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Perception and Attitudes of Inclusive Teacher Education Program Students

Lynn Paige Pehrson Millar

PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF INCLUSIVE

TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

STUDENTS

by

Lynn Paige Pehrson Millar

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Nancy Bacharach
Chairperson

Russell H. Schmidt

Carlos Reese

Dennis Nunes
Dean
School of Graduate and Continuing Studies

PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF INCLUSIVE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM STUDENTS

Lynn Paige Pehrson Millar

PROBLEM:

The implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the regular education initiative (REI) is becoming reality in a growing number of school districts across the United States. Educators, therefore, must be properly prepared to meet the needs of all students in the regular classroom, regardless of disability or exception. The perceptions and attitudes of teachers toward inclusion and students with disabilities affects the effectiveness of inclusive education programs. It is therefore necessary for preservice teacher education students to have positive perceptions and attitudes toward inclusion and students with disabilities. Teacher preparation programs must address this issue. This study examines the perceptions and attitudes of students within the Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ITEP) at St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

PROCEDURE:

Students enrolled in Cohort 1 of the ITEP program were surveyed and interviewed as the entered the program in the fall of 1994 and exited the program in the spring of 1996 to determine their attitudes and perceptions toward inclusion and students with disabilities, as well as toward the ITEP program in general. The following related questions became the focus of this research project:

1. Do the ITEP students have increased positive attitudes and perceptions toward inclusion as a result of being in the ITEP program?

2. Do the ITEP students have an understanding of the roles and competencies required of inclusive teachers as a result of being in the ITEP program?

3. Do the ITEP students feel prepared to teach children with disabilities in a regular classroom setting?

4. What components of the ITEP program were most helpful and the least helpful to the ITEP students?

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FINDINGS:

Based on the survey and interview results, the ITEP students' attitudes and perceptions toward inclusion and students with disabilities were more in agreement with the concept of inclusion as they exited the two-year ITEP program. The students also developed an understanding of the roles and competencies required of inclusive teachers during this time. Most of the students felt prepared to teach in an inclusive classroom upon exiting the ITEP program in the spring of 1996. The most helpful components of the ITEP program were the number and variety of field experiences, the team-teaching structure, and the cohort structure.

CONCLUSIONS:

Implications from this study for teacher preparation programs were to address the issue of developing positive perceptions and attitudes in the preservice teacher education students toward inclusion and students with disabilities, and that they teach the skills and competencies needed to be an effective inclusive teacher. The Special Education and Teacher Development departments should team-teach whenever possible to give students an education that prepares them for an inclusive classroom. The use of a cohort structure and collaboration between departments is also recommended for effective inclusive teacher education programs.

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Nancy Bacharach
Nancy Bacharach   Chairperson

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INTRODUCTION

American education today faces a number of challenges. One such challenge is to effectively implement inclusive education in our schools.

This chapter will include a brief background on inclusion, a brief discussion of attitudes and perceptions toward inclusion, the purpose of this study, research questions, and definitions of key terms.

A Brief Background on Inclusion

The Special Education Compliance Monitoring Manual states, "To the extent that there are no detrimental effects, children with disabilities shall be educated with children who do not have disabilities and shall attend regular education classes" (MN Dept. of Ed., 1993, pg. 4.2.5A).

This statement complies with Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, passed by the United States Congress in 1975, the first law which mandated that free, appropriate public education be provided for all children with disabilities. This statement also complies with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, or PL 101-476), which replaced PL 94-142 in 1990, mandating that each state and locality has a plan to ensure:

1. proper identification of children with disabilities,
2. full education services at no cost to the parents or guardians,

3. the students' and parents' right to due process (information and informed consent),
4. the least restrictive environment (LRE) consistent with the educational needs of the child with special needs,
5. a written individualized education program (IEP) for each child with special needs,
6. a nondiscriminatory evaluation of each child with special needs by a multidisciplinary team,
7. confidentiality, and
8. personnel development for teachers and other professional personnel and in-service training for regular teachers (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1994, pg. 32).

Since the passage of PL 94-142 and IDEA, policymakers, researchers, and advocates for children with disabilities have been concerned about the relationship between regular and special education. A movement known as the Regular Education Initiative (REI) was born, proposing that regular education and special education restructure themselves to make regular educators more responsible for students with mild or moderate disabilities, or to merge together in a single, unified educational system (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1994).

The implementation of IDEA and the REI has been a great challenge for educators. Many models of inclusive education have emerged to accommodate the needs of all children, including the disabled in regular education classrooms. The increasing inclusion of children with special needs in regular classrooms throughout the United States has been a topic of debate. There are several reasons why this topic has been so controversial: the unclear definition of "inclusive education" and the diverse perceptions of what inclusion really means, the attitudes of school faculty and preservice student teachers toward inclusion, the changing roles and competencies required of inclusive teachers, the division or integration of regular education and special education programs in our schools, in the government at state and national levels, and in teacher preparation programs at our colleges and universities, and

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conflicting reports on the effects of inclusion on "regular" and "special" children in the classrooms.

Attitudes and Perceptions Toward Inclusion

One issue related to inclusion is how teachers feel about this topic; what their attitudes and perceptions are toward inclusion.

Teachers' attitudes toward children in general will positively or adversely affect student achievement, behavior, and the success of implemented programs in the classroom. The same is true with teachers' attitudes toward children with special needs and inclusion programs. Siegel and Jausovec (1994) state that one major factor influencing the success of inclusion is the attitudes of teachers, and that "inclusion may be defeated if teachers do not hold positive attitudes toward this practice" (p. 2). Researchers have identified teacher attitudes as a major concern in exploring teacher effects upon integrated or mainstreamed students with special needs (Siegel & Jausovec, 1994; Siegel & Moore, 1994).

Although there are many factors that influence the success or failure of inclusive education programs, one key factor is the attitudes of educators toward teaching students with disabilities (Eichinger, Rizzo & Sirotnnik,1991; Siegel & Jausovec, 1994; Siegel & Moore, 1994).

Research has shown that regular education teachers who have had special education coursework have more positive perceptions of inclusion than those who did not have this education (Stephens, 1980; Stoler, 1992). Most regular education teacher preparation programs do not include coursework in special education. Many studies confirm that regular education teachers feel ill-prepared to teach children with disabilities in the regular classroom, and hence have negative attitudes and perceptions about inclusion (Blair, 1983; Bradley & West, 1994; Katsiyannis, Conderman &

Franks, 1995; Schumm, Vaughn, Gordon, & Rothlein, 1994; Sesow & Adams, 1982; Siegel & Jausovec, 1994; Vaughn, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher, & Saumell, 1994).

Hoover (1984) and Moisio (1994) recommend that continued research be done to determine preservice education teachers' attitudes and perceptions of inclusion to provide further insight into teacher preparation program effects on these attitudes and perceptions, as well as the preservice teachers' confidence in teaching children with disabilities in the regular classroom.

Inclusive Teacher Roles and Competencies

The changing structure of our education system, particularly with inclusive education, requires that the roles and competencies of teachers are modified. According to Vautour (1993), a competent teacher "demonstrates mastery over content matter and the pedagogical techniques to successfully *convey* such material to diverse populations" (p. 23). Those diverse populations are becoming more diverse, and hence the roles and competencies required of an inclusive classroom teacher are becoming more diverse.

Jenkins, Pious and Jewell (1990) infer from the literature on the Regular Education Initiative that regular classroom teachers have the following responsibilities:

1. Educating all students assigned to them.
2. Making and monitoring major instructional decisions for all the students in their class.
3. Providing instruction that follows a normal developmental curriculum.
4. Managing instruction for diverse populations.
5. Seeking, using, and coordinating assistance for students who require more intense services than those provided to their peers (p. 481-482).

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 1992) requires that teacher training institutions "provide for study and experiences that help education students understand and apply appropriate strategies for individual learning

needs, especially for culturally diverse and exceptional populations" (p. 50). Recent literature offers many suggestions on what these areas of understanding and strategies are. Some of these suggestions will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Purpose of the Study

Given that the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the regular education initiative (REI) is becoming reality in a growing number of school districts across the United States, educators must be properly prepared to meet the needs of all students in the regular classroom, regardless of disability or exception. Teacher preparation programs throughout colleges and universities must address these needs, paying attention to the perceptions and attitudes their preservice teacher education students have about inclusion throughout their programs, and especially as they exit their programs and obtain employment in the school systems.

This is a case study focused on the Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ITEP) at St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

St. Cloud State University began a three-year program in 1994 designed to prepare two cohort groups of 27 students each to work in traditional and inclusive school settings. Upon successful completion of the program, students will earn a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education and will be eligible for licensure in the state of Minnesota in both Elementary Education (grades one through six) and Specific Learning Disabilities for kindergarten through grade twelve. This program was named the Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ITEP), and blends the disciplines of Regular Education and Special Education at the University.

The first group of students (Cohort #1) began the program in September of 1994 and graduated in May of 1996. Prior to entering the program, and as they exited the program, each of the students was interviewed and surveyed to determine their attitudes and perceptions of inclusion. The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not the students' attitudes and perceptions of inclusive education were more in agreement with the concept of inclusion and whether or not the students have an understanding of the roles and competencies required of an effective inclusive educator as a result of being in the ITEP program.

Research Questions

This thesis will attempt to answer the following questions through a research study:

1. Do the ITEP students have more positive attitudes and perceptions toward inclusion as a result of being in the ITEP program?

2. Do the ITEP students have an understanding of the roles and competencies required of inclusive teachers as a result of being in the ITEP program?

3. Do the ITEP students feel prepared to teach children with special needs in a regular education classroom setting?

4. What components of the Inclusive Teacher Education Program at St. Cloud State University were most helpful and the least helpful to the ITEP students?

Definition of Terms

In the context of this study, the definitions of the following terms will be used:

Collaboration refers to joint efforts between educational entities, such as a special educator and a regular educator working together to plan educational programs for an exceptional student.

Exceptional Student refers to a student who possesses physical, mental, or emotional exceptionalities which may necessitate special attention by school personnel (NCATE, 1992, p. 63).

Inclusion refers to the practice of attending the same schools as siblings and neighbors, being in regular education classrooms with chronological age-appropriate classmates, having individualized and relevant objectives, and being provided with the necessary support (e.g. special education and related services) to learn (Rainforth, York, & McDonald, 1992; Taylor, 1988).

Inclusive school refers to a school where professionals "create a community in which all children work and learn together and develop mutually supportive repertoires of peer support" (Stainback, Stainback, East, & Sapon-Shavin, 1994, p. 486).

Integration or mainstreaming refers to the movement of students with disabilities from special schools to regular schools, and/or from special classrooms to regular classrooms.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) refers to the environment that allows the student with special needs to be educated in the most appropriate way possible for that student, being segregated as little as possible from home, family, community, and the regular class setting. The LRE is not always the regular classroom.

Regular classroom refers to a classroom that includes students who are not labeled with a disability. It may also include students who are labeled with a disability.

Regular Education refers to instructional programs that meet the needs of students who are not labeled with a disability.

Traditional schools refer to schools which segregate regular and special education classrooms and practices.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The practice of inclusion is not without controversy. This chapter will examine literature that has been written about the importance of perceptions and attitudes, what teachers have to say about inclusion, competencies required in an effective inclusive teacher, and the restructuring of teacher preparation programs.

The Importance of Perceptions and Attitudes

There are many different models of inclusion programs, and as many, if not more definitions of what an inclusive education program is. Wilczenski (1992) notes that in order for inclusion to be effective, "school personnel must be receptive to new special education service delivery models" (p.306). According to a study conducted by Ross and Wax (1993), the teachers' understanding of these different models will determine the success of these programs in the future. Gauldin (1995) maintains that "One major stumbling block to successful inclusion seems to be the lack of understanding by school personnel" (p.1). Investigating teachers' beliefs about making adaptations for diverse learners is helpful in the development and evaluation of interventions designed to improve teachers' knowledge, skills, and confidence in delivering these models (Schumm, Vaughn, Gordon & Rothlein, 1994). Vaughn, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher and Saumell (1994) stress that an understanding of teachers' perspectives and perceptions are "essential if we are to anticipate possible difficulties and prepare for successful inclusive practices" (p.4).

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In an inclusive setting, teachers must be willing to modify curriculum, facilitate a positive climate, and hold positive expectations for behavior and achievement for children with disabilities, and attitudes are an important prerequisite to a teacher's willingness to carry these out (Fender & Fiedler, 1990). "Therefore," Wilczenski (1992) states, "it is important to measure the attitudes of educators concerning the impact of integrating students with disabilities in the regular classroom" (p. 307).

A teacher's attitude toward a student with special needs will affect the other students' attitudes as well. An important variable in the acceptance of a student with special needs by other students is the attitude of the teacher toward the student with special needs (Kunzweiler, 1982). Negative attitudes will breed negative attitudes, and positive attitudes and acceptance will breed positive attitudes and acceptance.

Schmelkin (1981) maintains that the climate within inclusive programs is one of the most important determiners of a program's outcome. The attitude of the regular education teacher toward the child with special needs can influence the climate of the classroom (Stoler, 1992). This climate is, of course, affected by teachers' attitudes and perceptions about inclusion in general.

Very simply put, "inclusion is about attitudes" (Friend & Cook, 1993, p.55). Attitudes clearly affect an inclusion program's success, and studies of these attitudes will pave the way for insuring its success.

What Teachers Have to Say About Inclusion

Numerous studies have been conducted to determine teachers' attitudes and perceptions of inclusion. According to Eichinger, Rizzo & Sirotnik (1991), there are three factors that relate to teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education: demographics (age, gender, level of education), environment (availablility of support

services, administrative support, grade level taught, class size), and experience (exposure to and knowledge of students with disabilities). These factors need to be kept in mind when talking about attitudes and perceptions. Wilczenski (1992) notes that other components affecting attitudes and perceptions include the differing requirements of physical, academic, behavioral, and social accommodations of students in inclusive classrooms. In general, the greater the students' needs in these areas, the more negative the attitudes about inclusion become.

In a recent study conducted by Vaughn, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher and Saumell (1994), special education, regular education, Chapter 1, and gifted education teachers expressed strong, negative feelings about inclusion. They felt that the people responsible for inclusion decisions are "out of touch with what is going on in schools; people whose ideas work in theory but not in practice" (p.15), and "do not fully understand the implications of their decisions" (p.16). The teachers interviewed also expressed concerns about the safety of students, the possibility of an increase in lawsuits, inadequate school facilities, how students would be evaluated, how grades would be given, and what would result if students were unable to meet performance objectives. They also expressed the fear that students with disabilities would stand out in the regular education classroom and that may be embarrassing for them. The authors of this study point out that the responses from the teachers they interviewed are the reaction of a subgroup of teachers who have not experienced the positive aspects of inclusion, and/or are the likely reaction of teachers toward inclusion if it is implemented on a widespread basis.

Another concern of these teachers, and others who have been surveyed in other formal and informal studies is the perception that inclusion would result in a greater workload and more of a demand on their time. They felt that students with

disabilities need more special attention and planning time than they are able to give them, and simply don't have the time to meet all of the needs of each and every student (Bradley & West, 1994; Friend & Cook, 1993; Vaughn, et al, 1994).

One major concern common to most teachers interviewed or surveyed is the fact that the definition of inclusion is not concrete nor operationalized. Many fear inclusion because they don't understand what it is and do not have a clear understanding of the purposes of inclusion. Unfortunately, some models of inclusion mean "dumping" students with disabilities into regular classrooms, without effective support systems. This gives inclusion a bad name, as many studies on the topic of inclusion suggest effective support systems and collaboration among all staff as of major importance in effective inclusive models. According to Janney, Snell, Beers & Raynes (1995), "if [regular] education teachers are to become committed to the change, they need to gain an understanding of the purpose of inclusion" (p.436).

Another major concern about inclusion that is common to teachers is that they feel they are incapable of implementing an inclusive education model. The general consensus is that teachers feel a great need for more information related to teaching learners with special needs before an inclusive program can be effective. They express fears about not knowing how to teach students with disabilities. The inadequate training of regular education teachers in meeting the needs of learners with special needs results in their reluctance to teach them. Blair (1983) states that teachers' educational needs "stagger the imagination" (p. 54). In the November/December 1993 issue of *Instructor*, one teacher wrote, "'I didn't know what to expect of them; I didn't want to do something that would hurt those students'" (Friend & Cook, 1993, p.54). Another teacher in the study conducted by Janney, et al (1995) stated, "[It's] fear of the unknown...You're afraid they might hurt you or you might hurt them. [It's a] lack of education, not knowing what to expect'" (p.433). Knoff (1985) found that

most samples of regular and special educators in his study perceived regular education teachers as not having the skills needed to teach children with special needs. Vaughn, et al (1994) indicated from their study that many general and special education teachers expressed a concern about regular education teachers not being adequately prepared to meet the needs of students with disabilities in regular education classrooms. One elementary special education teacher in their study said, "if this is the way it's going to be, it has to start at the undergraduate level....The regular classroom teacher is going to have to take many courses in special education'" (p. 24-25). Another teacher in the study maintained that "'the only solution is preparing teachers to be double majors [in special education and regular education]'" (p.25).

Much of the literature reviewed maintains that teachers who have more confidence in their skills will have improved attitudes. Teachers' perceptions of their ability to successfully integrate students with disabilities into their classes must be considered in measuring their attitudes toward inclusion (Schmelkin, 1981). In general, teachers do not feel educated enough to implement inclusion successfully, and this perception affects their attitudes.

Many teachers find it difficult to believe inclusion will work and be successful, for many reasons as discussed above. However, there has been some positive feedback on teachers' attitudes about inclusion. In a study by Schmelkin (1981), there was an overall positive attitude toward inclusion on the part of the groups of teachers surveyed. Despite most teachers' fears and concerns about the likely success of inclusion, they suggested that inclusion could be positive and were hopeful about its success (Vaughn, et al, 1994).

Many teachers see the benefits of inclusion. "Inclusion is good for kids,'" (Friend & Cook, 1993, p. 54) wrote a teacher in *Instructor*. "'It helps students really understand diversity. And students learn how to help each other. It teaches students

that they can learn from each other; that the teacher is not the only source in the classroom.'" Another teacher wrote, "'Students with disabilities benefit from being with their peers. Some students learn much more than they would if they received the same instruction in a special education classroom. And they learn how to get along with their classmates who don't have special needs'" (p.54). Another teacher wrote that inclusion "'brings the staff together....We support each other more than we ever did before'" (p.54).

The results of a study done by Janney, Snell, Beers and Raynes (1995) indicated that all interviewees but one felt the inclusion effort in their schools were successful. An elementary school special education teacher in this study stated that inclusion is "'really beneficial and it's not as difficult as you might first anticipate it to be'" (p. 431). This teacher saw the benefits of inclusion in both the students with and without disabilities. Another teacher stated, "'It's made a good atmosphere for our whole school. Our children are so much more aware of others, and I think it's made them less self-centered. And it's made us teachers more aware, too'" (p. 431).

The majority of the literature reviewed on teachers' attitudes and perceptions toward inclusion reveals that both regular education and special education teachers feel that the benefits of inclusion far outweigh any negative aspects of it. With proper education and training of all teachers, inclusion can be an extremely effective practice.

Competencies Required of an Effective
Inclusive Classroom Teacher

Recent literature recommends that inclusive classroom teachers have knowledge of and an understanding of PL 94-142 and the REI, including the concept of what the least restrictive environment (LRE) is and is not (Wigle, Wilcox & Manges, 1994; Williams, 1990). Leyser and Bursuck (1986) found that the

knowledge of the rationale for inclusion was perceived to be an important component in teacher training programs.

The background of inclusion, including its history, definition, laws and policies was rated as an important knowledge base for inclusive educators in studies done by Bradley and West (1994) and Fender and Fiedler (1990). Included in this category is the knowledge of the legal rights of disabled students and their parents (Fender & Fiedler, 1990; Leyser & Bursuck, 1986; Williams, 1990).

The inclusive classroom teacher is required to have some knowledge base and understanding of educational disabling/exceptional conditions, including the characteristics of specific disabilities, how these students learn, what to expect from them, and how to address their educational needs (Bradley & West, 1994; Emporia State University, 1994; Fender & Fiedler, 1990; Fulk & Hirth, 1994; Leyser & Bursuck, 1986; Reiff, Evans & Cass, 1991; Williams, 1990). These teachers must also demonstrate an understanding of "the range of deviant classroom behaviors, including acting out, withdrawal, defensive, and disorganized behaviors" (Landers & Weaver, 1991, p.5). Williams (1990) found that the ability to identify areas of particular difficulty for a student was rated among one of the highest important teacher competencies. Recognizing the effects of physical conditions on learning and knowledge of how to modify the physical environment for students with disabilities were also rated as important in her study.

Competencies in providing program modifications, including curricular, behavioral, methodological and technological are rated as a high priority of concern for educators preparing for the inclusion process. Bradley and West (1994) report that "Educators repeatedly expressed the need for more information in the specific areas of facilitated communication, wait time, direction-giving, hands-on activities, transition time, and the use of adaptive technology and equipment" (p. 121).

Adapting teaching methods and instruction to meet the individual needs of students is an important competency mentioned in recent literature. Designing learning activities, individualizing instruction, and selecting, modifying, and adapting curriculum content and materials to support individual differences is included here. Preservice teachers need to be able to select instruction and tasks that are at an appropriate level of difficulty, with a "high rate of correct student response to teacher questions" (Hinders, 1995, p. 203). Applying alternative teaching strategies and recognizing the implications of specific disabilities for planning procedures are skills needed by inclusive teachers. This includes adapting long-range and daily planning for exceptional students. Writing behavioral objectives and planning for implementation, as well as evaluating curriculum to determine its appropriateness were rated as important skills needed in a study done by Williams (1990). Wigle, Wilcox and Manges (1994) maintain that general educators "need to learn how to adapt their learning objectives and their curriculum content to accommodate the needs of students with a wide range of abilities" (p.13). These authors also state that preservice teachers "need to focus on such skills as question framing, wait time, cueing, and coaching in the context of the heterogeneous classroom and congruent with the behavioral/learning characteristics of the mainstreamed students" (p. 13).

The ability to monitor the learning process of students and adjust instruction is a skill needed by all teachers, especially the inclusive teacher. This includes the ability to "evaluate program effectiveness for specific learners" (Williams, 1990, p. 152). One way of evaluating program effectiveness is to evaluate or assess the students and their progress. This is another skill required of the inclusive classroom teacher, which includes the skills of interpreting and implementing a student's individualized education program (IEP). The knowledge and skills of developing an IEP in consultation with team members may also be needed (Landers & Weaver, 1991). The inclusive teacher

needs to use frequent checks to monitor the progress of students and design tests that effectively monitor their progress. The ability to administer informal assessments to evaluate determine the level of functioning of students with special needs are skills rated as important for inclusive teachers. The focus group of Emporia State University (1994) included the ability to use appropriate assessment data to plan and implement instruction, and the ability to develop formal and informal alternative types of assessments as needed competencies by the inclusion teacher. In the study conducted by Williams (1990), it was found that the ability to design individual programs based on assessment information, the ability to implement an individualized program based on an IEP, the ability to select, administer, and interpret formal standardized tests, and the ability to understand and use psychological data for educational planning were rated as important competencies of inclusive teachers. The ability to communicate assessment findings and plans to parents was one of the highest rated competencies shown from this study.

Communicating effectively with parents is another important competency needed by the inclusive teacher. Inclusive teachers need to "acquire knowledge to collaborate with parents in students' progress in meeting program objectives and the ability to use assessments to planning and implementing instructional, transitional, and related programs" and "demonstrate knowledge of how to encourage and assist families to become active participants in the educational team" according to Emporia State University (1994, p. 8). Having the ability to involve parents, as well as "preparing parents of students with and without disabilities for the impact of inclusion on their children" are concerns stated in the study by Bradley and West (1994, p. 122). Landers and Weaver (1991) include the ability to "apply principles of sound conferencing in meeting with parents and other professionals" (p. 5) as a highly rated competency needed by the inclusive teacher.

Because effective inclusive programs include effective collaboration among its members, effective collaboration skills are essential to the inclusive teacher. Bradley and West (1994) found that teachers realize that they need to work together and share expertise much more in an inclusive setting. They also found that teachers were interested in knowing how to "develop mutual respect and support, how to establish a collaborative and sharing atmosphere among their staff, and how to facilitate a team approach to educating students" (p. 121). The majority of the literature reviewed supports this belief that inclusive educators need to develop collaborative relationships with colleagues, communicate effectively with other school professionals (social workers, school psychologists, special educators, etc.) and communicate effectively with support personnel. Wigle, Wilcox and Manges (1994) maintain that preservice preparation needs to include instruction for the regular educator to consult with the special educator, to serve effectively on prereferral and placement teams, and to co-teach with the special educator in the regular classroom. Cooperation and collaboration are skills that need to be practiced by all educators in an inclusive setting.

Finally, the skill needed by inclusive educators that is frequently mentioned in literature is classroom management. Emporia State University's focus group (1994) states that inclusive teachers need "the ability to implement individual and group behavior management procedures" (p. 7) which include the following:

1. Modify the learning environment to manage inappropriate behaviors.
2. Develop a repertoire of strategies to increase appropriate or decrease inappropriate pupil behaviors.
3. Involve parents and pupils in the establishment of behavioral programs, self-recording, and self-management.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of how to return a behavior management program to naturally occurring consequences.
5. Demonstrate strategies for crisis prevention/intervention.
6. Demonstrate the ability to help pupils work and cooperatively interact with their peers (p.7).

Williams (1990) found that the ability to "maintain objectivity when faced with inappropriate behaviors" (p. 152) and the ability to "encourage appropriate interactions among all students" (p. 152) were rated as having high importance in competencies that inclusive teachers need. The ability to apply appropriate, effective classroom behavior management technique was rated as an important skill in the majority of the studies reviewed. Sindelar (1995) summed up a few of the competencies and skills required of inclusive teachers well:

> Teachers must be skilled educational diagnosticians, they must have at their disposal a repertoire of instructional methods, they must be reflective decision makers and use multiple sources of data to inform their decisions, they must be skilled classroom and instructional managers, and they must know curriculum. They also must be motivated to work with students who do not learn readily and whose behavior may interfere with their academic progress and the development of rewarding interpersonal relationships. (p.242)

The Restructuring of Teacher Education Programs

Many of the studies mentioned above revealed that general education teachers did not feel adequately prepared to teach students with special needs in their classrooms due to lack of experience and training. Katsiyannis, Conderman and Franks (1995) state that "Inadequate teacher preparation [is] a major obstacle to the successful implementation of inclusionary programming" and that "teachers lack the skills necessary to meet the needs of diverse learners in inclusive settings" (p. 286).

Schmelkin (1981) states in her study of the attitudes and perceptions of special education teachers, regular teachers, and nonteachers toward inclusion that the relatively positive attitudes of these groups is possibly due to their experience and training. Most of the subjects in this study had been exposed to more information about persons with disabilities through education classes, and had at least one student with special needs in their classroom at one time or another.

In a study done by Butler, Bush, Wasicsko, Calaway and Murrell (1981), it was concluded that the introductory education courses on exceptional children, human growth and development, and educational thought and practice had an impact on attitudes of education students toward special education and mainstreaming. Many researchers have concluded in their studies that exposure to and knowledge about people with disabilities can positively influence attitudes of teachers. Yet, Blair (1983) concludes that "a survey course in special education will not necessarily meet the needs of classroom teachers and that these teachers will need more specific information" (p.54). Therefore, although coursework in special education and contact with people with special needs may be effective in improving attitudes toward inclusion and increasing confidence in teaching students with special needs, an important factor that must be considered is the teachers' *ability* to work with the students with special needs in their classrooms. "It is apparent that regular teachers must do more than passively accept the placement of students [with special needs] into their classrooms" (Williams, 1990, p. 149). The education of these and all students must be effective as well. There is a wide agreement among researchers of inclusion that with the diverse population of learners presently within our schools, it is imperative that teachers be prepared to meet the needs of *all* learners.

Fender and Fiedler (1990) surveyed 172 randomly selected colleges and universities that prepare teachers in each of the 50 states to gather information about the coursework and field experiences required in their teacher preparation programs. They concluded that teacher preparation programs are not fully preparing teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the regular classroom. One way that these programs are failing is that over half of the preservice teachers are not required to have interaction with students with disabilities as part of their graduation requirements. More extended classroom experience may be necessary to increase

preservice teachers' attitudes toward inclusion, attitudes towards the role of the regular class teacher in the evaluation and placement process, and confidence in their abilities to work with children with disabilities in their regular classroom (Hoover, 1984). "It is difficult to expect regular education teachers to be competent or comfortable teaching a population with which they have had little or no experience" (Fender & Fiedler, 1990, p. 208). In questioning recent teacher education graduates about their undergraduate preparation programs, Williams (1990) found that the most frequent suggestion given for strengthening these programs was to include more direct exposure to students with disabilities. Fulk and Hirth (1994) also concluded in their study of regular educators that "regular education teachers need exposure to students of varying disabilities and specific training on how to address their educational needs" (p. 9).

Recent literature suggests a variety of changes needed in the structure and content of teacher education programs to better prepare preservice teachers in inclusive classrooms. In addition to the increase in field experiences, changes in course content areas and program structures are recommended by researchers. Schumm, Vaughn, Gordon and Rothlein (1994) suggest that teacher education programs need to include practical and effective methods to promote learning for all students, including instructional adaptations that can be made during the act of teaching. "Practices such as adjusting the time and pace of assignments, monitoring student understanding, and providing for peer support are activities that teachers value and use" (p. 34), and need to be taught to preservice teachers. More education is needed in the areas of classroom organization and management, in accommodation of learning differences and styles, and in the interpretation of evaluation reports and technical vocabulary (Ross & Wax,1993). Knowledge and awareness of disabilities, as well as formal and informal assessment techniques are also important (Leyser &

Bursuck, 1986). This does not mean that we do away with specialized certification of teachers in specific disabilities such as sensory impairments, communication disorders, severely mentally retarded disabilities, and the like. Specialists will still be needed in these areas, and teachers wishing to work with students with severe disabilities musts acquire additional knowledge and experience in an area of specialization (Bunsen, 1990). However, the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that classroom teachers need to work effectively with students with mild to moderate disabilities are essentially the same as the skills, knowledge, and dispositions of many specialists. Teachers must be skilled diagnosticians, have a repertoire of instructional methods, be reflective decision makers and use multiple sources of data, be skilled managers, know curriculum, and be motivated to work with students whose disability may interfere with their academic and/or social skills progress (Sindelar, 1995). Teacher preparation programs need to include coursework and experiences that stress these skills.

Another important component of effective teacher preparation programs includes the collaboration skills required of regular education and special education teachers in implementing inclusive programs. Few teacher education programs integrate general and special education to any great extent, but if they are going to work together in the inclusive education programs, as has been recognized in much literature as an essential component of effective inclusive education programs, instructors and student teachers need to have experiences working together collaboratively in classes and field experiences (Hinders, 1995; Schumm, et al, 1994; Sindelar, 1995). Hinders (1995) stresses that regular and special education courses should be intertwined, not separate and distinct, and that faculty members should share equally the delivery of the infused content. This would "communicate to students that differences are not separate and distinct but rather human characteristics inherent in every individual" (p. 205).

Hinders (1995) continues to suggest that both special education and regular education instructors collaborate on course content using a team teaching model, modeling to preservice students the benefits of teamwork. Other literature also suggests using the team teaching or coteaching model in teacher education programs to help teach students to utilize this model in school settings (Bunsen, 1990; Ross & Wax, 1993; Sindelar, 1995).

Conclusion

In conclusion, research and literature suggest that because the perceptions and attitudes of teachers affect the effectiveness of any educational program, specifically inclusive education programs, it is important to measure these perceptions and attitudes. The perceptions and attitudes teachers have about inclusive education need to be positive in order for inclusion to be successful. The literature reveals that positive perceptions and attitudes result from exposure to and knowledge of inclusion, support services provided, and better preparatory education.

According to recent literature, inclusive educators need a better understanding of what inclusion is and what it is not. They need an extensive knowledge base and many strong skills in adaptation, communication, collaboration, and management.

Regular education and special education teacher preparation programs need to collaborate on "coursework that focuses on techniques and strategies for working with students with disabilities in the [regular] education classroom and collaboration with other professionals" (Mayhew, 1994, p. 64). It is essential that all educational disciplines work together at the preservice level to exhibit their own unique set of skills and information so that they are more effective and provide better services for all students. Effective collaboration is the only way to meet the responsibility to provide effective educational experiences for all children (Wigle, Wilcox & Manges, 1994). In

the process of restructuring and reforming education systems, we must not lose sight of the common goal of general and special education to give every child the "right to learn and grow in the same educational setting as every other child" (Bunsen, 1990, p. 33).

Chapter III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Inclusive education is becoming a more widely implemented practice in schools across the United States. In order to insure successful inclusive programs and practices to meet the needs of all students, a look at the perceptions and attitudes of educators and preservice teacher education students toward the inclusion of children with special needs in the regular classroom becomes more crucial. Chapter III describes the purpose, methodology, and subjects of this study.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not the Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ITEP) students' attitudes and perceptions toward inclusive education were more in agreement with the concept of inclusion and whether or not they developed an understanding of the roles and competencies required of inclusive teachers as a result of being in the ITEP program at St. Cloud State University.

Subjects

The subjects in this study were 27 college students enrolled in the Inclusive Teacher Education Project (ITEP), Cohort 1 at St. Cloud State University since September of 1994. These ITEP students were selected from a pool of 68 applicants

by a committee comprised of ITEP faculty. Criteria for selection included students' attainment of junior year status in their program, their GPA (students with a GPA of 2.75 or higher were given priority consideration), diversity along gender, racial, geographic, and traditional/non-traditional student status dimensions, and an evaluation of content and written expression in students' statements of interest in the program. The applicants were not chosen nor eliminated based on any one factor.

Of the 27 students chosen for Cohort 1, 16 were traditional (under age 23) and 11 were non-traditional (over age 23). Twenty-four were female and 3 were male. One was a student of color. Twenty-five of these students graduated in May of 1996 after completing 118 to 119 credits in Education and Special Education courses, including field experiences and student teaching experiences in traditional and inclusive settings at both the elementary and secondary levels (Appendix A). Almost half of the Education and Special Education courses were team-taught through collaborative efforts of faculty from both departments.

Methodology

Two major pieces of data were collected as the students entered the ITEP program in the fall of 1994, and as they exited the ITEP program in the spring of 1996.

In the fall of 1994, the *Attitude Survey of Inclusive Education*, adapted from the *Attitude Toward Inclusion Instrument* by Yates and Siders was distributed to the students by B. Klopfleisch, then a graduate student at St. Cloud State University (Appendix B). This survey was developed from literature on inclusion and other instruments already made, but which targeted specific behaviors. No other instruments had been designed to deal with general issues of inclusion. A validation study of this survey was done by the authors with active teachers from three state

universities. The statements on the survey are formulated to detect a level of attitude toward the inclusion of students with special needs in the regular classroom.

The ITEP students were then interviewed by Klopfleisch, using questions formulated to support information on the survey (Appendix C). A disclosure statement/consent form was given to each student to sign prior to the interview (Appendix D). The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed.

In the spring of 1996, the *Attitude Survey of Inclusive Education* listed above was again distributed to the students. The students then signed the disclosure statement/consent form and were interviewed using questions formulated by the researcher to support information on the survey and to compare responses to the previous interview conducted in the fall of 1994 (Appendix E). The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed.

Chapter IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The attitudes and perceptions of teachers toward inclusive education programs
will positively or adversely affect the success of these programs. Teacher preparation
programs that include special education coursework may positively influence pre-
service teachers' attitudes and perceptions toward children with special needs and the
inclusion of children with special needs in the regular classroom.

Chapter IV begins with the analysis of the data from surveys completed by the
Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ITEP) students at St. Cloud State University as
they entered the program in the fall of 1994 and as they exited the program in the
spring of 1996. The chapter continues with an analysis of the responses of these
students to the interview questions given to them in the fall of 1994 and in the spring
of 1996.

A comparison was made to see if there were significant differences in the ITEP
students' survey and interview responses from the fall of 1994 to the spring of 1996.
Commonalities in attitudes and perceptions toward inclusion and the roles of inclusive
teachers are also identified.

The Attitude Survey

The *Attitude Survey of Inclusive Education* was analyzed for evidence by a
stratified quantitative method. The data were reviewed for significant differences

between the students' attitudes toward inclusive education prior to entering the ITEP program in the fall of 1994 and as these students exited the ITEP program in the spring of 1996.

Table 1 shows the significant differences in the responses to 10 out of the 38 items on the *Attitude Survey of Inclusive Education.* A t-test was done on each item. The items shown in Table 1 were statistically significant at the .05 level.

Table 1

A Comparison of Responses to the *Attitude Survey of Inclusive Education*

Item	n=27 Pre-Mean	n=25 Post-Mean	2-tail Prob.
1. In general, inclusion is a desirable educational practice.	3.60	3.92	0.008
3. Given the current structure of the classroom, it is feasible to teach gifted, normal, and students with disabilities in the same class with minor changes within the classroom.	2.79	3.46	0.001
9. A disabled student's classroom behavior generally requires more patience from the teacher than does the behavior of a normal child.	2.88	2.36	0.029
14. Traditional teachers possess the expertise to work with children with disabilities.	1.42	2.08	0.001
19. Inclusion of students with disabilities will require significant changes in traditional classroom procedures.	3.16	2.60	0.013
22. Traditional classroom teachers do not have sufficient training to teach children with special needs.	3.33	2.71	0.004
26. Diagnostic-prescriptive teaching is better done by resource room or special education teachers than by traditional classroom teachers.	2.64	1.91	0.006
29. Inclusion is likely to have a negative effect on the emotional development of the student with a disability.	1.58	1.13	0.001
30. Inclusion of students with disabilities will require all teachers to collaborate.	3.60	3.84	0.031
34. Students with disabilities are likely to create confusion in the traditional classroom.	1.88	1.52	0.036

The Interview Questions

The data collected from the interviews were analyzed by qualitative research methods (Appendix F). Commonalties in attitudes and perceptions about the roles of teachers and inclusion are also identified in this data.

When asked to describe themselves as teachers now, fourteen of the students responded in the exit interview that they felt competent, capable, qualified, confident, professional, and more aware, compared with three students responding in the entrance interview as feeling unprepared. Five students mentioned during the exit interview that they felt they were now able to adapt and accommodate instruction and curriculum to meet the needs of the students. None of the students mentioned this during the entrance interview. Although three less students responded that they were ambitious, excited, and/or enthusiastic in the exit interview than in the entrance interview, this may be in part to the fact that the students were physically and emotionally exhausted toward the end of the program.

In response to the question asking the students for their view of inclusion, only two students in the entrance interview responded that inclusion should be implemented when appropriate, depending on the needs of the child, and that it is not for all children with special needs. Ten students in the exit interview held this view. Five of the students in the exit interview stated that inclusion needs to keep the students' best interests in mind and teaching should be individualized to meet their needs. Only one student in the entrance interview made a statement similar to this. None of the students in the entrance interview mentioned teaming or collaboration as part of their view of inclusion, whereas four students in the exit interview mentioned this.

When asked for the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion, sixteen students in the exit interview mentioned that an advantage was that there is a better understanding and accepting of differences. Only eleven students in the entrance

interview mentioned this. Eleven students in the exit interview mentioned the social benefits of inclusion, whereas only three in the entrance interview stated this as an advantage of inclusion. Seven students in the exit interview stated that a disadvantage of inclusion would be when an inclusive program is not a benefit to a child and the child's needs are not being met. Only two students in the entrance interview stated this view. Seven students in the exit interview also stated that a disadvantage would be instances where teachers are not trained or not ready to implement inclusion. Three students held this view in the entrance interview.

Thirteen students responded in the exit interview that in an inclusive classroom, there are other professionals, viewpoints, and ideas. Five students in this interview also responded that in other classrooms, there are fewer adults and no collaboration between professionals. None of the students mentioned these during the entrance interview when asked to describe the differences between inclusive classrooms and other classrooms.

When asked to describe the skills and competencies needed to be an effective inclusive teacher, sixteen students described the need for a wide variety of strategies and resources during the exit interview, whereas only five students described this need during the entrance interview. Eleven students during the exit interview also described the need for teaming, collaboration, and cooperation skills, where as only two students described these during the entrance interview. During the exit interview, eleven students stated that effective inclusive teachers need to be flexible, open-minded, and/or versatile. During the entrance interview, only six students made statements to reflect these qualities. Two students mentioned during the entrance interview that an effective inclusive teacher needs to be able to adapt and modify lessons and teach at different levels. Ten students mentioned these competencies during the exit interview. During the entrance interview, the students made more statements that reflected

general qualities needed of an effective inclusive teacher, such as a positive attitude, creativity, and patience. The students were more specific in their descriptions of skills and competencies during the exit interview.

When asked during the exit interview to describe the components of the ITEP program that were most helpful and least helpful to them, twelve students responded that the number and variety of field experiences, the team-teaching structure, and the cohort structure were most helpful to them. Five students responded that they felt the team teaching structure was the least helpful, as there appeared to be a lack of communication between the teachers.

Nineteen students during the exit interview responded with "definitely" or "yes" to the question that asked them if they felt prepared to teach in an inclusive classroom. Four responded that they "think so", one that she would be prepared in Special Education, but not in Regular Education, and one that she would not be prepared if she had to teach by herself. Several students stated that they felt prepared because they now had strong skills, techniques, and strategies to work with.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether or not the Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ITEP) students have attitudes and perceptions toward inclusive education which are more in agreement with the concept of inclusion, and whether or not they developed an understanding of the roles and competencies required of inclusive teachers as a result of being in the ITEP program at St. Cloud State University. The subjects were ITEP students enrolled in the program from the fall of 1994 through the spring of 1996. These students completed a survey and answered questions in personal interviews as they entered the program in the fall of 1994 and as they exited the program in the spring of 1996.

Conclusions

In analyzing the data presented in the study, the ITEP students' attitudes and perceptions toward inclusive education and students with disabilities were more in agreement with the concept of inclusion from the time they entered the program to the time they exited the program. The students also had a better understanding of the roles and competencies required of an effective inclusive teacher as a result of being in the ITEP program at St. Cloud State University.

In general, the ITEP students feel that inclusion is a desirable educational practice when it is appropriate for the child, depending on his or her needs. This

attitude was held more positively by the ITEP students after completion of the ITEP program. The students felt that understanding and accepting differences and social benefits to the students were advantages of inclusion, and that when inclusive practices were not a benefit to a child and did not meet his or her needs, this could be a disadvantage. These views are compatible with the views held by many teachers interviewed in previous studies who have had experience in inclusive education (Instructor, 1993; Janney et al., 1995).

Prior to entering the ITEP program, the students were not positive about the feasibility of teaching gifted, normal, and students with disabilities in the same class with minor changes in the current structure of the classroom. After completing the program, the students were significantly more positive about the feasibility of this occurring. They also felt more strongly after completing the ITEP program that the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom would not require significant changes in traditional classroom procedures, but that it would require all teachers to collaborate.

Prior to entering the ITEP program, the students did not feel strongly that a student with a disability would be likely to create confusion in the traditional classroom or that inclusion would be likely to have a negative effect on the emotional development of the student with a disability. Upon exiting the program, the students felt even less strongly about these statements. The students also felt less agreeable upon completing the program with the statement which implied that the behavior of students with disabilities would require more patience from the teacher than the behavior of normal students.

The ITEP students were in slight disagreement with the statement which implied that diagnostic-prescriptive teaching is better done by resource room or special education teachers than by traditional classroom teachers. As they exited the program,

the students were in stronger disagreement with this statement, implying that diagnostic-prescriptive teaching can be done by traditional classroom teachers. The ITEP students believe somewhat that traditional teachers do not possess the expertise to work with children with disabilities and that they are not sufficiently trained to teach children with special needs. After completing the ITEP program, however, the students felt less strongly about these statements as they completed the survey, yet they mentioned more often in the interviews that having teachers who are not trained or are not ready for it is a disadvantage of inclusion at this time.

There were more common and specific responses from the ITEP students in the exit interview than in the entrance interview regarding the skills and competencies needed for an effective inclusive teacher. These responses were also more compatible with the skills and competencies mentioned in the literature studied. For example, the literature suggested that modifying and adapting the curriculum, methods, and instruction, as well as having a variety of resources and methods in ones repertoire are skills and competencies needed by an effective inclusive teacher. The ITEP students were more aware of this as they completed the ITEP program than they were as they entered the program. They were also more aware of the importance of communicating and collaborating with other professionals as they completed the program.

The ITEP students felt that the most helpful components of the ITEP program were the number and variety of field experiences, the team-teaching structure, and the support from the cohort group. Some of the classes were mentioned as least helpful to the students.

As they completed the program, they felt significantly more competent, prepared, and qualified to teach in an inclusive classroom. Several of the students responded that they have developed strong skills, techniques, and strategies in implementing an inclusive education program in their classrooms. Several other

students mentioned that they felt they have a better base and will go out "a step ahead" of other preservice teachers in other teacher preparation programs, having both a regular and special education background.

The fact that the post survey and interviews were administered to the students at a time when they were completing their undergraduate college education may have been a factor in some of the test results. There are several influencing factors at this time: feeling of excitement and relief of graduating, anticipation and anxiety about finding a job, exhaustion from the time spent on coursework and student teaching. Any of these factors could influence one's attitudes and perceptions about any given topic.

Limitations

Despite the findings of this study, there are limitations. One weakness is that the study was conducted with the ITEP program as it was in its initial experimental stages, and it is only one program in one institution. A control group could add power to the results of the study.

Additionally, because of the cohort structure of the ITEP program, the commonality in responses could be emphasized. As with any self-reporting data, there are concerns about the pressure to provide socially-acceptable answers.

The researcher is also aware that the measures used in this study may not be sensitive enough to discern the impact of the program.

Recommendations

Through the reading of the literature and this study conducted with the Inclusive Teacher Education Program at St. Cloud State University, there are several

recommendations the researcher wishes to make regarding teacher preparation programs in general that should be considered:

1. Continue or implement an inclusive teacher education program to prepare preservice teachers for successful inclusion programs in our schools.

2. Within an inclusive teacher education program, teach and model the skills and competencies needed to be an effective inclusive teacher as outlined in this study.

3. Collaborate and team-teach as much as possible, and communicate well with other teacher education instructors and departments.

4. Monitor students' attitudes and perceptions toward inclusive education and students with special needs throughout the teacher education program.

5. Provide students with a variety and number of field experiences throughout the teacher education program.

6. Use cohort groups for support and unity.

This study also raised critical issues to consider for further research. The researcher recommends using comparative studies with other teacher preparation programs and assessing these groups prior to and after completion of the programs to compare results of attitudes, perceptions, and competencies of inclusive education teachers. These programs would include regular education, special education, and other inclusive teacher education programs.

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APPENDIXES

FFEP Program Course Outline

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APPENDIX A

ITEP Program Course Outline

ITEP Program Course Outline

Students enrolled in ITEP are responsible for completing the following courses:

APSY 262	Human Growth and Development (4 cr.)	
APSY 362	Educational Measurement and Test Construction (4 cr.)	
APSY 463	Application of the Principals of Learning (4 cr.)	
HURL 496/497	Human Relations and the Teacher, Part I and Part II (6 cr.)	
IM 468	Media Materials and Methods of Instruction (4 cr.)	
MATH 250	Foundations in Arithmetic (4 cr.)	
ED 220	Introduction to Elementary Education (3 cr.)	
OR		
SPED 403	Foundations in Special Education (3 cr.)	
OR		
SPED/ED 210	Introduction to the Teaching Profession (3 cr.)	
		(29/30 credits)

The following ED/SPED courses will be delivered to ITEP cohorts through collaborative efforts of faculty from both departments. Initial field experiences are intermingled with course content during this period of time.

ED 323	Department Seminar in Elementary Education (2 cr.)	
ED 346	Elementary School Curriculum and Instruction (3 cr.)	
ED 340	Literature for Children (3 cr.)	
ED 371	Reading I: Basic Skills (4 cr.)	
ED 372	Reading II: Basic Skills Practicum (3 cr.)	
ED 441	Elementary School Science Methods (3 cr.)	
ED 442	Elementary School Language Arts (3 cr.)	
ED 443	Elementary School Social Studies (3 cr.)	
ED 445	Elementary School Mathematics (3 cr.)	
ED 451	Managing a Classroom for Optimal Learning (3 cr.)	(30 credits)
SPED 411	Applied Special Education Foundations (4 cr.)	
SPED 415	Medical Perspectives for the Classroom (4 cr.)	
SPED 417	Emotionally/Behaviorally Disordered Students (3 cr.)	
SPED 436	Communication and Consultation in Special Education (4 cr.)	
SPED 431	Career and Transitional Programming for the Special Needs Learner (4 cr.)	
SPED 416	Assessment for Special Education (4 cr.)	
SPED/ED 400	Fine Arts Methods - Music, Art, P.E. (4 cr.)	
SPED 445	Issues and Concepts in Learning Disabilities I (4 cr.)	
SPED 446	Issues and Concepts in Learning Disabilities II (4 cr.)	(35 credits)

The program will culminate in student teaching experiences in traditional and inclusive settings at both the elementary and secondary levels.

ED 463	Elementary School Teaching 1-6 (12 cr.)	
SPED 480	Practicum: Learning Disabled Students I (6 cr.)	
SPED 481	Practicum: Learning Disabled Students II (6 cr.)	(24 credits)

TOTAL CREDITS   118/119

APPENDIX B

Student Survey

STUDENT SURVEY

Date: _____ Quarter: _____ Year: _____
Major: _____ Courses enrolled in: _____
Last 4 digits of SS#: _____ Gender _____ Age _____

Please respond to the following statements based on the following definition: Inclusion refers to the practice of attending the same schools as siblings and neighbors, being in general education classrooms with chronological age-appropriate classmates, having individualized and relevant objectives, and being provided with the necessary support (e.g., special education and related services) to learn (Rainforth, York, & McDonald, 1992; Taylor, 1988).

4 = Strongly Agree   3 = Agree Somewhat   2 = Disagree Somewhat   1 = Strongly Disagree

1. In general, inclusion is a desirable educational practice. 4 3 2 1
2. Students with disabilities should have the right to be in traditional classrooms. 4 3 2 1
3. Given the current structure of the classroom, it is feasible to teach gifted, normal and students with disabilities in the same class with minor changes within the classroom. 4 3 2 1
4. Children model the behavior of other children. 4 3 2 1
5. Scheduling difficulties make it impossible to enact the inclusion initiative. 4 3 2 1
6. Support personnel should take their services into a traditional classroom. 4 3 2 1
7. Many of the activities teachers do with students without disabilities in a classroom are appropriate for students with disabilities. 4 3 2 1
8. The needs of students with disabilities can best be served through special, separate classes. 4 3 2 1
9. A disabled student's classroom behavior generally requires more patience from the teacher than does the behavior of a normal child. 4 3 2 1
10. The challenge of being in a traditional classroom will promote the academic growth of the student with a disability. 4 3 2 1
11. The extra attention students with disabilities require will be to the detriment of the other students. 4 3 2 1
12. Inclusion offers mixed group interaction which will foster understanding and acceptance of the differences in individuals. 4 3 2 1
13. It is difficult to maintain order in a traditional classroom that contains a student with a disability. 4 3 2 1
14. Traditional teachers possess the expertise to work with children with disabilities. 4 3 2 1
15. The behavior of students with disabilities will set a bad example for other students. 4 3 2 1
16. Isolation in a special class has a negative effect on the social and emotional development of students with disabilities. 4 3 2 1
17. The student with a disability will probably develop academic skills more rapidly in a special classroom. 4 3 2 1
18. Most students with a disability do not make an adequate attempt to complete their tasks. 4 3 2 1
19. Inclusion of students with disabilities will require significant changes in traditional classroom procedures. 4 3 2 1
20. Most students with a disability are well behaved in the inclusive classroom. 4 3 2 1
21. The contact students without disabilities have with students with disabilities may be harmful. 4 3 2 1

22. Traditional classroom teachers do not have sufficient training to teach children with special needs.	4	3	2	1
23. Students with disabilities will monopolize the teacher's time.	4	3	2	1
24. Inclusion of students with disabilities will promote her/his social independence.	4	3	2	1
25. It is likely that students with disabilities will exhibit behavior problems in a traditional classroom setting.	4	3	2	1
26. Diagnostic-prescriptive teaching is better done by resource room or special education teachers than by traditional classroom teachers.	4	3	2	1
27. The inclusion of students with disabilities can be beneficial for students without disabilities.	4	3	2	1
28. Students with disabilities need to be told exactly what to do and how to do it.	4	3	2	1
29. Inclusion is likely to have a negative effect on the emotional development of the student with a disability.	4	3	2	1
30. Inclusion of students with disabilities will require all teachers to collaborate.	4	3	2	1
31. The student with a disability will be socially isolated by students without disabilities.	4	3	2	1
32. Parents of students with disabilities will present a greater problem for a teacher than those of children without disabilities.	4	3	2	1
33. Inclusion of students with disabilities will necessitate extensive retraining of traditional teachers.	4	3	2	1
34. Students with disabilities are likely to create confusion in the traditional classroom.	4	3	2	1
35. All school personnel should have good teaming skills.	4	3	2	1
36. Students with disabilities should be given every opportunity to function in the traditional classroom setting.	4	3	2	1
37. It will be necessary for school personnel to have collaboration skills in order for inclusion to be successful.	4	3	2	1
38. The presence of students with disabilities in the traditional classroom will promote acceptance of differences on the part of students without disabilities.	4	3	2	1

Adapted from: *Attitude Toward Inclusion Instrument*
by Camille M. Yates, Ed. S. and James A. Siders Ed. D.

APPENDIX C

Pre-Program ITEP Student Interview Questions

Pre-Program ITEP Student Interview Questions
Formulated by B. Klopfleisch

1. What are your reasons for involvement in the ITEP program?

2. Describe yourself as a teacher now.

3. What knowledge and skills do you perceive to be needed as an effective teacher?

4. What is your view of inclusion?

5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion?

6. What are the differences between inclusive classrooms and other classrooms?

7. Describe an effective inclusive classroom teacher.

8. What, if any, is your prior experience working with disabled persons?

APPENDIX D

Disclosure Statement/Consent Form

CONSENT FORM
Inclusive Teacher Education Program

I, _____, voluntarily agree to participate in
research activities as a participant in the Inclusive Teacher Education
Program. I understand that I will be asked to complete surveys intended to
assess specific outcomes of the project. I also understand that part of the
research will consist of one-to-one interviews that will be audiotaped. I
understand that, although my identity will be kept confidential through the use
of code numbers, both the interviewer and/or transcriber will have access to
the audiotapes as a part of the program evaluation process. No other project
staff will have access to the audiotapes, and my identity will remain
confidential.

All procedures have been explained to me and I have had the opportunity to
ask questions. I understand that I have the right to request at any time that
my coded surveys or interview results be excluded from review.

Date:_____

Signature:_____

Print Full Name: _____

Witness:_____

APPENDIX E

Post-Program ITEP Student Interview Questions

Post-Program ITEP Student Interview Questions
Formulated by L. Millar

1. Describe yourself as a teacher now.

2. What is your view of inclusion?.

3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion?

4. Describe the differences between inclusive classrooms and other classrooms.

5. Describe the skills and competencies needed to be an effective inclusive teacher.

6. What components of the ITEP program were most helpful to you, and what were the   least helpful?

7. Do you feel prepared to teach in an inclusive classroom? Why or why not?

APPENDIX F

A Comparison of ITEP Student Interview Results

A Comparison of ITEP Student Interview Results

1. Describe yourself as a teacher now	Pre-Interview	Post-Interview
Unprepared	3	0
Competent, capable, qualified, confident, professional, aware	0	14
Able to adapt, accommodate	0	5
Open-minded, flexible, not rigid, easy-going	4	6
Patient	4	3
Like to have fun	3	2
Ambitious, excited, enthusiastic	6	3
Good listener	2	2
Creative	2	1
Desire to change education	2	0
Motivator, get students excited, have desire for learning	6	0
Understanding, empathetic	3	0
Like challenge of reaching kids in different ways, new ways	3	0
Make difference to those students, influence their lives	3	0
Keep things positive, upbeat, look at the good	3	0
Like to interact with people	1	2
An advocate for disabled	0	1
2. What is your view of inclusion?		
When appropriate, depends on needs, not for all	2	10
Individualizing to students' needs, best interests	1	5
Combining all cultures, not just disabled	5	8
LD children work with normal children	2	0
Combining special ed kids with traditional kids	1	0
Including all, belonging	4	8
Teaming, collaboration	0	4
Understanding and accepting differences	7	2
Not "dumping" students in classroom	0	2
Having support services	0	3
Benefits all	0	3
Builds self-esteem, confidence	1	1
Other services need to be in place	0	1
Don't really know, not sure what effect will be	2	0
Prepares students for the real world	0	1
3.a. What are the advantages of inclusion?		
Understanding/accepting differences	11	16
Social benefits, growth	3	11
Students learn, grow together as community	6	9
Awareness, skills for dealing with variety of problems/people	5	0
Students aren't singled out, segregated	4	0
Breaks stereotyped catagories, students aren't labeled	2	0
Discontinues elitist educational system	2	0
Special ed kids meet friends, work with peers	4	0
Students feel welcome, included, belonging	2	4
Positive self-outlook, grow farther, motivated	1	4
A real-world setting	2	3
Students without disabilities model behaviors	1	3
Benefits of teaming, working together	0	3
Special Ed teacher contributes ideas, help	0	2
Teachers more aware of what they're doing	0	1

3.b. What are the disadvantages of inclusion?		
When not benefit to child, needs not met	2	7
Teachers not trained, not ready	3	7
Extra planning time, more preparation needed	4	5
Students may be prejudiced, tease those with disabilities	2	0
More time or less depth spent on topics, slower pace	3	0
Harder to reach different levels of learning, hard to teach	5	0
Emotionally consuming/stressful with management problems	3	0
When students disruptive or extreme cases	5	4
More adults/staff needed	2	1
May be more attention on child with disabilities	5	1
When others don't like it, have different definitions	0	4
Increased cost	0	3
When students aren't being included	0	3
When not enough support	0	2
4. Differences between inclusive/other classrooms		
Inclusive - other professionals, viewpoints, ideas	0	13
Inclusive - everyone included, accepted	11	13
Inclusive - more individual help, one-on-one work	2	0
Inclusive - see/meet disabled not previously seen/met	2	0
Inclusive - students guide behavior, peer pressure/discipline	2	0
Inclusive - non-handicapped help handicapped students	3	0
Inclusive - different structure, teaching methods	2	0
Inclusive - children learn to work together, cooperate	7	0
Inclusive - group learning, hands-on, less structured	9	1
Inclusive - students at all levels, own pace, different needs	3	6
Inclusive - other resources/materials used	0	4
Other - students secluded, labeled, not accepted	0	7
Other - no groups, desks in rows, everyone seated, quiet	0	5
Other - One teacher, no collaboration, fewer adults	0	5
Other - one curriculum, set of materials, method	0	5
Other - a lot of competition, don't want to share	1	0
Other - no tolerance for different levels	0	3
Every classroom has some inclusive issue	0	1
5. Skills/competencies needed for effective teacher		
Wide variety of strategies, resources	5	16
Teaming, collaboration, cooperation skills	2	11
Flexible, open-minded, versatile, go with the flow	6	11
Adapt/modify lessons, teach at different levels	2	10
Broad background, special ed background	12	8
Understand, accept differences, accept inclusion	4	7
Patience	8	5
Challenge students, allow them to take responsibility	2	5
Creativity	7	2
Organized, time-manager	5	2
Keep activities active, use variety of activities	0	3
Problem-solver	1	1
Observant/strategic	1	1
Positive attitude	14	0
Not singling out disabled student	3	0
Resourceful, know where to go for help	4	0
Not biased, ready to include all children	11	0

No fear of teaching	2	0
Skilled with discipline, management	3	0
Multi-cultural background, awareness, need for diversity	3	0
Coping skills, able to deal with emotionally & personally	2	0
Gives love and caring to students	3	0