THE EFFECTS OF INCLUSION ON GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

By
Bruce Pawlowicz

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the
Master of Science Degree
With a Major in

Education

Approved: 2 Semester Credits

_____
Investigation Advisor

The Graduate School
University of Wisconsin-Stout
August, 2001

The Graduate College
University of Wisconsin-Stout
Menomonie, WI 54751

ABSTRACT

Pawlowicz Bruce K.
(Last Name) (First Name) (Initial)

The Effects of Inclusion on General Education Students
(Title)

Education Dr. Edwin Biggerstaff August, 2001 41
(Graduate Major) (Research Advisor) (Month/Year) (No. of Pages)

American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual
(Name of Style Manual Used in this Study)

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects that inclusion of special education students have on regular education students. This was done through a comprehensive review and critical analysis of research and literature concerning both positive and negative effects of the inclusion of special education students.

As an overview one could say that there are many changes that the inclusion of special needs students set into motion when being mainstreamed with regular education students. Both positive and negative effects have been documented.

This researcher found that teachers are able to spend enough time with regular education students if the instructor values the inclusion process and if cooperative planning takes place between the regular education and special

needs instructors, many problems will exist if attitudes are negative and cooperative planning doesn't take place.

Another question that the researcher studied was to learn if special needs students caused disturbances that would slow the learning process for the entire class, this researcher found there to be few problems.

The last question studied was to learn if there are positive outcomes for the regular education student in an inclusion classroom, research shows many examples of positive and very few negatives.

Whether the mainstreaming and its effects are viewed as good or bad, seems to have a lot to do with two factors. The attitude that the regular education instructor has toward the inclusion process and if proper planing exists between the regular and special needs instructors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the help and understanding of my wife Yvonne and my two children Angela and Ashley. Their patience and encouragement is what allowed me to successfully complete this work before me. I would also like to thank John DeBruyne for supporting me throughout the entire program. Without his encouragement and friendship the process would not have been as enjoyable. Finally a big thank-you to Dr. Ed Biggerstaff, I appreciate all the help and guidance I received from him throughout this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Students across America with special needs have been integrated into classrooms with populations of general education students. This integration of students with special needs and students in general education is called inclusion. Inclusion is no longer an option for schools to choose or not choose. Federal law now requires the inclusion of all students with special needs if that placement is the least restrictive environment.

Public Law 94-142, which states that education will be provided to all handicapped children, was enacted to prevent discrimination that was considered wide spread (Elliott et & McKenney, 1998). An amendment to this act in 1990, titled Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), stated that the education of that person would include all academic areas, as well as the vocational and technical areas of education (Cronis & Ellis, 2000). Many high school instructors believe that the process of including students with special needs into general education classes demonstrates reverse discrimination for general education students. "Some feel that there is a failure to meet the needs of either regular or special education students" (Winzer, 1998, p. 2). Because inclusion causes a change in how educators teach and students learn, it becomes important to analyze the effects of inclusion on the general education students to best serve both populations.

Teachers struggle with the concept of inclusion for a variety of reasons. Some feel that the students with special needs slow the progression of the class,

making it difficult to get through the curriculum. Educators often asked: Are students in core classes able to complete the entire required curriculum? How will this effect the outcome of standardized achievement tests? If merit pay is tied to achievement test scores, what will the effects be on education and teacher recruitment?

Others believe that they will need to work harder to find meaningful assignments for those with special needs. One of the biggest fears for many teachers is that they won't be able to teach in the same way that they have become accustomed; special adaptations to style of teaching and content need to be made. For these and other reasons, some teachers view inclusion as a problem for teachers and regular education students (Winzer, 1998).

Certainly, this isn't necessarily the way that the subject of inclusion needs to be viewed. There are likely positive as well as negative effects that will come from the inclusion of such diverse groups. The result, whether good or bad, may have a lot to do with the attitude of the instructor. "Because teacher beliefs about the value of the disabled and their professional responsibilities toward them correlate with teaching practices in serving children who are exceptional, complete inclusion and acceptance of students with disabilities will only happen if there are long-term changes in the attitudes of educational professionals" (Winzer, 1998, p. 2).

Studies have shown that integration can help regular students become more compassionate toward students with special needs. "When students with severe disabilities are included in the regular classroom, all students develop

social, communication, and problem-solving skills, as well as the ability to get along with others in diverse communities" (Farlow, 1996, p. 55). Without inclusion, students in general education would rarely communicate with the student with special needs, let alone have an opportunity to work together.

Teachers need to know how the inclusion process effects both students in general education as well as students with special needs. With this information they will be able to better judge curriculum plans that include students with special needs. "Teachers can adjust curriculum and instruction to ensure that all students have successful educational experiences" (Farlow, 1996, p. 54).

Parents of average students in an inclusion classroom may also have some concerns. If extra time and effort is needed to help students who are special succeed, and if extra time and effort is spent working with students who are gifted and talented, then how much time and effort will be given to the average student? A question sometimes posed by the parents of average students needs consideration. They ask, is my child getting the time and attention necessary for learning to take place?

This study will examine the effects of inclusion of students with special needs on students in general education. Examining positive and negative attributes of the inclusion process, as well as identifying successful techniques to use in an inclusion classroom curriculum will do this. Some examples of modified curriculum involve peer support, cooperative learning, and alternative activities. Each of these modifications require an understanding that all students

will be affected in both positive and negative ways, and that gains are not gotten without compromise and sacrifice (Farlow, 1996).

Statement of the Problem

Students in general education are affected in many ways, both positive and negative by the inclusion of students with special needs. Teachers must be able to make critical decisions regarding methods of instruction and curriculum development. With a well-rounded knowledge of the topic of inclusion, they can choose strategies to help students both regular and special. This will help minimize the negative effects of inclusion and enhance the positive. Teachers need to know what some of the advantages and disadvantages are for all students in an inclusion classroom.

Purpose of the Study

This study will explain the issues associated with the inclusion of special needs students into the general education classroom. This will be done through a comprehensive review of the literature, with an analysis of the findings, and recommendations to interested teachers and parents.

Research Questions

The following research questions are to be targeted in this study:

1. Is an instructor able to spend enough time with regular education students when special needs students are in the classroom?

2. Do special needs students cause disturbances, which are contrary to a good learning environment?

3. Can the inclusion of special needs students cause positive outcomes for regular education students?

Definition of Terms

For clarity of understanding, the following terms need to be defined.

General education- Students not possessing special limitations.

Inclusion- The integration of special needs students into general education classes with special education services.

Special needs students- Students possessing various types of mental or physical limitations. (Special education dictionary parentpals,2000).

Assumptions

One assumption is that special education students, when integrated into regular education classrooms, cause unique problems that require consideration.

Another assumption is that instructors are interested in making adjustments in their classrooms to accommodate special needs students.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter will consist of a study of the effects of inclusion, evaluation methods appropriate for inclusion, teacher attitudes about inclusion, alternatives to inclusion, and an analysis of how inclusion is viewed by special needs students, regular education students, and parents.

Effects of inclusion

Since inclusion has been in place, there have been many benefits to the general education population brought about by the inclusion of special education students. Many of these benefits are not easily measured, but may be very important to the development of the student's view of the real word. All parties involved should note. "If we believe that our students must learn to live in a pluralistic society, then inclusion deserves the extra effort and energy required of us" (Farlow, 1996 p. 54). Inclusion allows students to work in groups with other students with whom they may not otherwise have contact. This becomes a real life lesson in tolerance and patience. General education students also benefit by being given a chance to mix socially with other groups. This creates a safe and structured environment in which students can expand their comfort zone. "Students in an inclusive setting develop a new sense of understanding and respect for one another and for human differences" (Van Dyke et al., 1995, p. 477). Inclusion then helps students understand one another, which in turn helps to reduce bias (Van Dyke et al., 1995).

When general education students are placed into a tutoring role to assist special education students, a number of positive outcomes can occur. The general education students realize that their knowledge base is greater than they assumed, enhancing their self-confidence. They also realize that they can have a positive effect on another person, creating the sense that they are important and can contribute to the benefit of society (Federico et al., 2000). They realize their effort matters. In his article Farlow (1996) told about a 15 year old sophomore boy with Down syndrome named Carlos. He was included in all group activities within the class that he was mainstreamed into, and extra credit was given when all group members participated. Over time, students began communicating more with each other as they worked to help Carlos. The benefits to the class were dramatic in that they worked much more cooperatively (Farlow, 1996).

There are many instances where inclusion has benefited the special needs student as well. Before inclusion was mandated, children with special needs were often placed in a part of the school that was far away from the regular population. Segregated from the other students, the special needs children may have felt so different that they maintained low expectations. This treatment seems to predetermine their future to failure. One article, written by a college-educated professional, recounted his own experiences as a special needs student with cerebral palsy. He was placed into a special education classroom through the fifth grade. While in this segregated system, he achieved at a very low level. He didn't like his placement and hoped some day to be

allowed into the regular classroom with normal kids. Upon entering the sixth grade, he entered an inclusion classroom; once this happened, he worked harder to fit in and at the end of his first year of inclusion, he was reading at grade level with his new peers. At the beginning of the fifth grade, he had been reading at second grade level (Stussman, 1997). Though this example is quite extreme, it seems that many students can reap benefits from inclusion; having good role models around to set a higher standard of achievement is but one example. Stussman (1997) stated “education is more than what you learn in books; education is learning how to interact with others” (p. 21). In general, when barriers don’t encumber children, there is no limit to what they can do (Stussman, 1997).

Behavioral problems associated with some special needs children can sometimes be improved by an inclusive setting. In his article, Farlow (1996) also cited the example of a student named Bonito who, like his brothers, seemed destined to join a gang. He imitated gang behavior in dress. He was defiant of authority, swearing when he disagreed with assignments, and was disrespectful of female teachers. By including him into a college prep economics/government class, which did not include students in gangs, he was able to meet the goals set for his inclusion. These goals were; following directions, showing respect for women, using appropriate language, and participating in discussions with peers. His teachers were most impressed. Farlow (1996) made the following statement:

> When students with severe disabilities are included in the regular classroom, all students develop social, communication, and

> problem-solving skills, as well as the ability to get along with others in diverse communities. Students with severe disabilities benefit by (1) having appropriate role models; (2) participating in the same inclusive, diverse communities that they will share as adults; and (3) establishing a network of friends and acquaintances that will increase the likelihood of their success in the community. (p. 55)

To examine the other side of the coin one needs to take a look at limitations that are caused by the inclusion of special needs students into general education classes.

There are many potential problems for the general education population. The most obvious is the fact that with special needs students in the classroom, less of the teacher's time and attention is available to the general education student. Teachers need to work with students at various levels of ability, making it difficult to cover material at a rate that is appropriate to all. Winzer (1998) wrote "regular educators teach to single large groups and incorporate little or no differentiation based on student need" (p. 3). Disruptions to the learning environment also threaten how well students learn. Kauffman, Lloyd, Baker, and Riedel (1995) stated:

> Students may be severely antisocial, aggressive, and disruptive; they may be socially rejected, isolated, withdrawn, and non responsive; they may show signs of severe anxiety or depression or exhibit psychotic behavior; they may vacillate between extremes of withdrawal and aggression; and they nearly always have serious

> academic problems in addition to their social and emotional difficulties. (p. 542)

In some cases students with severe emotional disabilities not only provide a distraction, but they may also pose a threat to safety (Kauffman et al., 1995).

Special needs students also suffer certain limitations when included into regular education classrooms. Vann (1997) stated, “We have found that for some children, full inclusion in the regular classroom is not the best setting to learn what they need to achieve their fullest potential” (p. 31). In the inclusion classroom special education students don’t always get the attention they need either. The teacher’s time and energy can only go so far. In looking at all of the evidence, positive and negative, inclusion does have an effect on general education students. How the effects are realized varies greatly, depending on how strongly key players feel about inclusion.

Evaluation

The practice of inclusion causes teachers to be challenged in new ways. One of the challenges comes from the fact that expectations need to be different for individuals within the class. In addition the evaluation of students, which previously had been uniform for all students, now needs to be adjusted to meet the student’s individual ability. Along with the fact that this becomes a bigger task, it too creates other problems.

The issue in question involves researching problems that exist in motivating students with diverse abilities when the evaluation method is not standard or consistent from one student to the next. Some perceive problems will come from the fact that students generally believe that there needs to be total equality within a given class. The individual student feels as though he is not being treated fairly when everything is not equal.

To begin looking at difficulties with motivation as it relates to the evaluation of students in diverse groups; one first needs to look at what motivation is. Motivation has to do with the

students desire to participate in the learning process. The source of motivation is another variable worth looking into. It can be intrinsic, (motivation to undertake an activity for its own sake, for the personal enjoyment of being involved in the process), or extrinsic motivation, (motivation to perform in order to obtain a reward or avoid a punishment) (Lumsden, 1999).

When general education students are mainstreamed together with special needs students, differences need to be addressed. The pace of delivery may have to be adjusted. The style of teaching may need changing, too. However, the area that needs the most revision is the area of evaluation. Surely all students can not be judged by a single standard, and if different standards are applied, will the differences be noticed by the students and argued on the basis of inequality?

Historically there have been many different types of assessment procedures used. Elementary students often are given S or U for satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Sometimes + and - are used, in other instances a check may be used to show the successful completion of a competency or task. Most upper grades use the common A-F lettering system, where grade totals are averaged and a standard rubric is applied to show how a range of percentage points can equal a particular grade. The question is: How do we allow for differences with special needs populations? Using the standard assessments many special students would fail. If failure is eminent, why should they even try? To address this issue alternate grades are sometimes used. For example if a student is working very hard but fails to get the minimum number of points to pass, he can receive an (E) grade meaning that he doesn't fail, but there is no point retaking the course. This grade is very demeaning because it makes the recipient feel inadequate.

So how do special needs students succeed in an inclusive classroom? One possibility is for some type of flexible grading system. Perhaps a grading scale custom tailored to the individual student's ability. Obviously this becomes more work for the teacher, but it seems to have benefits for the special needs student. Motivation will improve when the possibility for success is possible. But is this always true? Perhaps the special needs student will realize the differences in expectation and become upset at being treated differently. And the opposite could also be true. Regular education students, who perform at a higher level, do more work and

possess more ability may not feel as though they have received fair treatment when special students receive the same grade for doing much less (Sparks,1999).

One way to look at assessment on an individual basis is to measure progress rather than cumulative knowledge. A useful tool here is the use of a pretest for each topic to help judge an accurate starting point. From the pretest achievement can be monitored.

> Teachers need to know how to transform these valued achievement targets into quality, day-to-day classroom indicators of achievement. That's the foundation of assessment literacy. Teachers who know how to do this can document student achievement day to day in their classrooms and watch the progression of students learning. And, if someone asks, they can provide compelling evidence of things their students can now do that they couldn't do before (Sparks, 1999, p. 54).

Another assessment tool that could be useful is student self-assessment. This type of assessment is most beneficial, especially for low achievers.

> The key is to understand the relationship between assessment and student motivation. In the past, we built assessment systems to help us dole out rewards and punishment. And while that can work sometimes, it causes a lot of students to see themselves as failures. If that goes on long enough, they lose confidence and stop trying.
>
> When students are involved in the assessment process, though, they can come to see themselves as competent learners. We need to involve students by making the targets clear to them and having them help design assessments that reflect those targets. Then we involve them again in the process of keeping track over time of their learning so they can watch themselves improving. That's where motivation comes from (Sparks, 1999, p. 55).

The concept of portfolio assessment is still another tool deemed useful to the inclusive classroom. Salend (2000) defines them in this manner. "Portfolios are archival in nature and

contain samples of students' work that are collected over a period of time and continuously examined to document students' growth, efforts, attitudes, and the strategies they use to learn" (p. 265).

For many educators this method of assessment is met with a great deal of skepticism. Many questions beg to be answered. Will this system take more time and effort than traditional methods? Will people outside the school be able to value a portfolio as much as a grade? Is the portfolio the sole means of assessment or should grades also be assigned? And how can a portfolio be used to determine things like class rank, valedictorian, or candidacy for a scholarship?

Portfolio assessment however, does have many advantages. For example assessment is ongoing and continuos. It provides evidence of pupil progress in products produced and skills stressed. It is a democratic process in that the learner has input into what goes into the portfolio. It presents evidence of improvement. And has the ability to show that a pupil has learned, something a numerical value cannot do. (Ediger, 2000)

So, how do teachers use portfolios? One educator explains; "Since standards-based education is linked to performance assessment, each standard is likewise linked to two or more performance criteria, each of which is stated behaviorally. Instructors evaluate the task according to these preset performance criteria. In the third step, feedback is given to each student on content, performance, and reflection of the task. The students may, under the instructor's direction, revise the task to meet the performance criteria" (Fallon & Watts, 2001, p. 52).

Although this writer first thought of portfolio assessment as a system too cumbersome to be worthwhile, he has come to see it's many benefits. It appears to be a very fair and consistent model of evaluation for anyone whether in regular education or special education. Portfolio assessment also seems to be a good motivator for all involved; it measures growth and shows progress. The best attribute is that this assessment method is non-judgmental, focusing on strengths, not weaknesses.

Teacher attitudes about inclusion

There have been many different ideas in education over the years, but few have received the attention or generated the controversy and polarization of perspectives as has the movement to include all children with disabilities into regular classrooms (Winzer, 1998). Teachers vary in their attitudes about inclusion from total acceptance of full inclusion to those who would retain the status quo. Full inclusionists believe that inclusion should apply to all students with disabilities and that all students belong in regular classrooms all the time. Other teachers believe that only students with certain disabilities should be mainstreamed, and others may benefit more by attending pull out classes that will better meet their specific needs (Zera & Seitsinger, 2000).

Many regular classroom teachers have a hard time allowing for differences that may be viewed as disruptive. They have been striving to eliminate disruptions believing that both teaching and learning will benefit. Teachers also believe they have limited resources, are not properly trained, and may not be willing to devote the extra time needed to help students that require special help. Perhaps teachers would be willing to accept all or most of these challenges provided they have the proper support (Zera & Seitsinger, 2000).

Teacher training is one area worthy of improvement. If teachers are to embrace inclusion they need to be given a thorough understanding of special education and of the special needs of these students.

Another form of support for regular education teachers is the special education teacher that often assists or team-teaches. Teachers will often resist teaming up with another educator because most teachers have learned to work alone. The idea of sharing responsibilities reduces their sense of autonomy they once enjoyed. Teachers who work together, also need time to collaborate. If schools don't allow these teachers time for collaboration it either won't happen or extra time after the normal school day must be used, causing teachers to be engaged more hours for the same pay. Many teachers would view that as a negative (Winzer 1998).

All students can benefit by having a resource teacher in the classroom. Two teachers can offer a lower teacher student ratio. It may also be beneficial if the resource teacher works equally with all of the students in the classroom. By doing this the special needs students don't feel singled out, and can instead feel like a normal part of the class (Stanovich, 1999). In one

study teachers indicated that, “although they initially experienced some anxiety, most of the collaborative teams evolved into a unit that was characterized by engaging in shared planning and curriculum development, learning from each other, developing trust and solving problems together, and enjoying their teaching partnerships” (Salend, Laurel, and Duhaney, 1999, p.21).

In their study on high school teacher attitudes toward inclusion, Van Reusen, Shoho, & Barker (2000) found that,

> Teachers in the study who reported more positive attitudes about inclusive education and teaching students with disabilities in their classrooms also reported the highest level of special education training or experiences. This result suggests that teachers with special education background or training and those who already have positive attitudes towards students with disabilities may be predisposed to seek out additional inclusive education practices and be more willing to be assigned to general education classrooms in which students with special needs are included. (P.10)

The authors of this article explained that most high school teachers have been prepared as content specialists and aren’t vary adaptive to the use of alternative curriculum, adapted grading, or alternative planning (Van Reusen, Shoho, and Barker, 2000). Another observation was that “the presence of students with disabilities in the general education classroom increased the instructional load of the general education teacher. Not only was the instructional load heavier, but also both groups of teachers [general education and special education] indicated that there were more management problems when students with disabilities were placed in general education classrooms (Daane, Beirne-Smith, and Latham, 2000).

Alternatives to inclusion

Before the inclusion model came into play classrooms were segregated by ability. Students with normal attributes made up the regular education class. Students who possessed special needs or had disabilities were often placed into special education classrooms. Not all students with special needs, however, received the attention they deserved. Some schools had limited budgets for qualified staff or suffered with inadequate facilities. Often times the facilities

were located in some part of the school that wasn't needed by regular education. The special needs students seemed to get what was left over, and high value was not being assigned toward their education (Stussman, 1997). Regular education also went through segregation. Students were being tracked by their abilities. The idea was that material could be developed and delivered to a specific level of ability, and that each group would benefit by being placed into the level where they could achieve the most success. The problem with this system is that by its very nature it is discriminatory. Once a placement is made the student is labeled in such a way that others would view them primarily in the context of that placement. To help eliminate the stereotype some schools adopted names for various classes that attempted to hide the level that distinguished them from the rest. An example might be to call the high achievers the " blue bird class", and the low achievers "sparrows". The measure was good in theory but failed to fool anyone of the fact that classes were being segregated by ability. Special needs students were the most discriminated against because they were not being treated with equality and stereotyping was common. Public Law 94-142 attempted to level the playing field by requiring students with disabilities to be placed into the least restrictive environment (Cronis and Ellis, 2000).

Schools choose to view a least restrictive environment differently. Some believe that it is a mandate to implement full inclusion for all students. Other schools have interpreted the law to mean that inclusion of special needs students should take place only if the placement is a good fit (Zera and Seitsinger, 2000). Schools also choose inclusion for economic reasons; "It is easier to add a student to an inclusionary setting than it is to create an individualized program for a child with special needs. The leap has too often been to a service-provision design, often made at the local level and driven by local economics rather than student need" (Zara and Seitsinger, 2000, p.17).

In their article titled Taking Inclusion into the Future, Kerzner-Lipsky and Gartner (1998) suggest the following;

> Commensurate changes must occur in the universities, in the workplace, and in the community.

> Inclusion goes beyond returning students who have been in separate placements to the general education classroom. It responds to Slaven's call for "neverstreaming" by establishing a refashioned mainstream, a restructured and unified school system that serves all students together.
> (p.80)

Bricker (2000) also looks into the future in her article on Inclusion: How the scene has changed. She says,

> The inclusion of children/adults with disabilities into mainstream society is part of a larger social issue that can be framed as protection of minority rights. The essence of this debate is how the individual with disabilities (and other historically devalued populations) fits into the larger social scheme. What tolerance and compensatory moves are both appropriate and acceptable to those directly affected by disability and those who are not? It seems to me that the inclusion debate might benefit from the understanding that the special education and disability community cannot ensure the well being of inclusion programs without the support and goodwill of professionals, parents, and children in general education. Thus, a useful focus is that inclusion be designed to benefit all children and schools. (p.17)

How do special needs students view inclusion ?

For some students inclusion is welcomed with open arms. In his article, Stussman, (1997) explains how he was miserable in the segregated special education classes. The ill feelings came from the stereotype associated with the placement. He goes on to explain that until he was allowed to be mainstreamed in an inclusion classroom, his progress academically was stifled. After he was allowed into the regular education population at the fifth grade, his attitude toward school improved, he no longer ate lunch at a separate table, and his academic achievement in school soared. This man now has two college degrees and a lifestyle described to be very normal (1997).

Other students may feel intimidated by being included into a classroom that is more general education than special education. Special needs students report being more comfortable in an inclusive setting when the teacher takes the time to know them, doesn't humiliate them or put them on the spot, identifies with their struggles, and gives them positive reinforcement on a daily basis (Stanovich, 1999).

In another report the researcher examined how special needs students feel about being pulled out of the general education classroom to receive individual help in the resource room. The findings showed that students often felt embarrassed about leaving, and often they would fabricate stories to justify to their friends why they were leaving class. These same students indicated that they were often targets of ridicule and name calling when the general education teacher isn't supportive of students who are mainstreamed (Saland, Laurel and Duhaney, 1999).

How do regular education students view inclusion?

Research has shown a great number of positive outcomes for students without disabilities who have been placed into inclusionary classrooms with students possessing disabilities. In his report, titled, According to Their Peers: Inclusion as High School Students See It, Fisher (1999) identifies seven categories of positive outcomes. The first talks about an increased responsiveness to the needs of other people. Without inclusion students not only wouldn't come in routine contact with students possessing special needs, but they may view other groups with skepticism. The second positive outcome was the valuing of relationships with people who have disabilities. Without inclusion, opportunities for creating relationships with people possessing disabilities would be almost nonexistent. The third opportunity discussed was the possibility for personal development. The fourth benefit of inclusion is an increased tolerance of other people. This tolerance would develop over time. The fifth on the list was the possibility for development of people who have disabilities. The benefit to the regular education student is in the knowing that he has been involved in a worthwhile program. The sixth benefit listed was the increased appreciation of human diversity; this is impossible to overlook, no matter what your views on inclusion are. And the seventh and last benefit listed was the positive changes in personal status with peer's.

Another positive outcome for regular education students is that research has shown that "Students did not believe that their participation in inclusive classrooms had caused them to miss out on other valuable educational experiences"(Peltier, 1997, p. 235). Students also reported that the inclusion experience gave them the ability to understand other people, and improve their self-concept because of their role in helping others, and it also helped students reduce their fear of people with unusual behavior and appearance (Peltier, 1997).

Regular education students also have negative concerns about their being included with students possessing disabilities. One study showed that a majority of students surveyed did not want to be in a class with students possessing disabilities. The majority of the students interviewed in the same survey indicated that severely handicapped children do not belong in regular education classrooms. This same study also revealed however, that students who had previously been involved as peer tutors now have more positive attitudes about inclusion (Ferguson, 1999). This may suggest that students fear what they don't understand. Another fear that regular education students possesses is that the disabled children, "will require excessive school resources and teacher attention and, therefore, jeopardize the education of students who are not disabled" (Saland, 2000, p. 268).

Another concern shared by some general education students is described in an article titled, Lost in the middle. The author states : "The high end and the low end of the class can take up all your energies" (Ratnesar/DesMoines, 1998, n.p.). She goes on to explain that almost 80% of a school's budget in 1967 was devoted to regular education. This declined to 59% in 1996. "Average students have become casualties of a spoils system in which every morsel of every school district's budget has a different interest group staking a claim to it" (Ratnesar/DesMoines, 1998, n.p.).

Research also has shown that some regular education students feel that behavioral problems within a classroom need to be dealt with in a consistent way. If the special needs student doesn't receive the same punishment for similar infractions, the inequity is quickly noted and may be the cause for future disturbances (Fisher, 1999).

How do parents view inclusion ?

In an interview one parent of a special needs student explained, “Tolerance and respect for one another, caught as much as taught by teacher example, were demonstrated by the students in various ways” (Federico, Harold, and Venn, 2000, p.179).

In another interview with a parent of a regular education student, the parent revealed early negative feelings that grew out of proportion and caused general discontent. The parent was worried that if his child’s placement into an inclusion classroom was not successful, for any reason, his daughter would be stuck there the entire year. But, by the middle of the school year the father noted how pleased he was with his daughter’s academic progress and explained how good the learning atmosphere was within the classroom (Federico, Harrold, and Venn, 200, p.179).

Finally, the reports in another study revealed, “Parents responded with very positive perceptions reporting many academic, behavioral, and social outcomes that they attributed to their child being in the general education class” (Gallagher, Floyd, Stafford, Taber, Brozovic and Alberto, 2000, p. 135).

Throughout the research on the effects of inclusion on regular education students, one theme seems to dominate. Regardless of who you ask, inclusion will be a positive experience if those involved believe in it and work hard to make it work. Conversely, when there is little support, whether in the form of funding, or ideology, it will likely fail. If you think you can, you probably can.

Many people are involved in a child’s education, parents, teachers and administrators all need to share in making inclusion work.

CHAPTER THREE

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter reviews the purpose of the study and summarizes the information found in the Review of Literature chapter. A critique of the findings and a conclusion is drawn also based on the results found in the Review of Literature chapter. The researcher will conclude with recommendations to the local department of special education, hoping the findings will be beneficial to both regular and special needs students.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to examine literature pertaining to the effects of inclusion on regular education students. This was done by looking at the problem from the perspectives of regular education students, special needs students, teachers, and parents.

Conclusion

Students with special needs have been placed into regular education classrooms at an ever-increasing rate since the enactment of Public Law 94-142 (Cronis & Ellis, 2000). This law requires schools to place students with disabilities into the least restrictive environment. Schools choose to interpret this law in a variety of ways. Some believe the law requires the full inclusion of all students with disabilities, regardless of the severity. Others will place students with disabilities only into classes that they feel the student will get a direct benefit from, such as a vocational class. Many other possibilities exist somewhere in between.

A great deal of research has been conducted on the effects of inclusion on the special needs student. This study focused its attention on the effects of inclusion on the regular education student.

To those who have had little or no experience with inclusion the concept seems to only benefit the special needs student. It would also follow that special needs students are difficult to work with, take a lot of the teacher's time and create classroom disruptions. Though this may sometimes be true, it doesn't have to be so. Research has shown there to be many positive

outcomes for both regular and special needs students. Examples are, regular education students learn compassion, understanding and tolerance for their classmates with disabilities. Inclusion also gives them the opportunity to be less judgmental, and not so likely to perpetuate stereotypes normally associated with people that look or act differently. They also benefit by being allowed to work together with students with disabilities. By participating in team projects, regular education students learn they have self worth, and this set of positive interactions can be cause for a more tolerant and understanding society.

Research has shown that inclusion programs require teachers and schools to operate differently than before inclusion. If teachers resist change it is difficult to have a successful program. Schools also need to embrace change. If a program is to become successful, financial resources must be allocated for additional teacher training, as well as additional staff. Most successful inclusion models make use of an aide or special education professional that is assigned to every class where inclusion is taking place. Without the proper support, teachers quickly become frustrated and non-supportive of the program.

Methods of evaluation have also been researched. Since students commonly vary greatly in ability, traditional evaluation methods will cause problems dealing with equity. Some research has shown that individual evaluation will level the field for evaluation. Personal portfolios' also offer evaluation that is both constructive and motivational.

How successful inclusion is, and how it impacts regular education students, also varies with the population under investigation. This research looked at the effects of inclusion on the regular education student from the eyes of regular and special education students, as well as parents and teachers. The general findings are that when done properly there are few if any ill effects for the regular education student. The one noted exception being the fact that schools are now spending a great deal more money on special needs students than they ever have in the past. This leaves much less money for regular education. Some research has shown that average students are falling through the cracks in this system.

Recommendations

The results of this comprehensive review of literature has led the researcher to make the following recommendations regarding the effects of inclusion on regular education students.

1. Schools should carefully plan for an inclusion process. If they are to be successful they need to find out in advance what will work and what won't.
2. Schools should not look to inclusion as a means of saving money. If done correctly, it will cost more.
3. Schools should not attempt to save money by not hiring the necessary support staff; the job is too great.
4. Schools should educate parents and teachers about inclusion so they can make an informed decision about the process. Most of the negative perceptions about inclusion come from a lack of understanding. Once people know and understand the process, their fears will diminish.
5. Special education placements should be made with the best interest of the child in mind. Research has shown some examples of placements that were made for the attainment of equal rights. If the goal is only to ensure equality than other important placement issues may be overlooked.
6. The success of an inclusion program depends on the beliefs of those who implement it. If everyone involved is striving to make it work, it probably will.

Bibliography

Bricker, D. (2000). Inclusion: How the scene has changed. Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 20 (1), 14-19.

Cronis, T.G., & Ellis, D.N. (2000). Issues facing special educators in the new millennium. Education, 120(4), 639-648.

Daane, C.J., Beirne-Amith, M., & Latham, D. (2000). Administrators' and teachers perceptions of the collaborative efforts of inclusion in the elementry grades. Education, 121 (2), 331-339.

Ediger, M. (2000). Portfolios: Will they endure? College Student Journal, 34 (1) 38-44.

Elliott, D., & McKenney, M. (1998). Four inclusion models that work. Teaching Exceptional Children, 30(4), 54-58.

Fallon, M.A., & Watts ,E. (2001). Portfolio assessment and use: Navigating uncharted territory. Teacher Education and Special Education, 24 (1) 50-57.

Farlow, L. (1996). A quartet of success stories: How to make inclusion work. Educational Leadership, 53(5), 51-55.

Federico, M., Harrold, B., & Venn, J. (2000). Inclusion reaches beyond the classroom. Kappa Delta Pi, 36(4), 178-180.

Ferguson, J. M. (1999). High school students' attitudes toward inclusion of handicapped students in the regular education classroom. The Educational Forum, 63 (2), 173-179.

Fisher, D. (1999). According to their peers: Inclusion as high school students see it. Mental Retardation, 37 (6), 458-467.

Gallagher, P.A., Floyd, J. H., Stafford, A. M., Taber, T.A., Brozovic, S.A., & Alberto, P. A. (2000). Inclusion of students with moderate of severe disabilities in educational and community settings: Perspectives from parents and siblings. Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, 35 (2), 135-147.

Goff, L., Colton, A., & Langer, G.M. (2000). Power of the portfolio. Journal of Staff Development, 21 (4) 44-48.

Hellums, D. & Davis, P.W. (1997). How do you motivate students who are failing? Intervention in school and clinic, (33), 116-118.

Kampfer, S. H., Horvath, L.S., Kleinert, H.L., & Kearns, J. F. (2001). Teachers' perceptions of one state's alternate assessment: Implications for practice and preparation. Exceptional Children, 67 (3) 361-374.

Kauffman, J., Lloyd, J., Baker, J., & Riedel, T. (1995) Inclusion of all students with emotional or behavioral disorders? Let's think again. Phi Delta Kappan, 75(7), 542-546.

Kerzner-Lipsky, D., & Gartner, A. (1998). Taking inclusion into the future. Educational Leadership, 56 (2), 78-81.

Lumsden, L.S. (1994). Student motivation to learn. Eric Digest, 92, 1-5.

Morris, R. C. (2000). How to make your school inclusive. Principal Leadership, 1 (3), 81-82.

Painter, B. (2001). Using teaching portfolios. Educational leadership, 58, (5) 31-34.

Peltier, G. L. (1997). The effect of inclusion on non-disabled children: A review of the research. Contemporary Education, 68, 234-238.

Phoenix, D. A. (2000). Time to assess the role of assessment? Journal of Biological Education, 35 (1) 3-4.

Ratnesar-Des Moins, R. (1998). Lost in the middle. Education, 152 (11), n.p..

Salend, S.J. (2000). Strategies and sources to evaluate the impact of inclusion programs on students. Intervention in School and Clinic, 35 (5), 264-270.

Salend, S.H., & Garrick-Duhaney L. M. (1999). The impact of inclusion on students with and without disabilities and their educators. Remedial and Special Education, 20 (1), 14-19.

Scales, P.C. & Toccogna, J. (2000). Caring to try: How building students' developmental assets can promote school engagement and success. NASSP Bulletin, 84 (619), 69-78.

Sparks, D. (1999). Assessment without victims. Journal of Staff Development, 20 (2), 52-56.

Special education dictionary parentpals. (2000). [Online] Retrieved on October 12, 2000 from the World Wide Web: http://www.parentpals.com/5.0newsletter/5.22dictnews/dictnewsindex.html

Stanovich, P. J. (1999). Conversations about inclusion. Teaching Exceptional Children, 31 (6), 54-58.

Stussman, B. (1997). Inclusion isn't all academic. The Education Digest, 62(7), 19-21.

Switzer, P.V. & Yoder, J.I. (1996). The academic treasure hunt: Checklist gives students motivation and control. College Teaching, 44, 113-114.

Udvari, S. J. & Schneider, B. H. (2000). Competition and the adjustment of gifted children: A matter of motivation. Roeper Review, 22 (4), 212-216.

Van Dyke, R., Stallings, M., & Colley, K. (1995). How to build an inclusive school community. Phi Delta Kappan, 76(6), 475-479.

Van Reusen, A.K., Shoho, A.R., & Barker, K.S. (2000). High school teacher attitudes toward inclusion. The High School Journal, 84 (2), 7-20.

Vann, A. (1997). Inclusion: how full? The Education Digest, 62(9), 31-33.

Winzer, M.A. (1998). The inclusion movement and teacher change: Where are the limits? Mcgill Journal of education [Online], 33(3), 1-6. Retrieved on November 8, 2000 from the World Wide Web: http://libproxy.uwstout.edu:2123/cgibin/sebclient.pl?sp.usernumber.p=430317&url=yes&

Zera, D. A., & Seitsinger, R.M. (2000). The oppression of inclusion. Educational Horizons, 79 (1), 16-18.