

Are the Needs of Cognitively Disabled Students being met
in Family and Consumer Education Classes
at the High School Level?

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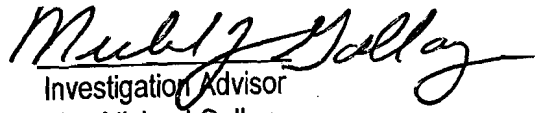
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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to identify if moderate cognitively disabled students are experiencing and learning the life skills needed to become independent through Family and Consumer Education as perceived by Family and Consumer Educators, Special Education Teachers/ Aides, and Special Education Directors/ Coordinators. The second is to identify whether and the degree to which these cognitively disabled students are involved in FCE classes and what involvement the FCE teacher has in the life skill education of those students not enrolled in FCE classes. The third is to determine if these students would best be served through adaptive FCE classes instead of inclusion practices.

The data was collected through survey from FCE teachers, special needs teachers working directly with these students as well as special education directors/ coordinators from 25 different Wisconsin public school districts that range in student population from 750 to 1200 students. Data was analyzed by frequency of counts and percentages. Respondents were asked the amount of

contact and understanding in regards to students with cognitive disabilities. Secondly, the respondents were asked to identify possible barriers they felt may hinder the success of the disabled students within the FCE program which they are involved. Lastly, respondents were asked to identify the life skills cognitively disabled students in their district were receiving as well as to rate the success they feel these students are experiencing through traditional inclusion practices. The results found in this study provided essential information to evaluate current inclusion practices regarding the life skills taught to cognitively disabled students at the high school level and to determine changes or needs for the future educational practices within Wisconsin public school districts. This information may be used during an in-service to be viewed by special education teachers for reference when planning Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) meetings and goals. General educators, specifically vocational educators in the area of Family and Consumer Education (FCE) involved in inclusion of cognitively disabled students will also benefit from viewing the results of this research.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The main purpose of education is to provide the required information and skills to enable students to become employed, self sufficient and successful members of society. This philosophy is inclusive to all students regardless of mental and physical abilities. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Public Law 94- 142) is considered to be the bill of rights for the disabled and is an expression of commitment by the nation to provide a free and appropriate public education for every handicapped person age three to 21 (Sarkees and Scott, 1986). The anticipated outcome of this “free” and “appropriate” education is the eventual transition of handicapped people from school to the work place and lives of productivity and self-sufficiency (Wehman, Renzaglia, and Bates 1985). This law went far beyond any previous legislation in specifying that, to the greatest extent possible, this “special” education was to be provided in the least-restrictive environment (Mastropieri and Scrugs, 2000). The goal of this law is to include students with disabilities into the regular classrooms whenever it is appropriate for the given students needs. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act has been amended several times since 1975, most recently in 1997.

The amended law has been changed to the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1997 (IDEA’97). The new amendment of IDEA focuses on the inclusion and transition services available to people with special needs. Inclusion refers to the education of students with disabilities in the general education setting. Transition services are included as a component of a students Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and are intended o strengthen the ability to move from school to community, vocational programs, college or employment (Mastropieri and Scruggs, 2000). Other legislation related to the education of those with disabilities preceded IDEA’97. These included the

Vocational Education Act of 1963 (P.L.88-210) and the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 (P.L.98-524) which focused on the vocational training needs of the disabled students. Since these acts were passed, federal and state legislation has continued to support programs to provide services for students at risk because of disability and/or economic disadvantage will be provided education in the least restrictive environment and will receive vocational services when appropriate as a component of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), developed jointly by special educators (Siegel, 1999).

Mainstreaming, or the education of exceptional children in the most normal setting, has become widely practiced. In 1976, the Council for Exceptional Children defined mainstreaming as follows:

Mainstreaming is a belief which involved an educational placement process for exceptional children based on the conviction that each such child should be educated in the least restrictive environment in which his educational and related needs can be satisfactorily provided. This concept recognizes that exceptional children have a wide range of special educational needs, varying greatly in intensity and duration, that there is a recognized continuum of educational setting which may, at a given time, be appropriate for an individual child's needs; that to the maximum extent appropriate, exceptional children should be educated with non-exceptional children; and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of the exceptional child from education with non-exceptional children should occur only when the intensity of the child's special education and related needs is such that they cannot be satisfied in an environment including non-exceptional children even with the provisions of supplementary aids and services (Official Action, 1976, p.43)

Family and Consumer Sciences Education (FCE) is one component of the vocational education available in most middle and high schools in the United States. Prior to Family and Consumer Sciences, FCE was known best as Home Economics. The gradual change in curriculum from the basic sewing, cooking, and child rearing to food and nutrition, child development, family and human relations, family economics and consumer education, independent living, as well as vocational preparation for the work force has made FCE a vital part of the Secondary education experience for all students. Because FCE has become an essential part of education in the secondary school setting, it is only natural that students with disabilities would be included in these courses as well.

The main goal of educators at the secondary school level is to provide information and skills to their students to help promote a successful transition from school to community, specifically, post secondary education, and the work force. Students with disabilities, specifically students with cognitive disabilities often need more guidance and instruction to gain the same amount of skill and information from their learning experience than normal functioning students. Because of this factor, it is essential that the curriculum and materials be presented in a manner that cognitively disabled students can gain the most information from their education.

Currently, cognitively disabled students are enrolled in various FCE classes at the junior and high school level in numerous Wisconsin school districts. By including these students into the regular FCE classrooms, this district is complying with IDEA'97, which avoids the problem of exclusion. This is generally an appropriate way to educate students with these learning disabilities in the areas that FCE covers. Another form of exclusion - called functional exclusion – occurs when programs are inadequate or unresponsive to students' needs. This can happen when a student is

placed in a class but are given little or no beneficial education. Practices such as these constitute functional exclusion. Although the child has access to a program, the program is of such a nature that child cannot substantially benefit from it and, therefore, receives few or none of the intended benefits of education (Turnbill, 2000). The concern of some educators is that the cognitively disabled students may or may not be benefiting from their experience in these classes as they are being presented to them. The question to be asked is this: Are the needs of cognitively disabled students being met in Family and Consumer Education classes at the high school level?

Statement of Problem

Should there be a required FCE curriculum designed for cognitively disabled students in addition to the current regular FCE classes offered in Wisconsin school districts? Cognitively disabled students are generally enrolled into FCE classes for the socialization skills that are available in these classes. These socialization skills include working with others, communication skills, and involvement with the general student population (Wehman, Renzaglia, and Bates 1985). They are not currently required to participate in the Family and Consumer Education classes, but can choose these classes as electives at the high school level. The majority of FCE programs in Wisconsin provide valuable life enhancing skills and competencies that aid in the transition and success of students from school to post high school life. Unfortunately, these classes are rarely adapted specifically for the cognitively disabled students enrolled in them. The curriculum is too advanced or not geared to the cognitively disabled students' specific needs and therefore does not benefit them overall. There is little research to support the conclusion that the existing Family and Consumer Education programs in Wisconsin school districts are meeting the needs of the cognitively disabled students at the senior high school levels.

Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to determine if the current FCE program in the Wisconsin school districts are meeting the needs of the cognitively disabled students enrolled at the senior high school levels.

This study is seeking a solution by researching the following questions:

1. To what extent are cognitively disabled students included in FCE courses at the senior high school level?
2. What are the main barriers that cognitively disabled students face in FCE courses at this time?
3. How successful are cognitively disabled students at learning and applying life skills taught in FCE courses as perceived by their educators?
4. Would cognitively disabled students benefit from an adapted FCE curriculum?

The numbers of individuals it will benefit include but are not limited to the following: the students, special education teachers, FCE teachers, the community, the parents of the students, and the school district as a whole. By identifying if the current needs of the cognitively disabled students are being met or the possibility that their needs are not being met, it may be possible to find a solution to a problem that needs addressing.

The students have the right by law to be educated under Public Law 94-142 and therefore should benefit from the classes they participate during their education. If a student is enrolled in a class by the delivery of information or curriculum is not geared or adapted to their needs, they will experience functional exclusion and therefore wasted their time and efforts.

Special education teachers will benefit from learning if their students' needs are being met because it is their purpose to educate and facilitate for the special needs students within their

program. By identifying the levels at which the classes are being taught and what benefits their students are gaining at this time, the special needs teachers will be able to help their students to include more or less of the classes that benefit them most or least respectively.

Family and Consumer education teachers will benefit by learning if their current methods of teaching are beneficial for their cognitively disabled students. By learning the outcome of this study, they will hopefully be able to modify and adapt their curriculum to better include these students in their classes. It is the goal of most educators to educate, so evaluation of current teaching methods will only help enable the teachers to do what is necessary to accomplish their goals more in depth.

The community will benefit from cognitively disabled students getting the most from their education. It is one of the main goals of secondary education to help prepare all students to become contribution members of society. By identifying the needs of cognitively disabled students in Wisconsin school districts, it will help to reinforce the education that these students are currently receiving or help to reinforce the education that these students are currently receiving or help to create a new approach that will help students to make the necessary transition into their community when they complete their schooling.

The parents and families of the cognitively disabled students will benefit if their students are able to comprehend and apply the information and skills they learn in FCE classes. A major part of the cognitively disabled population move into group homes or other group living environments when they are of a mature age, but a portion of these students remain in the home with their families. Because they stay in the home, they need to be a functional part of the family. The more the student can utilize the information and skills that they learn in FCE classes, the better they will be able to be a working member of the family in the home.

Lastly, Wisconsin school districts will benefit from this study because they will show the

community and the cognitively disabled population and those involved with them that they care about their education. As a parent, I know that I would like to feel confident that the school district that my children were attending cared about their welfare and their excellence in their current programs or they will be recognized for their willingness to change for the benefit of their students.

Definition of Terms

Moderate Cognitive Disability: An individual who functions intellectually in the 54-40 IQ range according to the Wechsler IQ Test and currently exhibits deficits in adaptive behavior.

Severe Disability: Individuals who function intellectually between 20 and 39 IQ and require extensive ongoing support in more than one major life activity in order to participate in integrated community settings and to enjoy a quality of life that is available to citizens with fewer or no disabilities.

Vocational Education: Includes a variety of educational programs intended to prepare students for employment and life after high school. It is comprised of seven areas associated with different labor markets: agriculture, business, family, and consumer science, marketing, health, trade and industry, and technical/ communications.

Family and Consumer Education: Includes a variety of educational programs intended to prepare students for family life, work life, and careers in family and consumer science (Mastropieri and Scruggs, 2000).

Least restrictive environment: A rule requiring schools to educate students with disabilities with students without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate for the students with disabilities (Turnbull, 1999).

Individualized Education Plan: A written plan for serving students with disabilities ages 3 to 21 (Turnbull, 1999).

Appropriate Education: A rule requiring schools to provide individually tailored education for each student based on the evaluation and augmented by related services and supplementary aids and services (Turnbull, 1999).

Chapter II

Literature Review

This chapter contains a review of literature on the problems and issues of inclusion of the cognitively disabled student in the regular high school class setting, the review of literature regarding guidelines for developing inclusive school settings, and the review of literature on curriculum modifications and adaptations for the inclusion of the moderate/severe cognitively disabled student in the high school classroom.

The ongoing debate regarding the educating of the child with a moderate/ severe disability seems to go on unresolved. Teachers, administrators, parents, general educators, and community members continue to express their opinions on what they feel is the best practice when educating general and special education students. This continues to be the “hottest issue” in special education. The legal argument for inclusion is also open to personal interpretation when it comes to the educating of the student with moderate/severe disabilities. The Individuals with Disability Education Act or IDEA legally entitles students with disabilities to be educated with non-disabled children to the “maximum extent possible”.

Despite the IDEA, many students continue to not be included the general classroom. The students least likely to be educated in a general classroom are those with severe disabilities. The following is the definition of inclusion for students with moderate/severe disabilities according to (Hehir & Latus, 1992; Janney et al., 1995; Sailor et al., 1989). Students with disabilities are educated in integrated settings to promote more “normalized” community participation by instructing them in the skills that are essential to their success in the social and environmental

setting in which they will ultimately use these skills. Functional life-skills training are best provided in a variety of settings, which combine classroom, school, and community-based learning environments (p14).

There is currently an increasing trend to include more students with severe disabilities in the general classroom, though it is minimal. There is significant evidence to show the positive effect of inclusion on students with disabilities from pre-school to secondary schools. Studies done by Cole & Meyer (1991) and Helmstetter, Peck, & Giangreco (1994) focused on the increased peer contact in and out of school and increased social awareness of the disabled students. MacMillian, Gresham, & Forness (1996) argue however, that there is very little empirical evidence to support the efficacy of inclusion. The positive outcomes cited in the many “non-data based” reports are usually social in nature rather than examining gains in basic skills, social competence or content areas. There are also more recent studies on the impact of inclusion on the general education student. Preliminary studies, according to Hunt, Staub, Alwell, & Goetz (1994), have concluded that inclusion has no ill or adverse effects on the general education students in regards to academic performance.

As literature continues to grow, the focus of the debate among special education professionals has shifted away from whether the students with moderate/severe disabilities should be included in general education classrooms to how to best serve all students effectively. Unfortunately, in many schools, inclusion simply means enrolling students with disabilities in regular classrooms. Throughout the 80's and 90's studies were done to measure the success of mainstreaming, now inclusion, of the disabled student in the regular classroom. The studies also provide criteria to measure the success of inclusion. Since the reauthorization of IDEA there has been a major push for successful inclusion programs.

One example of a tool developed through the study of effective transition programs, is a resource handbook for administrators developed by the National Needs Analysis Project at the University of Oregon. The handbook lists and discusses the components considered when planning effective programs for students with disabilities. Similar components are listed in several other studies related to effective inclusion. In 1993, interviews were conducted to gather advice about integration from general and special education teachers and administrators from ten schools in five Virginia school districts (Janney, Snell, Beers, Raynes, 1995). Students with moderate/severe disabilities had recently been integrated in the general education setting of these schools. The study explored the educational change process and the general educators' perceptions. Qualitative analysis of interview data revealed teachers' perceptions of the success of integration and most importantly their advice to others contemplating integration.

The results of the study identified two major themes defining success. One was the importance of planning and in-service, and the other was the need for financial support and commitment from administration.

Thousand and Villa (1990) compiled information from a number of studies to develop a list of strategies for education of learners with severe disabilities in their local home schools and communities. Their findings listed 9 critical elements that were vital to the success of an inclusion program. Many of these are similar to those identified by Janney, Snell, Beers, and Raynes in 1995.

A study conducted in Iowa in 1997 involved gathering the perspectives of general and special education teachers as they were experiencing the initial year of the return of students with moderate/severe disabilities to three rural neighborhood schools.

Interviews were conducted at the beginning, middle and end of the school year. Similar themes were addressed across teachers and time. The themes were compared across the three schools as well as to critical elements of successful inclusion identified in recent literature. This was a limited study since it involved only six teachers, from three schools, from a single state and over only one year. The nine themes or guidelines compiled from the data however are similar to those identified in other research.

In a study published in 1999, Wilson researched the literature from the last several years looking for guidelines that could be drawn regarding promising practices impacting the success of inclusive education for students with moderate/severe disabilities. The following is a summary of the findings of the research cited. According to the literature, effective inclusion programs have a program philosophy, administrative commitment and support, established program goals and objectives, communication and collaboration time between staff members, in-service and support with instructional methods and curriculum, support of non-disabled peers, classrooms structured so all could learn, and community involvement.

The findings included a number of guidelines, but also left several unanswered questions regarding inclusion, such as how to insure individualized instruction for the included student and how to develop a “sense of ownership” for the included student.

Adaptations are modifications that are used to change the content or the conceptual difficulty of the curriculum and extend to the instructional methodology as well. The extent of the change is greater and typically more time-consuming than accommodations, which tend to change only the instructional methods. Selecting one or two basic concepts from a unit of study for a student with

intellectual challenges involves changing the conceptual difficulty as well as some of the content. The teacher may be required to change activities, logistics in the room or student interactions and experiences. An adaptation rarely only impacts only one student. It may prove helpful to other students, but would not be necessary for all students. Teachers must consequently subgroup students within the classroom enabling those who can progress to move on to the next activity or concept. This kind of organization is frequently present in the elementary classroom, but many times lacking in the middle school and high school setting where students move through a series of different courses each day and where a lesson plan is intended for all students (Fuchs,1995).

An accommodation is a modification of the delivery of instruction or a method of student performance that does not significantly change the content or the conceptual difficulty of the curriculum. Accommodations tend to be easier to make and implement within the general education classroom. Generally, accommodations will benefit many students within the classroom (McCarney& Wunderlich, 1988). Accommodations can also be made to the physical environment and classroom activities that enable students with physical challenges to participate.

Overlapping instruction is the modification of outcome objectives or expectations for students. As students participate in class activities, several students in the class may have totally different outcomes. Thus, the curricular goals are changed. The basic content may not be the same for all students. An example is a student in a high school family and consumer education classroom who has an objective to complete during a lab activity. The student's objective is distribute ingredients, count materials as they are distributed, and to engage in positive social interactions as the tasks are completed. The concept of differentiation was developed by Giangreco (1993), who refers to it as curriculum overlapping. Differentiation of outcomes can be particularly helpful when a teacher is including students with significant disabilities into a classroom.

Modifications and adaptations have been used for many years in education, in the community, and in vocational settings. Another method of defining modifications is through the following five categories:

1. Using varied materials and devices
2. Adapting skill levels
3. Providing personal assistance
4. Adapting rules, requirements, or instructions
5. Adapting the physical environment.

Before looking at the above models for modification, it is essential to remember that the general educator who will implement the modification must be the person who selects the adaptations. Modifications are required by IDEA but also must be reasonable. In other words they cannot be or cause a hardship to the school financially or be so disruptive to the classroom that it impacts negatively on the other students. The literature repeatedly (Stainback & Stainback, 1989; Giengreco & Cloninger& Edleman& Schattman, 1993; Kocchar & West & Taymans,2000) suggests that the general educator and the special educator should collaborate when planning the education of disabled students and that the general educator ultimately does make the decision because they are the primary implementers.

Bradlely, King-Sears, & Tessier-Switlick, (1997) suggest the following as a guide for any modification to be effective. They suggest it must FLOW:

- Fit into the classroom environment
- Lend themselves to meeting individual student needs
- Optimize understanding for each student
- Work well with the activity planned for the lesson

Janney and colleagues (1995) found that teachers who were including students with moderate/severe disabilities were successful in adapting the program with the assistance of the special educator because they gradually made changes in their physical, social, and academic classroom activities. Fascinatingly, direct experience with a student with significant disabilities was more influential in the change process than was in-service or preparatory work.

Moderate/severe disabled students often have a specialized curriculum, which focuses on functional or life skills. The functional approach tends to focus on the usefulness or application of age-appropriate content and skills. There is an underlying theme of functionality that allows for the development of units such as domestic skills, basic academics, daily living skills, and vocational skills. Integrating functional curriculum or life skills into the general education program is still a crucial factor in maintaining social relationships and ensuring generalization of skills being taught.

Vocational Education has traditionally been an area in which special education professionals have placed disabled students because of the hands on nature of the classes. In family and consumer education, the moderate/severe disabled student can take part in cooking activities with a group of students to facilitate practice in measuring, kitchen safety, survival skills, and cooperation in a group. These courses offer an opportunity for special needs children to work on "life skills" and to be included with their peers.

A survey of 100 Wisconsin secondary schools found that students with disabilities did not use a full range of vocational programs, only 37 percent of students had participated in vocational assessment activities, and that half had vocational goals included in their Individualized Education Programs (Lombard, 1992). Family and Consumer Education is one of those vocational programs

that is generally included in the IEP.

As Family and Consumer Education Educators work toward their mission of improving the quality of individual and family life, it is essential that we help students with disabilities become productive members of society (Bowers, 1996). Students with disabilities have always been present in FCE classrooms, but the number of moderate/severe cognitively disabled students has been low. However, two factors have brought about increased pressure to better serve these students. One is the increasing complexity of functioning in our technologically advanced society. Certain skills are required to participate in family life and the work force. Secondly, there is a growing number of disabled students in the FCE classroom because of increased emphasis on inclusion. Regardless of the reason, the fact remains that family and consumer education teachers will continue to serve students with disabilities (Mandiloff and Vail, 1996).

A study was done 1996 in a Lansing, Michigan high school to evaluate the impact of full inclusion of students with severe disabilities. The inclusion of seven students with moderate/severe disabilities which included cognitive disabilities, autism, and severe multiple impairments was evaluated using teacher and parent surveys as well as observations of student interaction. Both special and general educators reported that information sharing, development of instructional materials, and support from consultants and paraprofessionals were effective. Similarly, both groups of educators reported that in-service programs, staff development activities, and technical assistance from the district were ineffective. Observations of classrooms found interactions between students and non-disabled peers to be overwhelmingly accepting (Bang and Lamb, 1999).

The literature offers a wide variety of ideas of how to modify the curriculum or the classroom

setting. The most difficult challenge teachers experience is having the time to collaborate on how to best meet the students needs and ultimately to take ownership of the instruction. Collaboration time for staff is one of the most important components of an effective inclusion program. To assist the general educator's successful achievement of modified curriculum and instruction in the classroom, models and definitions are helpful. The following definitions and models were compiled from a number of sources.

The purpose of modification is to enable an individual to adjust for intellectual, physical, or behavioral challenges. The modification allows the individual to use existing skill repertoires while promoting the acquisition of new skills or knowledge. A concept frequently associated with modification is partial participation, which implies some level of active involvement in a task or activity. This concept acknowledges that some students, particularly those with more severe disabilities, may never learn the same material and skills as the majority of the class participants, but that it is still appropriate for them to participate in the general education classroom (Ottlinger & Koohlhepp, 1992).

Summary

It becomes apparent by this review of literature that moderate/severe cognitively disabled students are to be included in the general education classroom that can most effectively meet their needs. The classes need to be age-appropriate and they must provide regular and sustained interaction with non-disabled peers. The curriculum most appropriate for these students is a functional life-skills curriculum, which combines classroom, school, and community-based learning. The family and consumer education classroom meets these criteria in most cases. The curriculum is based on life-skills education and can offer group activities that allow for disabled and

non-disabled student to interact. A lab activity in a foods class is a good example. A great deal of thought and planning must be directed toward curricular and instructional modification. This requires an understanding of the student's abilities and needs. It also involves collaboration and support from the special education staff. This ultimately depends on the support and commitment of administration that have developed and communicated the district's philosophy of inclusion. The review of literature revealed that while inclusion has been researched and implemented for many of the disabled population, the moderate/severe disabled are still being educated outside of the general education classroom in many cases. There is a lot of research regarding effective curriculum modifications and adaptations for most of the disabled population, but very little specific information for the moderate/severe-disabled student. This makes it difficult for family and consumer education teachers and even more evident that inclusion of this population can only be done through the collaborative work of the special education teacher and family and consumer education teacher with the support of the school administration.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The main purpose of this study is to identify if moderate cognitively disabled students are experiencing and learning the life skills needed to become independent through Family and Consumer Education as perceived by Family and Consumer Educators, Special Education Teachers/ Aides, and Special Education Directors/ Coordinators. The second is to identify whether and the degree to which these cognitively disabled students are involved in FCE classes and what involvement the FCE teacher has in the life skill education of those students not enrolled in FCE classes. The third is to determine if these students would best be served through adaptive FCE classes instead of inclusion practices. The specific methodology followed in this study is explained in this chapter under the headings of: (1) subjects, (2) instrumentation, (3) procedures, (4) unknowns, (5) limitations, and (6) data analysis.

Subjects

The subjects for this study were randomly selected Special Education teachers, Family and Consumer Education teachers, and Administrators working with cognitively disabled students while working in various Wisconsin public school districts that met the 750 to 1200 student population set for this research by the researcher. The subjects were randomly selected from the public school district population established by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) database. The researcher compiled data from multiple DPI databases to create a single database that contained districts that provided Family and Consumer Education, Special Education for cognitively disabled students, as well as had a Special Education director/ Coordinator in the selected school districts. The schools chosen are similar in size to the school

where the researcher is employed. Once these three criteria were met, the subject selection was then narrowed by population size set for this particular research. The sample size for this study consisted of 62 Educators and Administrators from the database created by the researcher.

The high school family and consumer education teachers were selected to find out their impressions of how cognitively disabled students are included in FCE classes. Family and Consumer Education teachers typically teach courses in Foods and Nutrition, Teen Living, Housing, Parenting, Marriage and Family, Child Development, Clothing, and Relationships. The total population for this group of teachers from the school districts meeting the researcher's criteria was 30. These courses are offered as electives in most high schools and often consist of varied grade levels and ability levels. The researcher is a Family and Consumer Education Teacher and has taught cognitively disabled students in the classroom numerous times.

The Special Education teachers of the cognitive disabled teach a variety of subjects to students who may spend varied portions of their day in the cognitive disabilities classroom. These teachers work with the student, their families and other staff to develop Individualized Education Plans, which dictate the learning goals for the student. These plans are developed yearly. Most students who are in this type of classroom have academic and life skills orientated goals, so the cognitive disabilities teacher is responsible for placing the student in classes in the general education area where these goals can be met or provide direct instruction in the cognitive disabilities classroom. The Special Education teachers were also selected to get information regarding the inclusion of their cognitively disabled students in the Family and Consumer Education classrooms. The total population for this group of teachers from the school districts meeting the researcher's criteria was 20.

Surveys were also sent to the person in each district meeting the researcher's criteria who held the position of Special Education Director/Coordinator. This person is responsible for overseeing the educational program of the special education students in the district. They would have information and knowledge regarding the special education students' level of involvement in general education classes such as family and consumer education. There were 12 Special Education Directors/ Coordinators from the school districts meeting the researcher's criteria.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for this research was an electronic survey created by the researcher and distributed via e-mail. This tool was used to gather information about the current Family and Consumer Education programs and to what capacity the cognitively disabled students that are enrolled, participating, and benefiting from these courses presently. The survey contained demographic information about the respondent including amount of cognitively disabled student contact, gender, current position held within the district, and length of time in the educational field. The survey went on to ask about what categories of disabled students were being included in family and consume education classes and was the respondent attending Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings. The survey also asked if the respondent was responsible for writing goals for IEP's.

The instruction methods and curriculum section of the survey asked the respondents to identify what mo cognitively disabled students were doing in regards to FCE courses. Respondents were asked to identify barriers they felt were preventing the moderate/severe cognitively disabled students from being successfully included in FCE classes. The respondents were asked to identify multiple examples that best represent the activity of cognitively disabled

students within their district with regards to student involvement/ placement/ inclusion in Family and Consumer Education courses. Respondents were then asked to rate the success of these students' by completing a series of questions formatted in a six-point Likert scale. Respondents were also asked to identify what life skills were currently being offered to cognitively disabled students in their district in both regular Family and Consumer education classes as well as in the special education classrooms. Finally respondents were asked their opinion using a six-point Likert scale on the question "CD students would benefit from adaptive FCE courses."

The objective type survey was created using similar information from previously completed questionnaires and surveys for related research in which multiple choice items, Likert items, and check list items were used. The survey was reviewed for content and construction by the researcher's advisor at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The final survey consisted of two parts. Part 1 consisted of seven demographic questions. Part 2 was comprised of six questions formatted on a six -point Likert scale regarding educator perceived barriers, perceived success of cognitively disabled students, and life skills available to cognitively disabled students through Family and Consumer Education courses or through contained special education classrooms. A copy of the final survey appears in Appendix A.

Procedures

The final draft of the survey was deployed via e-mail to 62 respondents on May 26st, 2008. The respondents were asked to complete the instrument online by June 14th, 2008. The respondents were a sampling of 30 Family and Consumer Education teachers, 20 High School Cognitive Disabilities teachers and 12 Special Education Directors/ Coordinators. Each subject received a consent letter (see appendix B) via their online invitation to complete the survey,

which introduced the researcher, as well as described the reason and purpose of the study. The researcher described the focus or population that was being studied and the respondents were assured of the confidentiality of the survey as well as the researcher's willingness to share the results. Due to the nature of an online survey, all responses were anonymous and no additional reminder was sent to complete the online survey. Sample copies of the survey with consent form letter are located in Appendix A and B respectively.

Unknowns

Conditions that may affect this study include low response rates, incomplete or incorrect lists from which the random sample may be extracted and possible sampling error and bias on the part of the researcher.

Limitations

1. This study is not a random sample, but rather a targeted established population.
2. This study is limited by possible sample bias of respondents and sample error.
3. This study will not generalize to all populations of the handicapped.

Data Analysis

The data compiled from the e-mailed surveys was studied in the following manner. The researcher performed all data analysis from the responses given in the survey.

The demographic information was analyzed for frequency of counts and percentages. Specific information summarized in this way were respondent's gender, educational title, number of years in education, number of contacts with cognitively disabled students, categories of disabled students regularly encountered in their classes or daily routine, attendance at IEP's, and

frequency of written IEP goals. and possible barriers to disabled students being included in FCE courses. The survey required respondents to identify what cognitively disabled students have done or are doing in regards to FCE courses in their school district. The following six questions related to instructional methods and curriculum was analyzed for frequency of counts and percentages. The specific information summarized in this way was the respondent's ratings of each question on a six-point Likert scale (1=I strongly disagree, 2= I disagree, 3= neutral, 4=I agree, 5= I strongly agree, 6= no opinion).

All results in chapter four are presented in a descriptive format preceded by tables and discussion.

Chapter 4

Results

Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to gather information to help determine the answers to the following questions that will help determine if the current FCE program in the Wisconsin school districts are meeting the needs of the cognitively disabled students enrolled at the senior high school levels.

1. To what extent are cognitively disabled students included in FCE courses at the senior high school level?
2. What are the main barriers that cognitively disabled students face in FCE courses at this time?
3. How successful are cognitively disabled students at learning and applying life skills taught in FCE courses as perceived by their educators?
4. Would cognitively disabled students benefit from an adapted FCE curriculum?

Rate of Response

Surveys were e-mailed to a sample of 30 FCE Teachers, 20 Special Education Teachers, and 12 Directors of Special Education in Wisconsin school districts with a student population ranging from 750 - 1200. Responses were obtained from 32 subjects for a rate of response of 51.6 % (N=62).

Demographics

(A variety of inferential statistics were used to examine relationships among the survey variables.) Respondents were asked to indicate several demographics in the questionnaire. position held within the school district, length of time in the field of education, amount of contact with cognitively disabled students, and gender, regularly encountered categories of disabled

students found in their classrooms, the attendance of IEP meetings, and involvement with creating IEP goals for IEP meetings were requested in multiple choice items, yielding data at the nominal scale of measurement. The following tables represent the responses to the survey questions of this study. All table percentages and data are based on the 51.6 % of respondents participating in this study. Frequency and percentages are actual unless identified in the data explanation following the table. Tables 1 – 7, below report the frequency and the percent of the responses for the demographic items contained in the survey.

Table 1: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	3	9.4%
Female	29	90.6 %
Total	32	100%

The responses collected from the survey are shown in Table 1 above. Of the 51.6 % response rate, 3 males equaling 9.4% and 29 females equaling 90.6 % participated in the survey. Overall, the number of females in the research population was significantly higher than males due to the nature of the areas being researched. (i.e. Special Education, Family and Consumer Education, etc.)

Table 2: Position Held in the District

Position	Frequency	Percent
Administrator	3	9.4%
Special Education Teacher	16	50%
FCE Teacher	13	40.6%
Total	32	100%

Table 2 represents the response rate for the 51.6% regarding the respondent's position held in the district. Surveys were sent to 30 FCE teachers and had 13 respond to the survey equaling 40.6 % of the respondents in this study. The survey was also sent to 20 special education teachers identified as working directly with cognitively disabled students and had 16 respond to the survey equaling 50% of the respondents in this study. Finally, surveys were sent to 12 Special Education Directors/ Coordinators of which 3 responded equaling 9.4% of the respondents for this study. Due to the fact that many school districts only have one director or share a person throughout a district, less administration was available for this study.

Table 3: Length of Time in Education

Years in education	Frequency	Percent
1-5	0	0%
6-10	16	50%
11-15	7	21.9%
16-20	3	9.4%
21-25	0	0%
26 or more	6	18.7%
Total	32	100%

Table 3 represents the data collected concerning the length of time in education that the respondents possessed. The highest percentage of respondents has been in education for 6-10 years representing 50% of the respondents in this study. The responses ranged from 0-26 years in education. Each frequency of response is listed along with the percentage it represents in this study.

Table 4: Frequency of Contact with Cognitively Disabled Students

Contact	Frequency	Percent
No contact	3	9.4%
1-5 per yr	3	9.4%
6-10 per yr	13	40.6%
11-20 per yr	3	9.4%
Daily	10	31.2%
Total	32	100%

Table 4 represents the data collected related to the amount of contact/ interaction with the identified student population. The highest response to this question was 6-10 contacts per year made by staff with the targeted student population equaling 40.6% followed by daily contact equaling 31.2%. The researcher felt this question to be important to include because of the perception element to the study. If the respondents do not have contact with the target population, their responses may not be valid in regards to the study. The other contact frequencies are also listed along with their corresponding percentages represented in this study.

Table 5: Categories of Students Regularly Encountered in Class or Daily Routine

Categories	Frequency	Percent
CD Mild	29	90.6%
CD Moderate	19	59.3%
CD Severe	9	28.1%
Learning Disabled	29	90.6%
Emotional Disturbance	25	78%

Table 5 identifies the categories of disabled students that the respondents encounter on a regular basis. Respondents were able to select multiple categories therefore the end percentage total does not equal 100%. The highest percentages recorded identified regular contact with Mild CD and learning disabled students by the majority of the respondents with 90.6%. With a percentage this significant, the researcher feels confident that the end findings will have validity based on the respondent groups understanding and contact with the targeted student population. The other categories of students regularly encountered are also listed along with their corresponding percentages related to this study.

Table 6: Involvement in IEP meetings

Attend IEP meetings?	Frequency	Percent
yes	32	100%
no	0	0%
Total	32	100%

Table 6 represents the data related to their participated in Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) meetings. As the data shows, all 32 respondents participate in IEP meetings equaling 100%. Because of the law and district policy to ensure the implementation of inclusion, all educators are expected/ required to participate in IEP meetings.

Table 7: Writing IEP Goal Involvement

How often?	Frequency	Percent
Never	13	40.6%
Seldom	6	18.8%
Sometimes	0	0%
Always	13	40.6%
Total	32	100%

Table 7 represents the involvement that the respondents have in the process of writing IEP goals. There was a wide range from “I never write goals” to “I always write goals”. The number of respondents was the same for both answers with 13 equaling 40.6%. The other response recorded was “I seldom write goals” with 6 respondents equaling 18.8 %.

Table 8: Possible barriers for cognitively disabled students

Statements	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	6 No opinion
Lack of basic academic skills	10%	30%	10%	40%	10%	0%
Lack of life skills	30%	30%	0%	40%	0%	0%
Lack of basic social skills	30%	40%	10%	20%	0%	0%
Lack of knowledge of how to teach CD students	10%	30%	10%	50%	0%	0%
Lack of administrative support	20%	20%	20%	30%	10%	0%
Lack of knowledge of how to adapt materials to meet the needs of CD students	20%	20%	10%	30%	20%	0%
Lack of modified materials for teaching CD students	30%	20%	10%	30%	10%	0%
Guidance counselors do not encourage CD students to take vocational courses such as Family and Consumer Education	30%	20%	40%	10%	0%	0%
Teacher's fear of teaching CD students	40%	0%	20%	40%	0%	0%
Courses are too difficult for CD students	30%	30%	10%	30%	0%	0%
No instructional support to assist in the classroom	40%	20%	20%	10%	10%	0%
Lack of parental support or involvement	30%	20%	40%	10%	0%	0%
No barriers are present	30%	20%	30%	0%	10%	10%

Table 8 represents the opinions of the respondents regarding possible barriers that may hinder the success of the targeted student population. These percentages have been rounded to the nearest 10 %. Of the 32 respondents, the largest barriers identified were lack of knowledge of how to teach cognitively disabled students with 50%, lack of basic academic skills, lack of life skills, and teacher's fear of teaching cognitively disabled students each with 40 % responses. The other data collected is listed with its percentage of response related to this study. Overall, 50 % of the respondents indicated there were definite barriers present that may hinder the success of the targeted student population.

Table 9: Activity of Cognitively Disabled Students within Your District Currently

Activity of CD students	Frequency	Percent
CD students are included in FCE classes always	13	40.6%
CD students are included in FCE classes frequently	10	31.2%
CD students are included in FCE classes often	3	9.4%
CD students are included in FCE classes rarely	3	9.4%
CD students are not included in FCE classes	3	9.4%
CD students are enrolled in FCE classes for special needs students only	10	31.2%
CD students receive life skills education from a special education teacher	10	31.2%
CD students receive life skills education from a special education teacher in the FCE room setting	6	18.7%
CD students receive life skills education through collaboration between special education teachers and FCE teachers	6	18.7%

Table 9 represents the data collected regarding the current activity of cognitively disabled students within their school district. Respondents were able to indicate more than one response for this question; therefore the percentages in this table do not total 100%. The majority of the responses indicate that cognitively disabled students are being included in regular FCE courses

with about 80%. A significantly lower percentage indicate that cognitively disabled students receive their life skill education from a special education teacher in a closed classroom setting with roughly 30% responding. Only 18.7 % responded that life skills are being taught collaboratively between FCE and special education teachers.

Table 10: Rate the Success of CD Students in FCE Classes

Statement	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	6 No opinion
CD students have the same degree of success as regular education students when mainstreamed into FCE courses.	10%	30%	10%	20%	20%	10%
CD students have lower success as regular education students when mainstreamed into FCE courses.	10%	30%	0%	30%	30%	0%
CD students have a higher degree of success with FCE materials when placed in a closed classroom setting.	10%	30%	0%	20%	30%	10%
CD students leave FCE courses with the same understanding of the content as regular education students.	10%	40%	20%	20%	10%	0%
CD students can apply FCE concepts appropriately after they complete a mainstreamed FCE course.	0%	10%	30%	40%	10%	10%
CD students would benefit from modified FCE courses.	0%	0%	10%	20%	50%	20%
CD students have limited success in mainstreamed FCE courses.	10%	40%	10%	40%	0%	0%
Through regular inclusion, CD students have equal success as regular education students.	0%	30%	30%	20%	10%	10%

Table 10 represents the data collected related to the respondent's perception of student success in FCE classes. The percentages in this table have been rounded to the nearest 10%. The data indicates that the majority of respondents feel that cognitively disabled students do not have the same success as regular education students after completing FCE courses through regular inclusion practices. 50% of the respondents indicated that they "strongly agree" that CD students would benefit from modified FCE courses. The other responses are listed indicating their percentage related to this study.

Table 11: CD Students are taught the Following Life Skills in Special Education Classrooms

Skills	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	6 No opinion
Personal grooming and health	0%	10%	10%	30%	50%	0%
Clothing care including selection and maintenance	0%	20%	20%	40%	20%	0%
Basic sewing (hand or machine)	20%	40%	0%	10%	10%	0%
Simple food preparation	0%	40%	10%	10%	40%	0%
Recipe reading and following directions	0%	10%	0%	40%	50%	0%
Nutrition and healthy food choices	0%	0%	10%	50%	40%	0%
Consumerism and purchase making	0%	0%	10%	50%	40%	0%
Communication skills with peers, family, and employers	0%	0%	30%	20%	50%	0%
Relationship foundations including friendships, families, and romantic interests	0%	0%	40%	0%	60%	0%

Table 11 represents the data collected related to cognitively disabled students' life skill education. Respondents were asked to identify the life skills being taught in the special education classroom setting. Using a six-point Likert scale, respondents indicated their perceptions and knowledge of this portion of cognitively disabled students' education. The percentages in this table have been rounded to the nearest 10 %. The responses indicate that cognitively disabled students receiving life skill education in the special education classroom setting are receiving a large range of life skills including personal growth and hygiene (50%), communication with peers, family, and employers (50%), relationship foundations (60%), as well as substantial involvement with food selection, preparation, and purchasing (40- 50 %).

Table 12: CD Students are taught the Following Life Skills in FCE Courses.

Skills	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	6 No opinion
Personal grooming and health	0%	30%	20%	20%	30%	0%
Clothing care including selection and maintenance	20%	10%	10%	30%	30%	0%
Basic sewing (hand or machine)	20%	20%	10%	0%	40%	10%
Simple food preparation	0%	0%	0%	30%	60%	10%
Recipe reading and following directions	0%	0%	0%	30%	60%	10%
Consumerism and purchase making	0%	0%	10%	70%	20%	0%
Nutrition and healthy food choices	0%	0%	10%	30%	50%	10%
Communication skills with peers, family, and employers	0%	0%	10%	60%	30%	0%
Relationship foundations including friendships, families, and romantic interests	0%	0%	30%	50%	20%	0%

Table 12 represents the data collected regarding cognitively disabled student' life skill education as obtained through regular FCE courses. Using a six-point Likert scale, respondents indicated their perceptions and knowledge of this portion of cognitively disabled students' education. The percentages in this table have been rounded to the nearest 10%. The respondents indicate that cognitively disabled students receiving life skill education through regular inclusion practices are receiving life skills that mainly include food preparation and consumer decision making/ purchasing. Although other areas are being covered in the FCE classroom, the percentages are less than those of the special education classroom percentages. The other responses are listed as percentages represented by this study.

Table 13: Rate your Opinion: CD Students would benefit from Adaptive FCE Courses.

Statement	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	No Opinion
CD students would benefit from adaptive FCE courses.	0%	0%	0%	20%	70%	10%

Table 13 represents the data collected regarding the respondent's opinion on the statement "CD students would benefit from adaptive FCE courses." 90% of the respondents indicated that they

agreed or strongly agreed that cognitively disabled students would benefit from adaptive FCE courses. 10% had no opinion on the statement. The percentages in this table were rounded to the nearest 10%.

Summary

The data collected in this study indicate that inclusion of cognitively disabled students in FCE classes is occurring in the majority of school districts included in this study. The respondents in this study appear to have a significant amount of contact and knowledge concerning education of cognitively disabled students to make the data collected relevant to the study. The respondents identified a number of barriers to the success of cognitively disabled students in FCE and other regular education courses. The top barriers being student deficiencies in basic knowledge and skills as well as the teacher's perceptions, understanding, and abilities to teach students with these disabilities without assistance from special education staff and/or administrative support. The data leads this researcher to believe that each district is doing the best they can with the knowledge and materials provided to give these targeted students the best life skill education possible.

Based on the results of the survey, conclusions can be drawn about the purpose of the study. Recommendations can be made to increase the success of inclusion opportunities for cognitively disabled students within Family and Consumer Education classes as well as the obtainment of practical, applicable, and suitable life skill education.

Chapter 5

Summary and Recommendations

This chapter is divided into three sections: a summary of the study; results and conclusions; and recommendations related to the study.

Summary

The problem, which is the focus of this study, is: Are the needs of cognitively disabled student's needs being met at the high school level? The purpose of this study was to gather data to help formulate possible solutions to the increasing issue of inclusion inefficiency when it comes to the life skill education needed by cognitively disabled students to become successful during their high school education as well as after this period when transitioning into their adult lives is monumentally important. This study is seeking a solution by researching the following questions:

1. To what extent are cognitively disabled students included in FCE courses at the senior high school level?
2. What are the main barriers that cognitively disabled students face in FCE courses at this time?
3. How successful are cognitively disabled students at learning and applying life skills taught in FCE courses as perceived by their educators?
4. Would cognitively disabled students benefit from an adapted FCE curriculum?

A literature review related to this study suggests that cognitively disabled students should be included in classes that can most effectively meet their needs. The classes must be age-appropriate and must provide regular and sustained interaction with non-disabled peers. The curriculum most appropriate for this population is a functional life-skills curriculum, which combines classroom experiences with school and community based learning. The Family and Consumer Education classroom and curriculum meet those criteria due to its vocational nature.

Results and Conclusions

The study surveyed high school FCE teachers, special education teachers working directly with the targeted population and special education directors/coordinators. Subjects were chosen from 25 different Wisconsin public school districts ranging in student population from 750 to 1200 students. The schools chosen for this study were compiled by using the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction database from which the researcher created a separate database in which all schools included possessed a FCE program, cognitively disabled special education teachers, as well as a special education director/coordinator within the district of the desired size and population.

The survey was sent via e-mail and included demographic questions including gender, position held within the district, amount of contact with the targeted student population, categories of disabled students encountered regularly in the classroom or daily routine, length of time in education, IEP attendance, and IEP goal writing involvement. The survey also included perceptual questions that asked the respondent to identify various items that they

felt may hinder the success of the targeted student population, current student activity within their programs, life skill education obtainment, and whether or not they felt that cognitively disabled students would benefit from adaptive FCE courses.

The major findings indicate that over half of cognitively disabled students in the districts surveyed are included in FCE courses to obtain part or all of their life skill education. In addition to this data, it was also found that over half of cognitively disabled students are receiving their life skill education through their special education teacher whether it is in closed classroom or FCE environment. This data alone signifies that there is some overlap of life skill education happening in the school districts surveyed. The fact that cognitively disabled students require more time and extra repetition to comprehend and apply the same content as regular education students is only being reinforced through this apparent overlap in their education.

The top barriers identified by the respondents were not shocking but helped the researcher conclude that the lack of regular education teacher experience with modification and adaptive techniques and strategies hinders not only the teacher but the cognitively disabled student when placed in regular inclusion settings. Because of the regular education teacher's lack of knowledge and experience regarding CD student's ultimate needs, it is apparent that more collaboration between the FCE/ regular education teachers and special education teachers needs to be part of the educational plan for many of the surveyed districts.

The success of cognitively disabled students can only be generalized within this study because of its basis on perception. Overall, the perception of the respondents indicate that they feel strongly that CD students do not experience the same success as their non-disabled

peers when placed in either regular inclusion settings or in closed classroom settings. Both of these settings offer a different experience for the cognitively disabled student. In the regular inclusion setting, these students experience the social aspect of school and learning. Unfortunately, in this setting, the CD student is often left without the same understanding of the focus concepts because the teacher is either unable to modify or adapt the curriculum to meet their individual needs or it is not possible to spend the extra time needed to assure the CD students success at understanding the concepts due to the other students in the class. On the other hand, if the CD student receives life skill education through a closed classroom setting, they may get the individualized curriculum because the teacher understands what their ultimate needs are, but they may not get the increased understanding of the concepts that are the basis for FCE courses, nor do they get the socialization and application opportunity from their non-disabled peers. Both of these situations are apparent in the surveyed population. It is hard to know if one is overwhelmingly better than the other, but it is too bad that these are the only two choices out there for our cognitively disabled students.

Through the question “Would CD students benefit from adaptive FCE courses” the researcher hoped to plant a seed of curiosity within those surveyed. 90% of the respondents indicated they felt CD students would benefit from adaptive FCE courses. This rate of response leads the researcher to believe that there is not only a deficiency in the current delivery of life skill education to cognitively disabled students but there is also a desire for educators working directly with this student population to make a change that would decrease in inefficiency they currently face in their programs and districts. The success of the student is the most important part of education.

Recommendations

The results of this study were based on a small sample population. Considering the results and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The study could be conducted on a larger scale with a variety of district populations to see if the results are similar regardless of the student population of the district.
2. Further study to determine to what extent regular education teachers (FCE) are being trained to work with cognitively disabled students prior to entering the educational workforce as well as when they are employed by their district. These findings may help find a solution to reduce the indicated barriers that teachers feel when working with cognitively disabled students.
3. Additional research to identify possible solutions to the lack of collaborative efforts indicated by this study's results may prove to be beneficial across the board. Special education teachers may benefit from the expertise of the FCE teacher in areas they may not be as familiar as well as FCE/ regular education teachers may benefit from the obvious expertise of curriculum modifications and adaptations that special education teachers possess due to the nature of their training in working with CD students.

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Appendix A

Demographics

For the purpose of this survey, a student with a mild/moderate cognitive disability (CD) is one who, as a school-aged student functions intellectually within the lowest 1% of their particular age group. They may have labels such as mild CD, moderate CD and sometimes high LD and often have additional physical and sensory impairments. They may also be labeled autistic. These students require extensive ongoing support in more than one major life activity in order to participate with their peers. These students have Exceptional Education Needs (EEN). It does not include learning disabilities as their primary disability. Mark each response appropriately. All information is confidential. Thank you for taking time to complete the survey.

1. Check your current position and background. (check all that apply)*

- Family and Consumer Education Teacher
 - Special Education Cognitive Disabilities
 - Multi-Categorical LD/CD
 - Special Education Director
 - Exceptional Education Needs Coordinator (EEN)
 - Principal
 - Guidance Counselor
 - LVEC for the district
 - District Administrator
 - Other, please specify -----
-

2. Length of years in education, teaching, and/or administration.*

- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21- 25 years
- 26 years or longer

3. Gender*

- male
- female

4. What is your contact with cognitively disabled students?*

- No contact with CD students within the school year.
- 1-5 contacts with CD students within the school year.
- 6-10 contacts with CD students within the school year.
- 11-20 contacts with CD students within the school year.
- Daily contact with CD students within the school year.

5. What categories of students do you regularly encounter in your classes or daily routine?*

- Cognitively Disabled Mild
- Cognitively Disabled Moderate
- Cognitively Disabled Severe
- Learning Disabled
- Emotional Disturbance
- Other, please specify -----
-

Guidance counselors do not encourage CD students to take vocational courses such as Family and Consumer Education	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----
Teacher's fear of teaching CD students	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----
Courses are too difficult for CD students	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----
No instructional support to assist in the classroom	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----
Lack of parental support or involvement	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----
No barriers are present	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----	<input type="radio"/>	----

Curriculum, Instructional methods, and Success

The survey is designed to identify instructional methods and curriculum adaptations that are currently available to cognitively disabled students who are included in Family and Consumer Education classes as well as their perceived success in FCE courses in regards to life skill attainment. Examples of life skills are personal grooming, clothing care, simple food preparation, understanding nutritional needs and choices, personal relationships, money management, and basic sewing. Please read each question carefully before answering. The results of the survey are confidential and will be used to develop a resource of ideas. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

9. Select the examples below that best represent the activity of cognitively disabled students within your district. (check all that apply)

- CD students are included in FCE classes always
- CD students are included in FCE classes frequently
- CD students are included in FCE classes often
- CD students are included in FCE classes rarely

- CD students are not included in FCE classes
- CD students are enrolled in a FCE class for special needs students only
- CD students receive life skills education from a special education teacher
- CD students receive life skills education from a special education teacher in the FCE room setting
- CD students receive life skills education through collaboration between special education teachers and FCE teachers

10. Rate the success of CD students in FCE courses.

Please indicate your perception by choosing 1 for I strongly disagree, 2 for I disagree, 3 for neutral, 4 for I agree, and 5 for I strongly agree regarding the following statements regarding CD student success in FCE courses, 6 I have no contact with these students.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
CD students have the same degree of success as regular education students when mainstreamed into FCE courses.	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----
CD students have lower success as regular education students when mainstreamed into FCE courses.	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----
CD students have a higher degree of success with FCE materials when placed in a closed classroom setting than when they are mainstreamed.	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----
CD students leave FCE courses with the same understanding of the content as regular education students.	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input checked="" type="radio"/> -----

13. Please rate your opinion by choosing 1 for I strongly disagree, 2 for I disagree, 3 for neutral, 4 for I agree, 5 for I strongly agree, 6 no opinion.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
CD students would benefit from adaptive FCE courses.	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----	<input type="radio"/> -----



Appendix B

Consent to Participate in UW-Stout Approved Research

Title: Are the Life Skill Needs of Cognitively Disabled Students Being Met in Family and Consumer Education Classes at the High School Level?

Investigator:

Marie L. McFarlane
2 N German Street
Mayville, WI 53050
920-387-3390

Research Sponsor:

Dr. Michael J. Galloy
225P Applied Arts
UW - Stout
Menomonie, WI 54751
715- 232-2108

Dear Educator:

My name is Marie McFarlane and I teach Family and Consumer Education in Winneconne, WI. I teach grades 7 – 12 and have a number of special education students in my classes.

I am currently completing my Master’s Degree in Career and Technical Education with emphasis in Special Needs from the University of Wisconsin - Stout. My thesis is a study of the perceived success of moderately cognitively disabled students included in Family and Consumer Education classes at the high school level through traditional inclusion methods. I am interested in discovering how other educators directly in contact with this student population feel about the success these students have in life skill attainment and utilization after learning experiences through traditional inclusion methods. While the project is for my thesis work, I personally believe that your responses will help me provide the best education possible for all my students.

I am conducting a survey of Family and Consumer Educators and Special Education personnel to obtain their perception of the success moderately cognitively disabled students have in their districts. Your assistance in identifying what other districts and teachers are doing to accommodate these students in their classes is extremely important and appreciated. The results of the questionnaire will be kept confidential. Only aggregate data will be used. For the purpose of this survey “moderate cognitively disabled” is defined as a school aged student who functions intellectually within the lowest 1% of their age group. They may also have additional physical and sensory impairments. They may also be labeled autistic.

This survey will be conducted online and anonymously submitted by the participant. Your name will not be used and you will not be able to be identified by completing this survey. The survey should be completed within a week of receiving the invitation to complete the survey. There is very little risk to the participant in completing the survey. The survey will take you about ten minutes to complete and your data will be extremely helpful in my study. If you feel that you do not interact directly with the student population or do not feel that you can answer the questions due to lack of experience or knowledge at any point in the survey, there will be an opt out tab. There is no monetary compensation for completing this survey.

This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin – Stout’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study meets ethical obligations required by federal law and University policies. If you have questions or concerns regarding this study please contact the Investigator or Advisor. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB Administrator.

This research has been approved by the UW-Stout IRB as required by the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46.

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Sue Foxwell, Director,
Research Services
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By completing the following survey you agree to participate in the project entitled, Are the Life Skill Needs of Cognitively Disabled Students being met in Family and Consumer Education Classes at the High School Level?

<http://www2.uwstout.edu/GeneralSurveys/TakeSurvey.asp?SurveyID=732813K0217L14>