclusion and goal setting for the special education students. In-depth training on analyzing student behaviors and learning styles may prove useful in creating attainable goals in an inclusion setting. A student's IEP is the first step in creating a successful, least restrictive learning environment (Lee-Tarver, 2006).

Additionally, continuous professional development for administrators on various methods to implement inclusion practices with the knowledge that nontraditional inclusion methods may require more personnel is recommended. Specifically, professional development that involves creating and practicing inclusion strategies that

gradually places all students in one classroom through a slow integration process over several years is also recommended.

Another recommendation for action is training teachers on co-teaching models during their undergraduate studies and while they conduct student teaching which may alleviate their fears on inclusion. On the other hand, therapy to address students' behaviors may decrease students' anxieties on inclusion which may create a path for learning for disabled students.

Continuous teacher training is also recommended as it may improve teacher confidence in their ability and reduce frustration and anxiety while increasing the teachers' tolerance toward inclusion. Furthermore, the professional development should be conducted by qualified personnel to ensure the teacher's confidence in their training.

Recommendations for Further Study

Exploration of attitudes of regular special education teachers on a larger scale is imperative as inclusion is part of public law. Educators are becoming more vocal when discussing inclusive classrooms, and they are becoming more expressive about the challenges of implementing inclusion (Babbie, 2010). It is essential to teachers that future research is focused toward the academic success and progress of students with special needs in the inclusive classroom through educational programs and test scores.

This study focused on teacher feelings on inclusion. A quantitative research, such as inclusion classroom students' test scores compared to non inclusion students' test scores after the implementation of an inclusion environment may provide data that may be linked to the current study by validating or negating the study's results on Factor 1:

advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education. Parameters for this quantitative study may include comparing specific grades based on similar standardized tests or comparing urban to rural students.

Quantitative research on parents' attitudes on inclusion using a survey is another possible area of future study. A comparison of parents' attitudes as they relate to students' standardized test scores may shed some light on how to develop an inclusive environment. Specifically, the researcher may look for parental involvement as the indicator of a successful student in an inclusive environment.

Additionally, determining effective strategies to co-teach in an inclusive setting may be another area of future research and may provide insight on teacher's confidence level as described in this study's Factor 2: teacher feeling regarding inclusive education. An open-ended survey or teacher interviews through a mixed method approach may prove sufficient to determine effective strategies that can be used by other teaching professionals to promote confidence.

Further qualitative research could include comparing attitudes of teachers in schools that do not have experience with inclusion to teachers in a school with a history of inclusion. Included in this study could be a comparison of teachers that were educated in college programs that taught methods of inclusion and collaboration skills at the undergraduate and graduate level to those teachers who were not educated with those specific skills. The results affect the frustration and anxiety levels that teachers may experience as described in Factor 2: teacher feeling regarding inclusive education.

Determining teachers' self-efficacy levels as they relate to inclusion is an example of future qualitative research. This type of study may be implemented using teacher interviews outlining specific examples of effective strategies based on their experiences. Further aspects of this study may include the effectiveness of professional development as it relates to inclusion, which may lead to increased training.

A quantitative study using the STATIC survey at the high school level replicating this current study focusing on teacher training (Factor 3 of this study) may provide insight on how to develop effective professional development. Other aspects of the study may have the inclusion setting analyzed by an outside organization instead of surveying the teachers. The results may yield logistical concerns (Factor 4 of this study) and reveal the program's successes and failures.

A study on differences in attitudes on inclusion from teachers in different content areas, such as math, science, language arts, social studies, career and technical, foreign languages, physical education, and arts, is an example of a possible future qualitative study on the topic. Included in such a study would be a comparison of how inclusion affects the culture of the school from the teacher's point of view. Results of this type of study may provide insight on how students and teachers interact under the changing dynamics of different class configurations.

I have made recommendations for future study, which present their own possibilities for increasing the knowledge of inclusion in the educational community. Overall, the underlying factors for future research are possible accommodations for inclusion students, strategies that may drive achievement and the impact of parental

involvement. Other possible accommodations include the influence it may have on students, parents, and teachers as well as educational stockholders and decision makers.

Implications for Social Change

Accepting inclusion as part of special education law has been an uphill climb for regular education teachers. IDEA mandates that students with special needs be educated alongside regular education students (Autism Society, 2010). The results of this study revealed that the participants agreed on philosophical beliefs and administrative issues on inclusion. The agreements between the two groups can be used as a catalyst to promote continuous dialogue on other disagreeable areas.

The results also expressed that participants were not in agreement with the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion and not in agreement on teacher feelings on inclusion. This disagreement infers a gap between regular and special education teachers' attitude on inclusion that must be addressed. In order for inclusion to be effective, regular education teachers must accept inclusion and meet the challenges confidently. This theory implies that continuous professional development about collaborative teaching at the undergraduate level is needed to educate all teachers on the inclusion's impact on the special education students as they will soon become independent and active members of society.

The results of this study impact social change because it offers specific cognizance that attitudes were critical to the realization of a successful inclusion program. The results are in relation to advantages and disadvantages as well as teacher feelings on inclusion. Both factors align with Bandura's (1986) theory that a person's

sense of efficacy helps an individual by providing information of their capability and to assess their performance.

Educators, parents, researchers, and advocates can work toward a unified vision of professional development for teachers in inclusion in the hope that inclusion can be an effective, integral part of the educational process. Implications for social change included evidence to incorporate "what works" for inclusion, such as specific training on goal setting for the special education students. Another aspect of social change is an opportunity to develop strategies for teaching and managing student behavior in an inclusion environment. Understanding various learning disabilities, which may directly impact inclusion strategies and direction, is an implied direction for social change.

A long term social impact of inclusion practices may make disabled students more employable which may reduce the need for government assistance. A reduction in assistance may positively impact our federal deficit. Another long term social impact lies in the acceptance of special education students by social circles. The implications of social change are vital to the growth and understanding of inclusion, which may be used by school principals, teachers, parents, and policy makers.

Conclusion

In this study, I examined the attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward inclusion through five research questions. The results of this study found that overall there was a significant difference between special and regular education teachers'

view of inclusion. As a teacher, the results resembled the current reality in the schools where I have worked over the last 10 years. There seemed to be a disagreement on how to provide instruction to the special education students. Some teachers enjoy the separation of the regular and special education students; however, due to current budget constraints, separation is not a viable solution.

The study also indicated that regular and special education teachers did not agree on Research Questions 2 and 3 (Factors 1 and 2 respectively). Regular education teachers did not agree with special education teachers on the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion. Regular education teachers did not feel as confident and as adequately trained as special education teachers, and they reported feeling more anxious than special education teachers on teacher feelings on inclusion. Furthermore, both regular and special education teachers did not agree that the special education students should be in special education classrooms and the special education students should learn social skills from regular education students.

The participants did agree on Research Questions 4 and 5 (Factors 3 and 4 respectively). Regular and special education teachers agreed that all children can learn, including the special education students. The participants also agreed that further training for teaching the special education students was needed.

The participants in this study were disposed to share their opinions and attitudes on inclusion. Their attitudes were reflected in the survey, presented in Chapter 4, and discussed in Chapter 5. The topic of inclusion will continue to be of interest to educators, stakeholders, and the educational community as more training to increase inclusion

awareness, introduce inclusion strategies, and improve teacher's level of self-efficacy is needed. This study and other studies discussed in Chapter 2, have only addressed a few of the issues in educating students with special needs. What may be clear is that the rights for students with special needs should mirror the rights of regular education students and should offer the same educational opportunities throughout their academic journey.

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Appendix A: Static Measure

INFORMATION
STATIC
Scale of Teachers= Attitudes Toward Inclusive Classrooms
H. Keith Cochran
1999

DIRECTIONS: The purpose of this instrument is to obtain information about your attitude toward the inclusion of students with special needs in the regular education classrooms. There are no correct or incorrect answers. Your responses are completely autonomous and confidential. You should mark your response to each item on the sheet. Also, please adhere to the simple guidelines below when completing your response sheet.

SURVEY

1. I am confident in my ability to teach children with special needs.

   o Strongly disagree
   o Disagree
   o Not sure, but tend to disagree
   o Not sure, but tend to agree
   o Agree
   o Strongly agree

2. I have adequately trained to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

   o Strongly disagree
   o Disagree
   o Not sure, but tend to disagree
   o Not sure, but tend to agree
   o Agree
   o Strongly agree

3. I become easily frustrated when teaching students with special needs.

   o Strongly disagree
   o Disagree
   o Not sure, but tend to disagree
   o Not sure, but tend to agree
   o Agree

o Strongly agree

4. I become anxious when I learn that a student with special needs will be in my classroom.

o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Not sure, but tend to disagree
o Not sure, but tend to agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

5. Although children differ intellectually, physically, and psychologically, I believe that all children can learn in most environments.

o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Not sure, but tend to disagree
o Not sure, but tend to agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

6. I believe that academic progress is possible in children with special needs.
o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Not sure, but tend to disagree
o Not sure, but tend to agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

7. I believe that children with special needs should be placed in special education classes.

o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Not sure, but tend to disagree
o Not sure, but tend to agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

8. I am comfortable teaching a child that is moderately physically disabled.
o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Not sure, but tend to disagree

o Not sure, but tend to agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

9. I have problems teaching a student with cognitive deficits.

o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Not sure, but tend to disagree
o Not sure, but tend to agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

10. I can adequately handle students with mild to moderate behavioral problems.

o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Not sure, but tend to disagree
o Not sure, but tend to agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

11. Student with special needs learn social skills that are modeled by regular education students.

o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Not sure, but tend to disagree
o Not sure, but tend to agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

12. Students with special needs have higher academic achievements when included in the regular education classroom.

o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Not sure, but tend to disagree
o Not sure, but tend to agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

13. It is difficult for children with special needs to make strides in academic achievements in the regular education classroom.

    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

14. Self-esteem of children with special needs is increased when included in the regular education classroom.

    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

15. Students with special needs in the regular education classroom hinder the academic progress of the regular education student.

    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

16. Special in-service training in teaching special needs student should be required for all regular education teachers.

    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

17. I do not mind making physical arrangements in my room to meet the needs of students with special needs.

    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

18. Adaptive materials and equipment are easily acquired for meeting the needs of students with special needs.

    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

19. My principal is supportive in making needed accommodations for teaching children with special needs.

    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

20. Students with special needs should be included in regular education classrooms.

    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to disagree
    o Not sure, but tend to agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

21. I teach

    o Regular education students

- Special education students

Appendix B: Permission to Use STATIC

Subject : **Re: Permission to Use STATIC Questionnaire**
Date : Fri, Jul 15, 2011 11:53 AM CDT
From : XXXXXXXXXX
To : XXXXXXXXXXX

Dear Ms. Oyola,

Thank you for your interest in the STATIC instrument. I am overwhelmed at the interest it generated after having created it. It has been used in scores of studies, in more than 18 countries and translated into at least seven languages. I am happy to grant permission for you to use the STATIC in your dissertation study. I wish you the very best with your research and honored to be a small part of it.

Sincerely,

H. Keith Cochran, Ph.D.
Associate Professor