Inclusion: an analysis of middle school teachers attitudes toward the integration of students with disabilities into the regular classroom

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ABSTRACT

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

WARD, JR. ALBERT RAY  M.A. CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY, 1994
B.A. MOREHOUSE COLLEGE, 1981

INCLUSION:
AN ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS ATTITUDES
TOWARD THE INTEGRATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
INTO THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

Advisor: Dr. Brenda Rogers

Thesis dated June, 1997

This study examined the expressed attitudes of regular classroom teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities into their classrooms. Specific attention was given to those variables affecting teacher attitudes. Data obtained from seventy-three (73) teachers in the Atlanta Public School System provided information on the teacher's perceptions of inclusion as a viable concept in education. Responses obtained from a data inventory consisting of social-occupational characteristics provided data for determining the teacher's expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms.

The results indicate that there is a significant difference between the expressed attitudes of regular classroom teachers. Results further indicate that sex and the number of special education undergraduate and graduate courses completed are variables that influence attitude.
INCLUSION:  
AN ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS ATTITUDES  
TOWARD THE INTEGRATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES  
INTO THE REGULAR CLASSROOM  

A THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of educational specialist  

BY  
ALBERT RAY WARD, JR.  

DEPARTMENT OF EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION  

ATLANTA, GEORGIA  
JUNE 1997
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This research is dedicated to my parents, Albert and Patricia Ward, Sr. for the assistance, love, support, and wisdom that they have shown through my educational career and entire life as well.
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14. Experience Working as a Classroom Teacher Where Special Classes and/or Services Were Provided for Students with Disabilities and Expressed Attitudes Toward Inclusion of Students with Disabilities ......................... 79
Currently there are more than eight million disabled pre-school age and school age children in the United States. This figure includes physically disabled, mild or severely intellectually disabled, and those with emotional/behavior disorders. Prior to the advent of mainstreaming 40 percent of all disabled children received special schooling, either in segregated educational facilities or in regular public schools. A very small number were educated in private schools. More than 4 million either attended regular schools that did not have the special services that were needed or were totally excluded from receiving an education (Brenton 1984). Unmistakably the mainstreaming trend and the passage of Public Law 94-142 now titled Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990 caused significant changes in the delivery of services to disabled children and the delivery of educational services to disabled children changed dramatically. Current estimates indicate that two out of three disabled children are a part of regular education, a sharp contrast to the educational environmental conditions of the disabled prior
to the landmark legislation embodied in PL 94-142 now PL 101-476 which created the impetus for inclusion. It is precisely these conditions that created an unprecedented challenge for education personnel.

Barbara Milbauer (1996) asserts that students with disabilities have a wide range of special educational needs, varying greatly in intensity and duration; that there is a need for a continuum of educational settings, appropriate for an individual child's needs; that to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities should be educated with non-disabled students; and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of an student with disabilities child from education with non-disabled students should occur only when the intensity of the child's special education and related needs is such that they cannot be satisfied in an environment including non-disabled students, even with the provision of supplementary aids and services.

Since the passage of the landmark Education for All Handicapped Children's Act (PL 94-142) in 1975, students with disabilities have had right to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Until recently this usually meant some type of special placement. Now professionals as well as some advocacy groups for the disabled are pushing to have all students with disabilities educated in regular classrooms regardless of the nature and severity of their disability. This practice, referred
to as inclusion, is taking advantage of court decisions that favor the position to move ahead.

A report of the National Council of Sciences (Heller et al. 1982) prompted early research on inclusion. The panel found that classification and placement of children in special education ineffective and discriminatory. It is recommended that students be given noninclusive or extra-class placement if they can be accurately classified and only if noninclusion demonstrates superior results. This recommendation set the foundation for the inclusion debate. Recent research, legislation and court decisions further supported the case for inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms.

Parents and legal experts are increasingly demanding that schools address the scientific and legal basis for non inclusive practices. As schools are challenged to effectively serve an increasingly diverse student population, the concerns is not whether to provide inclusive education, but how to implement inclusive education in ways that are both feasible and effective in ensuring educational success for all students, especially those with special needs (Baker 1994). To reduce the gap between special students and regular students requires effective education methods for all students. A general consensus among professionals and advocates alike is that the
integration process appears to work more effectively when
the special education teacher works side by side with the
regular education teacher (Barry 1996).

The variety of advantages ascribed to inclusion consist
of removing the stigma associated with special classes,
providing realistic situations in school to prepare the
disabled for experiences they will eventually face when
they are not longer students, allowing regular and special
classroom teachers to share their skills and knowledge
in teaching the same children, and giving more children
a cost-effective education.

Inclusion, is now in its formulative stages. And
inclusion like any growing movement, calls for changes
in attitudes, behaviors and socioeducational structures.

Research indicates that one of the key factors in
the success of integration of students with disabilities
is attitude, especially teacher attitude. Several studies
suggest that we must deal with attitudes, fears and
frustrations about students with disabilities that may
be prevalent among regular education personnel. Muller
(1994) suggests that professionals must focus on the
attitudes of everyone involved and make those attitudes
the focus of our efforts to change.

Evolution of the Problem

In the early seventies, a change was noted in the
philosophy of special education following the passage of
the Education of All Handicapped Children Act now entitled the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act. This law reflects a major commitment by the federal government to the education of students with disabilities.

The basis for inclusion can be found in both legal mandates and moral principles. However, once inclusion is established in a school, it will be up to educators to make appropriate decisions about individual students with disabilities. Students with disabilities were traditionally taught in separate classrooms or special separate schools by special education teachers. The segregated service approach gave way to including students with disabilities in regular education classrooms either full or part time each school day (Baker 1995).

Legal factors that have been considered in inclusion ruling include the long term benefits of the students, any detrimental effects a disabled student may have on the education of students without disabilities in the regular classroom, and the cost of establishing or maintaining an inclusive education program for the students. Inclusion is about creating a classroom environment that welcomes and values diversity. It challenges all those involved to go beyond expected practice and to question why exclusion, prejudice, and discrimination exist. It aims to build communities of care and acceptance in which the special needs child is no longer different because
all children are valued (Baker 1995).

Clearly, the challenge of the future for both the community and educational professionals is to provide a basic restructuring of the system to allow for individual differences and a means to include those differences in a positive learning environment. Students with differences are just as necessary to the maturation, growth, and intellectual education within the American public school system as teachers, books, and buildings. Study after study has shown that including students with disabilities is one way to achieve that goal and may indeed provide an optimal learning and educational package that will transcend some of the broader issues facing the American school system. Accounting for individual differences, and including students with those differences into the classrooms, may indeed allow diversity to become a standard skill that will launch the American school system into the 21st century (Jallad et al. 1990).

As a result of the inclusion movement regular educators have found children who once may have been placed in self contained classes for the disabled now a part of their regular classroom.

The writer is concerned about the attitudes of the regular educators who have been personally encountered and is interested in determining the prevalence of the attitudes of regular educators in the wider professional
community.

This study was undertaken in Atlanta, Georgia to determine, examine and interpret the prevailing attitudes of middle school regular classroom teachers toward this increasing practice in their school system.

Contribution to Educational Knowledge

It is hoped that the findings in this study will be of value to educators, especially those who have taken the challenge of teaching students with disabilities through inclusion into regular classes. Also it is further hoped that:

1. This study will provide valuable information for potential and practicing regular education teachers for self-assessment in terms of positive attitudes towards professional development.

2. It will give insight into current trends and litigation surrounding these issues toward the education of students with disabilities.

3. Teacher trainers will be able to utilize this information to re-examine their curricular in order to design or modify curricula relevant to the education of middle school classroom teachers with emphasis on attitudes.

4. The findings of this study will make information that may be useful to assist not only educators, but school-community citizenry in helping to determine the feasibility of implementing inclusion in their schools.
Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study deals with the question:
What are the expressed attitudes of middle school regular classroom teachers in Atlanta Public School System toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom?

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship existing between the attitudes of middle school regular classroom teachers toward inclusion of students with disabilities and selected social-occupational variables and to further investigate the relationship of these attitudes.

Research Questions

The research questions generated for this study are:

1. Is there any significant differences in expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities among middle school regular classroom teachers categorized based on age?

2. Is there any significant differences in expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities based on sex?

3. Is there any significant differences in expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities among middle school regular classroom teachers based on
years of service?

4. Is there any significant differences in expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities with regard to the number of undergraduate or graduate academic courses taken in special education?

5. Is there any significant differences in expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities with regard to the socioeconomic status of the school community?

6. Is there any significant differences in expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities with regard to the type of program(s) in their school for disabled students?

7. Is there any significant differences in expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities and/or based on exposure to disabled children?

Research Hypotheses

The null hypotheses tested in this study are:

1. There is no significant difference in the expressed attitudes toward inclusion based on age.

2. There is no significant difference in expressed attitudes toward inclusion based on sex.

3. There is no significant difference in the expressed attitudes toward inclusion based on years of service.

4. There is no significant difference in the expressed attitudes toward inclusion based on the number of under-
graduate or graduate academic courses taken in special education.

5. There is no significant difference in the expressed attitudes toward inclusion based on the socioeconomic status of the school community.

6. There is no significant difference in the expressed attitudes toward inclusion based on type of program(s) in their school.

7. There is no significant difference in expressed attitudes toward inclusion based on exposure to disabled children.

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined according to their usage in this study:

**Inclusion**: The education of all students regardless of the nature and/or type of disability in the same group environment. Each child's specific needs are addressed in the integrated environment of a regular school setting with assistance of supportive services so that they can be successful in their adjustment and performance (Pierangelo & Jacoby 1996).

**Students with disabilities**: Persons under the age of twenty-one who are entitled to attend public school and who, because of mental, physical, or emotional reasons can receive appropriate educational opportunities from special services and programs to include, but not limited to, transportation, special classes, part-time programs, resource programs, alternate learning centers, home instruction and special teachers; State operated or State supported special school or other special facilities; pupil personnel services and/or those services, facilities, or programs which can be obtained through contracts with boards of cooperative educational services, public school districts, approved non public schools, or other agencies (Georgia Special Education State Program Plan 1997).
Special Education Training: As defined in this study includes graduate and/or undergraduate training received at an institution of higher education and does not include inservice or staff development (Baker 1996).

Middle School: A academic setting designed especially for addressing the dramatic social, physical and mental changes of early adolescents usually consisting of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders (Atlanta Public School System Staff Handbook 1996).

Regular classroom: The least-restrictive environment for all nondisabled children. This environment alone without some type of special education supportive service(s) is not suitable for a disabled child (Pierangelo and Jacoby 1996).

Inclusive classroom: An environment in which disabled students and nondisabled students are served together through the use of collaborative efforts within the school, the home and the community (Pierangelo and Jacoby 1996). The inclusive classroom is a way to promote shared activities with individualized outcomes as well as a sense of belonging and group membership for all students (Stainback and Stainback 1992).

Attitude: For the purpose of this study, attitude is defined as the regular classroom teacher's expressed feelings toward inclusion of students with disabilities as reflected in data on the Inclusion Inventory.

Research Design

The research design employed in this study was the descriptive survey method. Descriptive research was defined by Ary et al. (1990) as studies designed to obtain information concerning the status of a phenomenon. They are directed toward determining the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of the study. (Leedy 1989, 40) further defined descriptive research in this manner:

To behold is to look beyond the fact; to go beyond the observation. Look at a world of men and women, and you are overwhelmed by what you see; select from the mass of humanity a well chosen few, and these
observe with insight, and they will tell you more than multitudes together. This is the way we must learn, by sampling judiciously, by looking intently with the inward eye. Then from these few that you behold, tell us what you see to be the truth. This is the descriptive-normative-survey method.

The descriptive survey research design was appropriate for this research project it allowed the researcher to examine present conditions and describe systematically a situation or an area of interest factually and accurately.

**Research Procedures**

Data for this investigation were analyzed using the descriptive survey technique employing an inventory. The instrument was mailed via first class mail to the one-hundred (100) public middle school classroom teachers in the Atlanta System.

The steps for gathering and analyzing the data included the following:

1. One-hundred (100) middle school classroom teachers were randomly selected.

2. The inventory with a cover letter was mailed via first class mail to one-hundred (100) middle school classroom teachers employed by Atlanta Public School System, to collect data with respect to social-occupational characteristics and expressed attitudes toward students with disabilities.

3. Responses on the inventory were compiled and
grouped according to the teacher's expressed attitudes.

4. The data were tabulated, analyzed and assembled in percentages to show results for the designated variables.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited in the following ways:

1. The involvement of mail questionnaire survey research in which the responses were not received from the entire group.

2. This study was conducted in the Atlanta Public Schools using only middle school regular classroom teachers. Therefore, the conclusions which were derived applied only to middle school regular classroom teachers in the Atlanta Public Schools.

Subjects and Locale of the Study

The subjects in this study were predominantly middle school classroom teachers in the Atlanta Public School System, Atlanta, Georgia who were employed during the 1996-97 school year.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was designed in a questionnaire format that consisted of 16 questions with multiple choice answers. The instrument consisted of two parts: Part I: Social-Occupational Characteristics and Part II: Inclusion Analysis. The instrument stated that all information would be kept confidential and the
directions for participants were to check only one answer in each question.

Organization of Remaining Chapters and References

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter II deals with a survey of literature relating to the problem under investigation. This related information is used to set the study in its proper educational context.

Chapter III contains information about the selection of the sample, the instrument and statistical methods for analysis and treatment of data.

In Chapter IV the data is presented and reviewed. This chapter includes descriptive analysis of data, testing of hypothesis, and tables of the information gathered on the instrument.

Chapter V presents the summary, conclusions, implications and recommendations. The summary contains statements of findings revealed in the study. The implications may provide specific suggestions for middle school classroom teachers and education. The recommendations, based on findings in this study, may be used by school systems, and/or universities concerned with the inclusion process and teacher training programs.

The references cited and the appendices are the final portion of this study.
Summary

This study sought to examine and interpret middle school classroom teacher's expressed attitudes toward inclusion of disabled children with specific attention to those variables affecting teacher attitudes. Data obtained from seventy-three (73) teachers in the Atlanta Public School System provided information on the subject's perceptions of inclusion as a viable concept in education. Responses obtained from a data inventory consisting of social-occupational characteristics provided data for determining the teacher's expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The vision of inclusion is that all students would be served in their neighborhood schools, in the "regular classroom" with children their own age. Inclusion promotes the concept that these schools would be restructured so that they are supportive, nurturing communities that meet the unique needs of all students within them. The school could rich resources of both students and teachers (Sapon-Sevin 1996). Philosophy this notion is sound. The debate emerging in the literature and among regular educators and special and special educators is to what extent can this concept be realistically achieved. The general consensus appears to be that inclusion will succeed to the extent that it links itself with other ongoing restructuring efforts. The impetus for inclusion rest in the broad consensus that is emerging among educators that narrowly framed categorical programs have produced too few benefits (O'Neil 1996).

Two forces in contemporary education, among others, have led to the somewhat divisive argument focusing on whether to include students with disabilities children
or to provide for their needs in more tradition settings within the regular classroom. Sharply escalating educational costs have led to controversy and concern over accountability in education, as well as the idea that the best possible answers for students with disabilities lie in including them in regular classes, ultimately preparing them for the pragmatic world.

In fact, one of the clearest indications derived from the research on the subject is that inclusion means different things to different people. To some it is similar to the practice of integrating children from self-contained special classes into regular classes on a part-time basis. To others, inclusion is the elimination all specialized groupings on the basis of disability or exception.

The literature contains several definitions for inclusion. Baker (1995) cites that the general consensus is that inclusion is the act of educating all children regardless of their disabilities in a general education classroom. It can also be defined as the physical, sociological, and instructional inclusion of students with special needs into general education classrooms for the majority of the school day. Inclusion is more than merely physically locating students with special needs in classrooms with their chronologically aged peers. It requires that they be included with all aspects of the classroom and their educational needs met through services
provided in the general education classroom.

One of the most controversial and basic issues surrounding inclusion deals with the classification of students. One author summarizes the problem, "The classification of human beings, however, involves more than simple perception, and it is far more serious. Classification is a social act that is used at times to cast deviants from the community" (Stainback and Stainback 1992). In some ancient societies, many infants were classified as handicapped for the least deformity. These infants were often left unattended and, in some remote places, left to die. By the same token, some individuals, by their intrinsic classification, became entitled to extraordinary interventions on their behalf (Stainback and Stainback 1992).

Under the current educational system, classification systems applied to students with disabilities are anomalous. In the past, some of the categories of special children were used to keep students with unique needs out of regular education and society.

Because of the danger of using classification in a negative manner, classification topics should be treated categorically and judged accordingly. For instance, hearing impairments, visual impairments, profound disabilities, giftedness, and speech and language impairments should not be treated in the same manner. Of course, treating
the students with disabilities in a broader-based category does not exempt the treatment from moving the process into the forefront of the public school. Moreover, with respect to children in the milder categories, a regular school environment seems more productive for the child. Screening and assessment of students in the schools should probably be dimensional rather than categorical, even though the broader categories are used to delineate unique needs for special children. In terms of analysis, when measurements are continuous, they should not be segmented by category and diagnosis should be expressed mainly in curriculum-based terms. Analysts who wish to push diagnoses to levels or orders of disposition beyond the curriculum level should be held to a very high standard of evidence that their procedures are useful before they are admitted to practice in the schools (Baker 1995).

Additionally, assessment processes undertaken in cases of students who show special needs should be applied not only to the student but also to the class and school, and to each student's broader life situation. This will have a greater effect on both the students with disabilities and the regular classroom participant over the long-term.

There are many arguments both for and against including students with disabilities into the regular school system. Basically, one view holds that it is to both the students with disabilities and the regular child's benefit to be
exposed to individual differences. The disabled child learns to integrate into the world, being challenged both socially and intellectually. The regular child learns to accept alternate behavior and is quite often socialized into a caring mode that may have positive consequences later in life. Those opposed to inclusion believe that regular classrooms and classroom teachers are neither trained nor equipped to handle students with disabilities. They believe that in an inclusion environment, the students with disabilities is not given enough individualized attention and therefore suffers from a lack of the type of stimuli necessary for positive development (Vandercook and York 1996).

Another criticism of inclusion is that it can have a detrimental effect on the learning process of students who are not disabled. It has been found that as teachers begin to individualize instruction to accommodate the student with special needs, other students, particularly those considered at risk, also will benefit from the accompanying support systems. Studies of students at risk indicate that the kinds of support systems needed by such students are similar to those needed by students with disabilities. Having the benefit of both a special teacher and a regular teacher collaborating in a regular class is morally and educationally sound because such collaboration focuses on children's needs, not their labels.
Martin (1995) reports that inclusion offers less individualized instruction to children; that they would suffer from some of the same problems of organization, planning, and coordination that affect current pull out programs; that related services would not be more frequently offered than they are at present; and that most especially the value of the programs would be determined primarily by teacher and administrator feelings.

Several authors criticize the appropriateness of inclusion for young children.

Those believing inclusion is not appropriate for young children believe that learning will be affected, since students with disabilities will not receive intensive instruction on prerequisite and readiness skills that they need. Also, nondisabled children will either ignore students with disabilities or ridicule and abuse them because of negative attitudes. Staff time requirements will also increase if the students with disabilities are not in one location, because staff will need to travel from school to school (Sapon 1991).

Further, others believe that young students with disabilities are not ready for the concept of preparation because they do not have the required skills necessary to enter the regular classroom. For instance, these skills (e.g., ability to ambulate, readiness for associative and
cooperative play, attentional skills, and the ability to communicate with peers) are usually not developed sufficiently in students with disabilities without first being exposed to intensive training (Cipani 1995).

Inclusion can be mutually beneficial to all concerned when special needs children are educated as part of regular classrooms. This is supported by research into mixed age grouping, which finds that social as well as academic benefits occur when there is a wider than normal range of acceptable behaviors, performances and maturity levels in a classroom. Self-esteem is enhanced, for there are more ways of being accepted and more notions of what is valued.

Another advantage of peer involvement is called proximal development. In other words, in some situations children acting as tutors are often closer to the understanding and needs of their peers than are the teachers. This can be beneficial to the child with special needs and also for the teacher. Another important skill that arises from teaching children with special needs is that of nurturing. Nurturing involves those skills that parents need to care for their own children. It recognizes rights, responsibilities and care for those in need. It is patience with understanding (Stainback 1990).

However, much of the research on the subject indicates that parents, community members, and paraprofessionals
have proven quite successful at adapting the regular classroom to the fulfillment of emotional and intellectual goals of the students with disabilities. Disabled children, moreover, often do a better job of achieving, both academically and socially, when they are integrated into an inclusive classroom. That same research reveals that a segregated setting for students with disabilities is not as effective as including them into the regular classroom and that exposure of regular children to disabled children actually causes a lessening of the stereotyping of the disabled. Ironically, one of the major barriers to successful inclusion is not funding or children's attitudes but the preconceptions of the adults, usually from outside the educational framework (Jallad, Saumell, Slusher and Vaughn 1995).

**Background for Change**

Educating disabled students with their non-disabled peers was one of the major principles of the Education for Handicapped Children Act which is known as Public Law 94-142. It has now been renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which is also known as Public Law 101-476. How to accomplish inclusion is still being addressed in the courts. Legal factors that have been considered in inclusion rulings include the long term benefits of the students, any detrimental effects a disabled student may have on the education of students without
disabilities in the regular classroom, and the cost of establishing or maintaining an inclusive education program for the student. Inclusion is about creating a classroom environment that welcomes and values diversity. It challenges all those involved to go beyond expected practice and to question why exclusion, prejudice, and discrimination exist. It aims to build communities of care and acceptance in which special needs child is no longer different because all children are valued (Baker 1995).

The integration of students with disabilities into regular education classrooms is not a new concept. Haring (1958) summarizes the philosophy of inclusion, or integration noting that:

Exceptional children should have the benefit of experiences with their non exceptional peers whenever possible. Because these children will eventually be required to achieve a satisfactory adjustment within a predominately normal society, the experiences they have as children with the society are invaluable to them. Furthermore, normal children should be given the opportunity to understand, accept and adjust to children with exceptionalities.

Although programs for disabled children expanded during the 1960's, they were still lacking in three respects. They provided separate facilities and separate teachers. Consequently, many disabled students were labeled as "different." Such labels followed and often hindered students during their entire lives. Another problem was lumping all disabled students, particularly mentally disabled ones, under one category. As educators soon
discovered, many suffered from environmental factors such as poverty or physical abuse, but they had not been born mentally deficient. A third problem rested on the lack of federal or state funds allocated to programs for disabled students.

A number of factors are responsible for the changes that have come about in the education of students with disabilities. However, the most basic issues concerning changes in special education for disabled children are two-fold. First, to shift the emphasis away from the serving of disabled children by disability labels to providing for the special educational needs of children within the framework of the regular program and secondly, to comply with legislative demands resulting from parental pressures to integrate labeled children into the regular school program.

Since evidence accumulated over the years to indicate that inclusion would be a valid alternative to self-contained special classes for appropriately selected pupils and teachers, a number of authors have discussed their findings on inappropriateness of special class placement and suggestive alternatives. These early classic studies investigated the efficacy of special class placement of disproportionate groups of children (including minorities), ability grouping, testing practices and labeling as well as suggestive alternatives to special education placement.
Among these investigators are (Cohen 1978); (O'Donnell and Bradfield 1976); (Jones 1974); (Bruininks 1972); (Love 1972); (Barksdale and Atkinson 1971); (Haywood 1971); (Lilly 1971); (MacMillian 1971); (Cegelka and Tyler 1970); (Deno 1970); (Kidd 1970); (Milazzo 1970); (Christophos and Renz 1969); (Dunn 1968); (Guskin and Spicker 1968); (Goldstein 1967); (Combs and Harper 1967); (Wright 1967); (Rubin, Senison, and Betrull 1966); (Hodgson 1964); (Kirk 1964); (Johnson 1962).

The major alternative systems for change in providing services for disabled children was first purposed by Deno. This system which form the basis for the current structure of educational alternative for disabled children, is unique in its design and attempts to upgrade the effectiveness of the total pupil education effort. Deno cascade of educational alternative which provides for the structure of special education placement to date allows for a variety of approaches for serving students with disabilities, extending from placement in a regular class, with no need for special education, to special education that is provided in settings that may be the administrative responsibility of non-school agencies (Deno 1972).

**Pressures for Inclusion**

Educational scholars agree that parental pressure and litigation were the two primary factors which brought
the inclusion concept to the surface in American education.

Birch asserts that the pressures toward inclusion spring from a complex group of motives of which at least eleven can be identified:

1. Parental concerns were expressed more directly and forcefully.
2. The rejection of the labeling of children.
3. The capability to deliver special education anywhere has improved.
4. Court actions which accelerated changes in special education procedures.
5. Questions regarding the fairness and accuracy of psychological testing.
6. The proliferation of children classified psycho-metrically as mentally retarded.
7. Civil rights actions against segregation which uncovered questionable special education placement practices.

Some school districts came under fire for allegedly violating children's civil rights by placing them in special classes which were operated as segregated school facilities. Segregation could be charged, for instance, if special education classes in a school contained significantly greater proportions of American-Oriental, Black, Mexican-American, or Indian children than the rest of the school population.

8. The argument that non-disabled children were
deprived if they are not allowed to associate with disabled children.

Certain educators have argued that children without handicaps are deprived of important experiences if they are separated from their disabled agemates in school. The same point has been made by some parents of both disabled and non-disabled children. Understanding, helpfulness, satisfaction of curiosity, overcoming of disabilities, acceptance of differences, are but a few of the concepts and feelings which can be developed among normal children through constructively managed interactions in school with students with disabilities who are their classmates.

9. The programs questioned effectiveness of conventional special education.

10. Financial Considerations foster inclusion.

11. American philosophical foundations which encouraged diversity in the same educational setting (Birch 1977).

(Reynolds and Rosen 1976) suggest that parent groups emerged as a powerful force for setting up the directions of special education activities toward inclusion. Parents of disabled children began to organize to obtain educational facilities for their offspring and to act as watchdogs of the institutions serving them.

Similarly Kroth reports that many parents, as well as educators, questioned the desirability of traditional
self-contained classrooms for many students with disabilities. Labeling, damage to self-concept, compartmentalization, concerns by minority groups, and loss of stimulating opportunities, as well as questions about the constitutionality of some current testing and grouping practices, were matters of increasing concern.

A "quiet revolution" was fought within American education for the disabled that already exists for the non-disabled throughout the United States. This recent movement was directed toward the number of children who were denied an education. Concern for the education of disabled children continues to acquire base in the American Society. It is the concern not only of parents and teachers, but of state and local governments. It now has become the concern of governmental officials at the highest level of the United States.

Litigation has resulted in formulation of the concepts "right to education," in addition to "right to treatment," and "freedom from involuntary servitude" in the area of mental health and special education (Kirk 1968).

Attitudinal Studies Related to Integration and Inclusion

In the past decade, a host of studies have explored the relationship between teachers' expectations and student achievement. Research strongly suggests that higher performance expectations by teachers do stimulate more
effort on the part of both teachers and students, and lead
to increased student achievement (Gersten, Walker, and
Darch 1988). Since the mid-1980's, there has been
considerable discussion regarding greater accommodation
of disabled students within a inclusion setting and the
integration of regular special education (Reynolds et al.
1987).

teacher perceptions of mainstreaming/inclusion. He used
various resources in order to collect data which included,
databases, books and scanning print journals. After
collecting this data the authors used a process of
evaluation that listed specific criteria for research to
be included in his finding.

The results were reported in the following categories:
(1) Do teachers support mainstreaming/inclusion of students
with disabilities in general education classes? The
research surveyed showed that overall, 65% of the
respondents indicated support of the concept of
mainstreaming/inclusion. However, when asked about this
in more detail, teachers indicated different levels of
support according to the severity of the student's
disability. The results indicated that a lower percentage
of respondents supported mainstreaming/inclusion for
students with more severe disabilities. This suggests
that teachers are more comfortable with students that
don't deviate significantly from what they consider "the norm".

(Banks 1990) suggests that some regular education teachers feel that it is wasteful to use 40% of their time to teach students who are not going to learn anything anyway. However, "experts say the evidence is irrefutable that disabled children taught in integrated settings display better social development and a higher mastery of skill than segregated students." In a similar study reported by Chester and Grants (1991), an investigation on teacher's attitudes towards the inclusion of severely learning disabled students reported by Chester (1991) results indicated that the majority (60%) of teachers "agreed that the inclusion of severely learning disabled students demands more teacher time."

Research also suggests that teacher expectations are highly connected to student success in the academic environment. In a classic study conducted by both Edmonds (1979) and Brookover (1981) the researchers found that teachers and administrators in successful inner-city schools demonstrated consistently high expectations for students in academic, social, and behavioral domains. Recently, there has been a concurrent move in inservice education programs to stress high expectations (e.g., Clark and McCarthy 1991) and to urge teachers to increase their standards and expectations in the hope of raising student
achievement.

Lower expectations and negative teacher attitudes may partially account for the negative experiences of many disabled children who have been integrated into regular classroom under the provision of Public Law 94-142 now Public Law 101-476 (Gresham 1990). It is possible that the most successful teachers, those with the highest expectations and standards for their students, tend to resist placement of a child with obvious behavioral or learning problems, social skill deficits, or other atypical characteristics. Such children are typically perceived as difficult to teach, as demanding of teacher time and resources, and as having low potential achievement levels (Gerber and Semmel 1984).

Teachers are usually indirect and sometime evasive about the placement of disabled students in their classrooms, perhaps suggesting that the child "really would do a lot better in the room across the hall" or alluding to how the teacher cannot find an appropriate reading group for the student. Several researchers have explored this phenomenon. Ysseldyke and his colleagues (Thurlow et al. 1983) conducted studies in which teachers were asked what they would do if a child with a certain problem (e.g., a drooler or a well-behaved, charming child who read well below grade level) were placed in their classroom. Possible determinants of these simulated decisions were analyzed.
Ysseldyke and Thurlow (1983) argued that teachers who anonymously tell a researcher that they will actively resist placing a problem child in their classroom will likely do this in practice.

Walker and Rankin (1983) also explored the issue of teachers' resistance to placing disabled students in their classrooms as part of a larger program of research into the social integration of disabled children in less restricted settings (Walker 1988). The Walker and Rankin results indicated that those teachers most likely to succeed with low performing students were also those who (a) expected the most adaptive behavior, (b) tolerated the fewest maladaptive behaviors, and (c) showed the least reluctance to have disabled children placed in their classrooms. The researchers have also found that "effective" teachers, those with high standards and low tolerance for deviant behavior are those most likely to seek help in dealing with deviant behavior and who efficiently use their instructional time. Therefore, one reason for the type of resistance reported by Walker may be the effective teachers' attempt to guard against inefficient use of academic instructional time, which could result in an overall decreased level of student performance (Walker in press).

Other researchers have reported similar findings (Kauffman, Wong, Lloyd, Hung, and Pullen 1988) have reported
that most or all children with disabilities might be assumed to be at risk to have a considerably higher than average chance of failure, at least without special accommodation for their disabilities.

The results of these studies suggest that the teachers who would be most likely to maximize the achievement gains of students with learning and behavior problems were also those likely to resist their placement in their classes. Low performing students who have intensive instructional or management needs may have difficulty accessing the most skilled teachers in school settings.

Little is known about how teachers judge pupils to be at risk in the context of their expectations and demands for classroom conduct, although the link between disordered behavior and risk of school failure has been noted (Lombardi, O'dell, Novotny 1991), (Cuban 1989), (Shinn, Ramsey, Walker, Stieber, and O'Neill 1987). Previous research has explored the demands and expectations of teachers for disabled pupils in their classrooms, the adaptive behaviors they consider critical for success and the maladaptive behaviors they consider unacceptable (Walker and Rankin in press), (Kauffman, Lloyd, and McGee 1989), (Walker and Lamon 1987), (Kerr and Zigmond 1986). Nevertheless, research has not addressed questions regarding the relationship between teachers' expectations and demands for classroom behavior and their judgments of disabled
Distinctions between students with disabilities and those who are called at risk are not currently clear, as evidenced by controversy regarding the extension of special services to at risk pupils among special educators and proponents of school reform. Nevertheless, it is clear that many children not identified for special education as well as those with disabilities carry an elevated risk for school failure (Speece and Cooper 1990).

The finding that teachers discriminate between behavior violating their own personal standards and behavior that is likely to lead to school failure regardless of who the child's teacher might be suggests directions for future research. Studies are needed to (a) clarify the relationship between teachers' personal standards and their perceptions, (b) determine the predictive validity of teachers' judgments of the behavior that places pupils at risk, (c) assess the accuracy of teachers' predictions about behavior that would place children at risk in other teachers' classrooms, and (d) determine the relationship between teachers' judgments and their instructional and behavior management strategies (Kauffman, Lloyd, McGee 1989), (Walker and Lamon 1987), (Kerr and Zigmond 1986), (Walker and Rankin 1983).
Teacher Attitudes Toward the Implementation of Inclusion

Chambers (1994) outlines steps that will enable teachers to implement successful inclusion of students with mild/moderate disabilities into regular classroom settings, in rural schools. The underlying philosophy as stated in the article is "preplanning, planning, more planning--three steps to successful inclusion!" However, the article actually outlines more than three steps.

The first step discussed was preplanning with staff. This would consist of regular classroom teachers interacting with and observing the student with the disability prior to that student being placed in the regular classroom. The next step of preplanning would involve preparing the peers in the regular classroom by educating them about the student's disability and possibly some interaction with the peers. The next step would be to design an effective communication system between the special educator, the regular classroom teacher, and the parents of the student. Another part of this preplanning would include structuring collaborative planning time, which would require an elaborate plan to free teachers for extra planning time.

Rouch (1994) suggests that as schools prepare for inclusion, parents of students with disabilities have been a valuable resource for teachers and principals. Parents of students with disabilities have been involved at the
building level in planning for inclusion by providing staff briefings about their children and, in some instances, serving on hiring panels for new teachers joining the school staff. In some districts, parents sit with staff committees to determine the best classroom placement for their child as they move through the grades.

Little is known about either the instructional arrangements teachers use for students with mild disabilities in regular education settings or the effectiveness of various instructional arrangement are teachers attitudes toward these modifications. The only factors for which information is available are class size and student-teacher ration (Thurlow, Ysseldyke, and Wotruba 1987) and grouping practices (Ysseldyke, Thurlow, Christenson, and McVicar 1988). Yet special educators increasingly are being asked to work with classroom teachers to help them identify optimal ways of helping students with mild disabilities succeed in general education classrooms (Reynolds, Wang, and Walberg 1987), (Stainback and Stainback 1984). As a result, special educators must pay special attention to existing instructional arrangements for students with mild disabilities in regular classrooms.

Instructional arrangements and teacher's perceptions was examined by a questionnaire sent to 240 special education teachers across the United States who were asked to pass it on to their regular education colleagues. The
two-page questionnaire was based on literature about adapted education and instruction, focusing on the use of alternative instructional arrangements to meet the needs of individual students in regular education classrooms. The questionnaire asked for information about teachers' practices and opinions regarding structural arrangements and adaptive instruction for students with mild disabilities.

The two least desirable adaptations were "modifying tasks until student makes no errors or only infrequent mistakes" (average rating = 5.5) and "using other goals to instruct failing student" (average rating = 5.6).

The majority of both elementary and secondary teachers (58% and 51% respectively) reported no differences in their classroom instructional arrangements due to the presence of students with disabilities. Most teachers (58% elementary, 64% secondary) indicated that the primary method of instruction did not differ when students with disabilities were in the classroom.

The results of this survey provide little indication that teachers change their instructional methods when students with disabilities are placed in their classrooms. This holds true for both elementary and secondary teachers, although secondary teachers seem to encounter greater numbers of students with disabilities during a school day.
The ratings of elementary teachers were slightly higher than the ratings of secondary teachers for both desirability and ability to do.

These results suggest that general education teachers either do not see a way to alter the classroom environment to accommodate students with disabilities, or are unable to implement potential changes for one reason or another. The results of this survey provide an interesting, although limited, picture of some of the practices employed by regular education teachers in teaching students with mild disabilities (Ysseldyke, Thurlow, Wotruba, et al. 1990). In a similar study reported by Schumm and Vaughn (1994) teachers' perceptions of the desirability and feasibility of adaptations for the inclusion of students in their regular education classes were examined. Of particular interest was how teachers of different grade levels would respond to adaptations. It was hypothesized that some adaptations such as establishing a personal relationship with the inclusion students would be more desirable and feasible than other adaptations such as adapting their tests or other procedures for evaluation. The teachers were also asked to rate (excellent, good, fair, poor) their knowledge and skills for planning for regular education students and the inclusion students. Ninety-eight percent of the teachers rated their planning for regular education students as either excellent or good and 41% of the
respondents rated their planning for the inclusion students as either excellent or good. Results indicate that regular classroom teachers identify adaptations in materials and instruction as neither desirable nor feasible when teaching special learners in the regular classroom. This information is particularly relevant in light of the emphasis on educating special education students in the regular classroom. The assumption is that regular classroom teachers are willing to make instructional, curricular, and planning adaptations. The results of this survey also suggest that regular classroom teachers do not perceive these types of adaptations as highly desirable or feasible.

Similar results are reported by Zigmond and Baker (1990) in a school-based analysis of regular classroom teachers' instructional adaptations for special learners. Though the teachers in their target middle school appeared ready for the full integration of special education students, they made few adaptations in their instructional style. The analysis of Zigmond and Baker found that teachers reported a need to reorganize daily routines and integrate alternative instructional practices to accommodate special learners. They concluded that "fundamental changes in inclusion instruction must occur if the regular education initiative is to work in this school." Zigmond and Baker also suggest that regular classroom teachers do not find instructional and curricular
adaptations feasible. Teachers are willing to include the inclusion students within the whole class activities and to provide encouragement and support for their academics. They are less willing to make specific modifications for their instruction, use of materials, or environment. Few differences were found among grade groupings with elementary, middle, and high school teachers providing similar overall patterns of responses. These findings also indicate that the expectation that regular classroom teachers will make planning, instructional, and environmental adaptations for the special learners in their classroom may not be realistic (Zigmond and Baker 1990).

The research regarding the attitudes of regular educators regarding integration of disabled students and their willingness to make adaptations is inconclusive as (Phillips and McCullough 1990), (Tindal, Shinn, and Rodden-Nord 1990), (Idol 1988). These researchers suggest that while it is possible that appropriate support services such as those provided by specialized consultation and collaborative programs could increase teachers' willingness to make these adaptations, the extent to which regular classroom teachers accept the responsibility for making adaptations they are willing to make needs to be further explored (Jenkins, Pious, and Jewell 1990).

An analysis of the research in this area suggests that regular education and special education teachers
problems with the inclusion of students focused on three major factors that reduced the effectiveness of inclusion were: (1) teachers' preparedness for new roles, (2) the adequacy of their knowledge about inclusion and (3) their attitudes. Several authors suggest that inservice training may be the vehicle for prompting changes in teacher attitudes.

"Project Inclusion" was initiated as an Inservice Program to help improve the attitudes of teachers and to help them work effectively with inclusion of students by providing both regular and special education teachers to visit each other's room for observation of teaching strategies.

The results showed that "Project Inclusion" did produce a change in teacher attitudes about inclusion. For example: Regular education teachers were now able to see similarities of regular and special education students as compared to extreme differences, positive change of attitudes of inclusion students versus negative attitudes and rejection of inclusion students. Regular and special education teachers felt that they no longer required as much training to successfully teach inclusion students.

"Both groups of teachers indicated that visiting each other's classrooms during the program improved their attitude toward and respect for each other's jobs. Project
Inclusion proved to be a worthwhile way to improve a school's inclusion program by addressing the issue of teacher attitudes" (Dileo and Meloy 1990). Researchers have investigated the need to examine the definition of the Regular Education Initiative Jenkins, Pious, and Jewell (1990) suggesting that is not fair to hold the teacher primarily responsible for the educating students' with disabilities as well as regular education students using a "normal developmental curriculum." Other authors suggest a narrowing of the definition of the Regular Education Initiative (REI). A future 21st century definition reports that in order to prepare for the 21st century school administration are needed to work in conjunction with teachers to prepare students for the 21st century curriculum, "how to concentrate on learning how to learn, and how to be life long learners, rather than learning momentarily correct facts." They state that in order for this to occur that teachers must change their attitudes towards working with heterogeneous groups and that "they will be eclectic-knowledgeable in instructional methods and curricula with origins in general and special education." They will be experimenters and inventors picking, choosing, combining and recombining methods to actively engage students in their own and others' acquisition of (a) humanistic, public service ethics (b) communication, information-seeking, and problem solving
skills, and (c) core curricula deemed essential by the community (Thousand 1991).

Schumm's examined general education teachers' perceptions and feelings about planning for the inclusion of students as well as their planning practices. The questionnaire consisted of six sections: (1) demographics, (2) feelings about planning, (3) information sources, (4) facilitators and barriers to planning, (5) planning practices, and (6) comments (optional).

Subjects included 775 elementary, middle, and high school teachers representing 39 schools in a metropolitan school district in the Southeast. Respondents paralleled school district demographic profiles in terms of ethnicity, gender, years of teaching experience, and level of education. Expressed feelings of the respondents about planning for inclusion of students were generally positive with no fewer than 65% of teachers identifying their feelings as positive or somewhat positive; however, teacher planning practices did not necessarily reflect their overall positive feelings about planning. Grade grouping (e.g., elementary, middle school, high school) differences emerged in the planning practices subscale with higher ratings for planning and instructional adaptations for inclusion students among elementary teachers, lower for middle school teachers, and even lower for high school teachers. Similarly, middle and high school teachers were less likely
to use a variety of information sources when planning for inclusion students. One striking result was the lack of use of the IEP as an information source. Classroom teachers viewed fellow professionals (e.g., special education teachers, school based curriculum specialists such as reading resource teachers, and guidance counselors) as those who abet the climate for children who are identified as disabled and "disadvantaged"; a general disillusionment with prospects of "curing" human ailments through the ministrations of specialists in clinical environments; technical developments in measurements and observation systems; and value changes that emphasize a greater awareness of the disabled person's rights (Chester and Grants 1990). Budgetary factors, access to equipment and materials, and physical environment in the classroom and school were identified as barriers to planning for the inclusion of students (Schumm and Vaughn 1994).

A similar study by Haager, investigated teachers' perceptions of the desirability and feasibility of adaptations for inclusion students in their regular education classes. Of particular interest was how teachers of different grade levels would respond to adaptations. Results indicated statistically significant differences between the mean desirability and feasibility ratings of each inventory item with all adaptations perceived as more desirable than feasible. Surprisingly few differences
between grade groupings surfaced. Finding are discussed in light of relative teacher preferences for various adaptations (Haager 1994).

Future research related to the adaptation of the inclusion of students is being conducted by Vaughn. The purpose of the proposed research is to present a two step research program that will (1) determine how teachers collect and use student performance data in daily and long range curricular and instructional planning, and (2) develop and field test interventions that increase classroom teachers' skills, confidence, and motivation in planning for disabled students in the regular classroom. The focus of this research program is to evaluate planning processes, not the relationship between planning and student outcomes per se. The proposed project is inclusive of all grade levels of regular classroom teachers, kindergarten through senior high school. This research will be conducted in two phases over a four year period.

The benefits that will result from these studies include: (1) a more comprehensive understanding of preplanning, interactive planning, and postplanning activities used by general education teachers for special education students, (2) a set of materials and procedures for increasing effective planning, and (3) a better understanding of the efficacy of interventions designed to affect teachers' planning and adapting of
curricula for special education students (Vaughn 1994).

Clearly, the challenge of the future for both community and educational professionals is to provide a basic restructuring of the system to allow for individual differences and a means to include those differences in a positive learning environment. Students with differences are just as necessary to the maturation, growth, and intellectual education within the American public school system as teachers, books, and buildings. Study after study has shown that including students with disabilities is one way to achieve that goal and may indeed provide an optimal learning and educational package that will transcend some of the broader issues facing the American school system. Accounting for individual differences, and including students with those differences into the classrooms, may indeed allow diversity to become a standard skill that will launch the American school system into the 21st century (Jallad et al. 1990).

Effective inclusion will be impossible to achieve without the support and positive attitudes of teachers and school administrators. All education personnel need training, particularly at the preservice level, in special education law. This knowledge is needed for two reasons: to ensure that students with special needs receive an appropriate education as required by law and to minimize the potential for inappropriate due process procedures
by parents and other advocates.

Essentially, the majority of professionals are emotionally recognizing the negative inputs resulting from the proliferation of disability categories as a means of providing better provisions for children's needs. They are sure that the only meaningful category for educational purposes is the individual child. With this in mind, drastic changes have been implemented in schools, much of which has been the result of federal legislation. These changes have Federal legislating which clearly established the regal of disabled children to receive a free and appropriate education. The basic right to education is established in The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA), signed into law by President Ford in 1975. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 was usually referred to as P.L. 94-142 in educational circles (Yell and Espin 1990) until the change from P.L. 94-142 Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) became P.L. 101-476 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990.

Summary of Related Literature

The implications from the literature on teacher attitudes towards the inclusion of disabled children into the regular classroom indicates that teacher attitudes, perceptions, planning and adaptations greatly effect the success of disabled students in inclusion.
The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) of 1975 (Public Law 94-142) now Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990 (Public Law 101-476) provided the impetus for integration of disabled students and outlined provisions for a free, appropriate education in the least restrictive environment that will meet each disabled child's individual needs.

Studies relating to teacher attitudes and adaptations toward the inclusion of disabled students and the necessary planning and making adaptations for inclusion disabled students in the regular classrooms do not support the EAHCA of 1975 now IDEA of 1990 in the majority of the literature researched in this paper. However, few research studies are reported in this area suggesting the need for further study. Research suggests that teachers' in general did not want to have disabled children in their classrooms and that if they had a choice, they would choose for disabled students to be sent to another teacher's classroom. Research in this area is also limited suggesting a need for further study. Limited research suggests that teachers actually enjoy the responsibility of having disabled children in their classes. Literature reviewed indicate limited teachers planning of instruction and a general unwillingness to make adaptations in their academic curriculum for disabled students in inclusion. Further research is needed in this area giving the limited amount of research available
Little research was found which supported that teachers actually plan and make adaptations positively if at all in their instructional academic curriculum for inclusion students. At least one study by Schumm (1994) found teachers' perceptions toward planning for inclusion students as more positive than negative. In contrast, Haager reported that teachers' perceptions of adaptations for inclusion students were desirable but not realistically feasible.

The related literature indicates that further research is needed regarding teacher perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs toward disabled students in inclusion and their perceptions about planning and making accommodations for the instructional academic curriculum for inclusion of disabled students. The research regarding teacher attitudes toward inclusion peaked in the mid-eighties without conclusions. The research available suggests that teacher attitudes must improve by becoming more positive versus negative in order for the inclusion of disabled students in the regular classroom to grow socially and academically.
CHAPTER 3
METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

The primary purpose of this study is to ascertain, examine and interpret the existing attitudes expressed by middle school teachers toward inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classrooms. The secondary purpose is to determine if there are any significant differences in expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities based on the findings of earlier researchers as reported in the literature.

Method of Research

The descriptive survey method of research was used to collect data for this project. This research method was appropriate because this type of survey determines the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of the study (Ary 1990), and allows for examining present conditions and describes a situation factually and accurately (Leedy 1989).

Selection of the Sample

The study is based on a sample of seventy-three middle classroom teachers in the Atlanta Public School System,
Atlanta, Georgia. The total number of elementary classroom teachers selected for the study was one-hundred (100) with seventy-three (73) responding to the inventory, fifty-eight (58) females and fifteen (15) males.

The subjects used in this study were seventy-three (73) elementary classroom teachers chosen from the Teacher's Directory from the Atlanta Area. Each subject received a letter sent to their home by random sampling, subjects selected were employed by the Atlanta Board of Education for the school year 1996-97. Following the random sampling, cover letters along with copies of the Inclusion Inventory, and self-addressed envelopes were mailed to these teachers. They were asked to complete the inventory and return it in the self addressed envelope.

The Instrument

Purpose

For the purpose of this study, one instrument was used: an adapted form of the Inclusion Inventory. The original instrument was designed by E. Y. Forman to measure attitudes of Principals associated with the Integration of Students with Disabilities.

The Inclusion Inventory

The adapted form of the Inclusion Inventory consists of two parts: Social-Occupational Characteristics and Inclusion Analysis.
The Social-Occupational Characteristics section contains seven items. Each item is concerned with the subject population's social and educational background and present school status in terms of provisions for exceptional children.

The Inclusion Inventory section contains two parts. Part one of this section consists of seven statements that are specifically designed to gather responses relating to inclusion based on the teachers' perceptions of the inclusion concept and their willingness to integrate students with disabilities into regular classes. The remaining section of Part II consists of eight (8) additional items that are also designed to gather responses relating more specifically to teacher attitudes toward integration of students with disabilities into regular classes. In addition, the questionnaire solicits information regarding the types of program(s) in each respondent's school for students with disabilities, as well as other programs that are for these children.

**Statistical Methods for Analysis and Treatment of Data**

The task for data analysis was to measure the relationship of variables under investigation of variables under investigation. Descriptive Analysis, on the other hand, represented the characteristics of the groups being observed.

The chi square ($X^2$) test is used to test the difference
between a sample and a previously established distribution. It is also employed with numerical data (Popham 1988).

For the purpose of testing the hypotheses of this study, chi square and cross-tabulation of the data were used to interpret and analyze the differences among the subjects as revealed by the selected socio-occupational characteristics on the Inclusion Inventory. In certain instances, the researcher used mean (X), Standard deviation (σ) and frequency distribution (f) for the analysis of descriptive data.

Data collection from the instrument were thoroughly examined. A checklist was used to ascertain whether the responses from the subjects were complete. Frequencies for all variables by groups were processed by the computer to collect data necessary to test the null hypotheses of this study. The findings of the study are presented in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

Introduction

This chapter contains the presentation of the collected data resulting from the questionnaires returned by middle school classroom teachers in Atlanta Public Schools. These teachers were employed during the 1996-97 school year in middle schools containing grades six through the eight year, including special education classes.

The Inclusion Inventory was sent via first class mail to one-hundred randomly selected middle school teachers during the spring of 1996. An addressed stamped envelope was included for responses. The Atlanta Public Schools Personnel Directory of Middle School Teachers was the source for selecting of the target population. The total number of respondents was seventy-three (N=73), approximately 75 percent. The subjects varied considerably in age, and teaching experiences.

Descriptive Data

The subjects in this study numbered seventy-three (73): 15 males and 58 females ranging in ages from 25 - 69. These data are reported in Table I.
Data in Table I reveal that 5 (6.8 percent) of the males were between the ages of 26 - 36 and 7 (9.6 percent) between 37 - 47. The three remaining subjects were between the ages of 48 - 69. The male population of this group constituted 20.5 percent (N=15).

There were more females (79.5 percent) than males (20.5 percent). Only one female (1.4 percent) was 25 or under, with the majority of female teachers falling into the age range of 37 - 47 (N=25). The 59 - 69 age group make up 2.7 percent (N=2) of the total number of subjects.

Table 1

SEX AND AGE DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>25 or Under</th>
<th>26-36</th>
<th>37-47</th>
<th>48-58</th>
<th>59-69</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td>Num-Per-ber</td>
<td>Num-Per-ber</td>
<td>Num-Per-ber</td>
<td>Num-Per-ber</td>
<td>Num-Per-ber</td>
<td>Num-Per-ber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0 0.0 5 6.8 7 9.6 2 2.7 1 1.4 15 20.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1 1.4 22 30.1 25 34.9 9 12.3 1 1.4 58 79.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 1.4 27 37.0 32 43.8 11 15.1 2 2.7 73 100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data regarding the teaching experience of the subjects showed that 6 (8.2 percent) of the males had served as classroom teachers for 11 – 15 years; 3 (4.1 percent) had taught for 6 – 10 years; and 2 (2.7 percent) had worked for 16 – 20 years; and 2 (2.7 percent) had served for 21 – 30 years; while 12 (1.4 percent) had 31 or above years of experience.

Sixteen female subjects had served as classroom teachers for 11 –15 years (21.9 percent), and 9 (12.3 percent) had worked for 21 – 30 years. Thirteen subjects had between 16 – 20 years of experience (17.8 percent), while 10 had been working for 6 – 10 years (13.7 percent). The remaining four females had worked for 31 or above years or 5.5 percent.

Table 2 shows a comparison by use of percents of the socio-economic status of the middle school communities (N=73) and the types of program(s) that are provided in these schools.

Socioeconomic status of the school community referred to a community where the families income ranged from $0 – $17,420 for low; $17,421 to $34,000 for middle and $34,001 to $52,480 for high (United States Department of Labor 1991).
Table 2

Types of Programs and Socioeconomic Status of the School Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socioeconomic Status of the School Community</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Types of Program(s)</td>
<td>N=49 Number</td>
<td>N=21 Number</td>
<td>N=3 Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Contained</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the subjects (61.7 percent) responding to the questionnaire were employed in low socioeconomic areas. There were twenty-one subjects in the middle income area and only three respondents in the upper socioeconomic area. Any findings concerning the upper socioeconomic area are limited because of the small sample being represented.

The percentage (85.7) was high in the middle socioeconomic areas for inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes in comparison with the (55.1 percent) being inclusion in the low and upper (33.3 percent) socioeconomic communities. The largest percentage of resource room instruction for students with disabilities
found in the low socioeconomic areas (79.6 percent).

One subject (2.4 percent reported no special class programs for students with disabilities. The subjects responding in the upper socioeconomic communities indicated special education programs were being implemented through self-contained classes, resource room instruction, and inclusion of students with disabilities.

Table 3 presents the data on special education courses completed by the teachers.

Table 3

Percentage of Special Education Undergraduate and/or Graduate Courses Completed Based on Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Education Courses Completed</th>
<th>25-Under</th>
<th>26-36</th>
<th>37-47</th>
<th>48-58</th>
<th>59-69</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Completed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - Course</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 3 Courses</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 7 Courses</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 13 Courses</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 or above Courses</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data indicated that approximately 29 percent of the subjects in the age range of 26 - 36 had taken 1 - 18 or above courses in special education and remaining 8.2 percent had taken 2 - 3 special education courses. The 37 - 47 age group disclosed that approximately 33 percent of the subjects had taken 1 - 7 courses in the area while 11.0 percent had taken 2 - 3 classes in special education. Subjects in the 48 - 58 age group reported the following: 2.7 percent had taken 2 - 3 courses; 1.4 percent had taken 4 - 7 courses, and the largest percentage of teachers in this (11.0 percent) had taken at least 1 - 3 classes in special education.

In summary, the majority of the middle school teachers, one (1), had taken 1 special education course. Only two (2) subjects had taken 4 - 7 courses while one (1) had taken 11 - 13, and one (1) subject 18 or above. Eighteen (18) subjects (24.7 percent) had 2 - 3 courses.

Tables 4 and 5 contain data gathered from Part II, Inclusion Inventory. This section of the inventory was designed to assess responses that would support the subjects positions based on their perceptions of the inclusion concept and their willingness to integrate students with disabilities into regular classes. Statements that were evaluated in this section included letters a, b, c, d, e, f, g, and numbers nine through fifteen.
Statements being evaluated in table 4 are concerned with letter a - g. These statements are:

a. Court actions have accelerated changes in special education procedures.

b. Educational goals are individualized.

c. Parental concerns are being expressed more directly and forcefully.

d. The students with disabilities cannot compete with other children.

e. There is a lack of effective screening and individualized decision-making in determining which child can function successfully within the regular classroom.

f. Students with disabilities become more sensitive to their differences.

g. The self-concept of students with disabilities can be enhanced.
Table 4

Responses To The Inclusion Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of Responses</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Num-</td>
<td>Per-</td>
<td>Num-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Educational Goals</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The self-concept of students with disabilities can be enhanced</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Students with disabilities cannot compete</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Students with disabilities become more sensitive to their differences</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Court Actions</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Parental Concerns</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Lack of effective screening and decision-making</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The subjects were asked to identify pertinent variables in the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes. They were asked to (1) strongly agree, (2) agree or (3) disagree with each of the seven (7) variables listed above. Data are reported according to the response of each statement below in terms of importance to the highest percents for each variables.
1. Educational goals are individualized, N=45 (61.6 percent). Most of the teachers agreed with item b.

2. The self-concept of students with disabilities can be enhanced, N=45 (61.6 percent). The majority of classroom teachers were in agreement with this item.

3. Students with disabilities cannot compete with other children. N=44 (60.3 percent). The majority of the classroom teachers disagreed with this item.

4. Students with disabilities become more sensitive to their differences, N=42 (57.5 percent). Over half of the respondents agreed with this item.

5. Court actions have accelerated changes in special education procedures, N=39 (53.4 percent). Of the three (3) possible responses (strongly agree, agree, disagree) the majority of the classroom teachers agreed with this item.

6. Parental concerns are being expressed more directly and forcefully. N=37 (50.7 percent). Half of the subjects were in agreement with this statement.

7. There is a lack of effective screening and individualized decision-making in determining which child can function successfully within the regular classroom, N=28 (38.4 percent). The majority of responding classroom teachers agreed with this item.

Analysis of data regarding the identification of pertinent variables in the inclusion of students with
disabilities into regular classes is continued to be evaluated in table 5. Statements being evaluated in this table are concerned with responses given in items nine (9) through fifteen (15). These statements are:

9. As a regular classroom teacher you feel competent to teach (meet the educational needs of) students with disabilities.

10. Teaching students with disabilities who have been by inclusion is a part of your job.

11. Basically, as a regular classroom teacher, you are responsible for teaching students with disabilities through inclusion.

12. Working with the supportive services in your school would make a difference in your attitude toward teaching exceptional children.

13. As a regular classroom teacher you have the training and competency to teach students with disabilities even if not provided with supportive services or help.

14. The classroom teacher, as well as her students should be prepared in advance for the types of students with disabilities that will be placed in her class as a result of inclusion.

15. There is poor communication between special teachers and classroom teachers concerning student's needs and accomplishments.
Table 5

Responses To The Inclusion Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of Responses</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. Responsible for students with disabilities</td>
<td>Num- 9 Per- 12.3</td>
<td>Num- 43 Per- 58.9</td>
<td>Num- 16 Per- 21.9</td>
<td>Num- 3 Per- 4.1</td>
<td>Num- 2 Per- 2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Supportive Services Influence Attitudes</td>
<td>Num- 11 Per- 15.1</td>
<td>Num- 40 Per- 54.8</td>
<td>Num- 10 Per- 13.7</td>
<td>Num- 2 Per- 2.7</td>
<td>Num- 10 Per- 13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Advance Preparation</td>
<td>Num- 39 Per- 53.4</td>
<td>Num- 28 Per- 38.4</td>
<td>Num- 4 Per- 5.5</td>
<td>Num- 0 Per- 0.0</td>
<td>Num- 2 Per- 2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Without Supportive Services</td>
<td>Num- 4 Per- 5.5</td>
<td>Num- 12 Per- 16.4</td>
<td>Num- 38 Per- 52.1</td>
<td>Num- 10 Per- 13.7</td>
<td>Num- 9 Per- 12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Part of Your Job</td>
<td>Num- 8 Per- 11.0</td>
<td>Num- 33 Per- 45.2</td>
<td>Num- 19 Per- 26.0</td>
<td>Num- 5 Per- 6.8</td>
<td>Num- 8 Per- 11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Poor Communication</td>
<td>Num- 11 Per- 15.1</td>
<td>Num- 22 Per- 30.1</td>
<td>Num- 31 Per- 42.5</td>
<td>Num- 5 Per- 6.8</td>
<td>Num- 4 Per- 5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Competent to Teach</td>
<td>Num- 4 Per- 5.5</td>
<td>Num- 21 Per- 28.8</td>
<td>Num- 23 Per- 31.5</td>
<td>Num- 10 Per- 13.7</td>
<td>Num- 15 Per- 20.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each subject was asked to answer each of the seven (7) questions in the inclusion inventory section by selecting one answer from five possible responses: (1) Strongly Agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly Disagree and (5) Uncertain. Data is reported according to rank order of each statement below in terms of importance according to the percents of those who responded to the various items.

1. Basically, as a regular classroom teacher, you are responsible for teaching students with disabilities who have been through inclusion into regular classes. N=43 (58.9 percent). The largest number of classroom teachers answering this question agreed with it.

2. Working with the supportive services in your school would make a difference in your attitude toward teaching students with disabilities. N=40 (54.8 percent). The respondents did agree with this item.

3. The classroom teacher, as well as her students, should be prepared in advance for the types of students with disabilities that will be placed in her class as a result of inclusion. N=39 (53.4 percent). Responses indicated that the majority of teachers agreed with this statement.

4. As a regular classroom teacher you have the training and competency to teach students with disabilities even if not provided with supportive services or help.
N=38 (52.1 percent). Most of the classroom teachers were in disagreement with this statement.

5. Teaching students with disabilities who have been in inclusion is a part of your job. N=33 (45.2 percent). The majority of the subjects responding expressed agreement.

6. There is poor communication between special teachers and classroom teachers concerning the child's needs and accomplishments. N=31 (42.5 percent). The majority of classroom teachers do not feel that there is poor communication between classroom teachers and special teachers concerning the planning for students needs and accomplishments.

7. As a regular classroom teacher you have the training and competency to teach students with disabilities even if not provided with supportive services or help. N=23 (31.5 percent). The subjects responding to this question indicated that they do not agree with this statement.

Cross-Tabulation of Variables on the Inclusion Inventory

Tables in this section of the study present a cross-tabulation of data gathered on the inventory. Data in Table 6 denotes the sex of teachers and number of special education courses completed by the sample population in this study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifty-five of the seventy-three teachers have taken courses in special education. There were eight male teachers who had taken special education courses. All eight of the subjects had taken 2 - 3 special education courses, with the remaining seven subjects having taken 1 course in this area.

Forty-seven female subjects had taken a undergraduate or graduate course in special education courses. Forty-three of the female teachers had completed 2 - 3 courses, two had taken 4 - 7, one had taken 11 - 13, and one had taken 18 or above. Eleven of the female subjects had taken 1 course in the area of special education.

Table 7 compared the number of special education
courses completed and years of experience as teachers. Their experience as classroom teachers ranged from 1 - 31 or above years.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Experience as Classroom Teacher and Special Education Courses Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Undergraduate or Graduate Course Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subject within the 1 - 5 years of experience group indicated five teachers had taken 1 special education course while two subjects had taken 2 - 3 courses in special education. There were no teachers in this group who had taken as many as four courses.
Teachers with 6 - 10 years of experience included nine who had taken 1 course and one who had taken 18 or above courses in the area. There were three teachers in this group who had taken 2 - 3 special education courses. The total number of teachers who had taken special education courses in this group was thirteen.

Subjects within the 11 - 15 years of experience group indicated a high of thirteen who had taken 1 course in special education. Two of the remaining subjects in this group had taken one course each in the area, while seven subjects indicated they had taken 2 - 3 special education courses.

Within the 16 - 20 years of experience group, eleven subjects had completed 1 special education course. One subject had taken 4 - 7 courses in the area and three teachers had taken 2 - 3 special education classes. None of the teachers in this area had taken eight or more courses in special education. The total number of teachers who had taken courses in this area was fifteen.

Five subjects represented the 31 or above year group and two had taken 1 course in the area while three had taken 2 - 3 courses in special education.

In summary, the largest number of teachers (N=51) had taken 1 undergraduate or graduate course in the area. Two subjects had 4 - 7 courses, while one teacher had 11 - 13 courses and one had taken 18 or above courses with
eighteen subjects indicating they had taken 2 - 3 special education courses. The remaining subjects indicated that they had taken special education training through inservice (SDU) courses.

**Testing the Hypotheses**

This section of the study deals with testing of the following seven null hypotheses. The hypothesis is declared to be true if the calculated value exceeds the table value (Alder 1984).

1. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities among the responding middle classroom teachers according to age.

Table 8 indicates that there is no significant expressed attitudinal differences according to age among the middle school teachers.
Table 8

Age of Teacher and Expressed Attitudes Toward The Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Teacher</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 - Under</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-56</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-47</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-58</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-69</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f = absolute frequency

\[ X^2 = 12.41475 \] not significant at .05 level

The calculated value for chi square was 12.41475 and the table value was 26.30 with sixteen degrees of freedom; therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

2. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities between male and female elementary classroom teachers.

Table 9 indicates that there is a significant expressed
attitudinal difference between males and females.

Table 9

**Sex and Expressed Attitudes Toward The Inclusion of Students With Disabilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expressed Attitudes</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (f)</th>
<th>Agree (f)</th>
<th>Disagree (f)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (f)</th>
<th>Uncertain (f)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f = absolute frequency

\[ x^2 = 10.08820 \] significant at .05 level

The calculated value for chi square was 10.08820 and the table value was 9.49 with four degrees of freedom; therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

3. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities among middle classroom teachers categorized by years of service as a teacher.

Table 10 indicates that there is no significant expressed differences in attitude among the subjects according to their years of service as a classroom teacher.
### Table 10

**Years of Experience as Classroom Teacher and Expressed Attitudes Toward Inclusion of Students With Disabilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expressed Attitudes</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (f)</th>
<th>Agree (f)</th>
<th>Disagree (f)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (f)</th>
<th>Uncertain (f)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years of Experience As Teacher</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 or above</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f = absolute frequency

\[ X^2 = 9.74288 \] not significant at .05 level

The calculated value for chi square was 9.74288 and the table value was 31.41 with twenty degrees of freedom; therefore null hypothesis was accepted.

4. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities.
with regard to the number of academic courses taken in Special Education.

Table 11 indicated that there is a significant expressed attitudinal difference among the subjects with regard to the number of academic courses that they had taken in special education.

Table 11

Special Education Courses Completed and Expressed Attitudes Toward Inclusion of Students With Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expressed Attitudes</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (f)</th>
<th>Agree (f)</th>
<th>Disagree (f)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (f)</th>
<th>Uncertain (f)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Courses Completed</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 or above</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( f = \) absolute frequency

\( X^2 = 28.63048 \) significant at .05 level
The calculated value for chi square 28.63048 and the table value was 26.30 with sixteen degrees of freedom; therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

5. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities with regard to the socioeconomic status of the school community.

Table 12 indicated that there is no significant expressed attitudinal difference among the subjects with regard to the socioeconomic status of the school community.

Table 12

Socioeconomic Status of the Community and Expressed Attitudes Toward Inclusion of Students With Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socioeconomic Status of the Community</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (f)</th>
<th>Agree (f)</th>
<th>Disagree (f)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (f)</th>
<th>Uncertain (f)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f = absolute frequency
\[ x^2 = 4.67949 \] not significant at .05 level

The calculated value for chi square was 4.67949 and the table value was 5.99 with two degrees of freedom; therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

6. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes of classroom teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities with regard to the type of program(s) in their school for students with disabilities.

Table 13 indicates no significant expressed differences in attitudes among classroom teachers according to types of programs for students with disabilities in their schools.

Table 13

Special Education Programs and Expressed Attitudes Toward Inclusion of Students With Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expressed Attitudes</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (f)</th>
<th>Agree (f)</th>
<th>Disagree (f)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (f)</th>
<th>Uncertain (f)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Various Special Programs</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( f = \text{absolute frequency} \)
$x^2 = 2.07002$ not significant at .05 level

The calculated value for chi square was 2.07002 and the table value was 9.49 with four degrees of freedom; therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

7. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities with regard to having worked as a classroom teacher where special classes and/or services were provided for students with disabilities.

Table 14 indicates no significant expressed differences in attitudes among classroom teachers having worked where special classes and/or services were provided for students with disabilities.
Table 14

Experience Working as a Classroom Teacher Where Special Classes and/or Services Were Provided for Students With Disabilities and Expressed Attitudes Toward Inclusion of Students With Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expressed Attitudes</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f = absolute frequency

\[ X^2 = 2.66382 \] no significant difference at .05 level

The calculated value for chi square was 2.66382 and the table value was 9.49 with four degrees of freedom; therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study was designed to obtain attitudes expressed by middle school classroom teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes. Few studies have sought to investigate the attitudes of middle school educators toward inclusion.

Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Ascertain, examine and interpret the existing attitudes expressed by regular classroom teachers in Atlanta Public School System, Atlanta, Georgia, during the 1996-97 school year.

2. To determine if there are any significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in accordance with the null hypotheses of selected social-occupational characteristics on the Inclusion Inventory.
Data Collection

This study was based on a random sample population (N=73) of middle school classroom teachers in Atlanta Public School System during the 1996-97 school year.

Interpretation and Discussion

This section of the study presents a summary of the collected and analyzed data. The hypotheses and a discussion of each are as follows:

1. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities among the responding middle school classroom teachers categorized according to age.

Data from chi square indicates that there are no significant differences in expressed attitude toward inclusion of students with disabilities among middle school classroom teachers categorized according to age. Chi square test result of 12.41475 revealed that the data were not significant at the .05 level of confidence.

One of the findings in this study was that teachers between 26 - 47 years of age were more sharply divided regarding inclusion more than any other age group.

The literature does not state that age is a determining factor in attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities.
2. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities between male and female middle classroom teachers.

The chi square value of 10.088 indicated that there is a significant expressed attitudinal difference between male and female, therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The current literature does not support sex as a factor in the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes.

3. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities among middle classroom teachers categorized by years of service as teacher.

A result of 9.74288 on the chi square test indicated that there is no significant expressed attitudinal differences among the subjects according to their years of service as classroom teachers.

This hypothesis is supported by studies conducted by Want (1992) who reported that teachers' attitudes toward school, children, and teaching did not seem to be affected by teaching experience. That their attitudes became more homogeneous with experience, while the degree of negativeness or positiveness appeared to remain constant.

4. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities based on the number of undergraduate or graduate academic
courses taken in special education.

The chi square value of 28.63048 indicated that there is a significant expressed attitudinal difference among the subjects with regard to the number of academic courses that they had taken in special education. The findings showed that the subjects who had taken between 1 special education course agreed as well as disagreed more with the inclusion of students with disabilities into the regular program than any other group of respondents.

Data collected by (Birch and Shotel and Iano and Cipani 1995) in their investigations of training for teachers do not show that the number of academic courses in special education is a determinant of attitudes toward inclusion. However, these authors suggest that in-service workshops, seminars, continuing education, conferences and special courses on methods and techniques for working with the disabled might considerably affect these educators' attitudes and the success of the inclusion program.

5. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities with regard to the socioeconomic status of the school community.

A chi square value of 4.67949 indicated that there is no significant expressed attitudinal differences among socioeconomic status of the school community.
A closer look at the data indicates that the range of agreement on items by the respondents working in low and middle income communities was very close, $N=11$ (low income area) and $N=9$ (middle income area). However, the subjects in the low income areas were in disagreement ($N=22$) in expressing their attitudes toward inclusion at an exceptionally higher rate than the middle income area ($N=2$) and upper income area ($N=0$) subjects.

These findings in this area are obviously strongly related to teacher attitudes and their rejection of the labels culturally deprived and culturally disadvantaged which have been found to be associated with lower attitudes and expectations of children by teachers working in low socioeconomic areas, in contrast with high teacher expectation of pupils in middle and upper income areas.

Teacher expectations about the performance of children can come to serve a self-fulfilling prophecy. Studies by Herriott and St. John (1985) and Knight (1994) reported that the lower the socioeconomic status of the schools the smaller the proportion of teachers who held favorable opinions about the motivation and behavior of their pupils.

6. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes of classroom teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities with regard to the type of program(s) in their school for students with disabilities.

The chi square value of 2.07002 indicated that there
is no significant expressed attitudinal difference according to types of programs in schools for students with disabilities. One very important finding in this study was that 98.6 percent of the subjects were working in schools where there were numerous special programs being implemented for the purpose of enhancing the inclusion of students with disabilities.

7. There are no significant differences in expressed attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities with regard to exposure as a classroom teacher where special classes and/or services were provided for students with disabilities.

The results of chi square 2.66382, indicate that there is no significant expressed attitudinal difference among the subjects with regard to working where special classes and/or services were provided for students with disabilities.

The data revealed that 94.5 percent of the respondents were employed in schools where special classes or services were provided for students with disabilities. The remaining 5.5 percent reported no provisions for special classes and/or services being available in their schools. Three of these subjects were employed in a low socioeconomic community with the remaining subject working in a middle class community. Subjects in an upper class community reported that their school included special classes and/or
services for students with disabilities.

Conclusions

The individual responses of the seventy-three (73) middle school classroom teachers revealed information that was directly related to the testing of the hypothesis.

1. Inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes is an established educational practice in Atlanta Public Schools. The data revealed that the percentage for inclusion in all three socioeconomic communities (low 55.1, middle 85.7, and upper 33.3) was extensive.

2. Basically, the responding subjects N=31 (68.5 percent) do not consider themselves to be an "advocate" of inclusion. However, the subjects expressed favorable attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes by indicating they were willing to implement programs necessary for meeting the needs of students with disabilities. Also, 35.6 percent were advocates of inclusion.

3. Middle schools within the three socioeconomic communities (low, middle, and upper) provided to some extent self-contained classes, inclusion, and resource room instruction for students with disabilities. Schools within the middle socioeconomic communities had the largest percentage (85.7) of pupils in inclusion. The low socioeconomic communities retained the largest percentage
(79.6) for resource room instruction.

4. Teachers between 37 - 47 years (43.8 percent) disagreed as well as agreed with the concept of inclusion more than any other group.

5. Teachers in the low socioeconomic areas expressed strong attitudes toward rejection of the labeling of pupils in low socioeconomic areas as being culturally deprived and culturally disadvantaged. These labels have been found to be associated with lower attitudes and expectations of children by teachers working in low socioeconomic areas. The range of agreement on items concerning expressed attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes by subjects working in low and middle income communities was very close.

6. Schools within the middle socioeconomic communities provided the widest array of programs for students with disabilities, followed closely by the schools in the low socioeconomic communities.

7. The majority of the middle classroom teachers N=51 (69.9 percent) had taken 1 special education graduate or undergraduate course.

Implications

The implications occurring from the findings of this study are stated below:

1. The finding that inclusion was an extensively established educational practice in Atlanta Public Schools,
although sixty eight percent of the sample population did not express favorable attitudes toward being an "advocate" of inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes. This implies that teachers should be included more in the decision-making, planning and implementation of programs that they are expected to effectively implement. This finding also suggests the need for further training in the area of special education. It does not appear that one special education course significantly impacts or promotes a positive attitude in teachers regarding inclusion.

2. The finding that most teachers were willing to implement programs necessary for meeting the needs of students with disabilities, although they were not "advocates" of the inclusion students with disabilities into regular classes implies that teachers are willing to consider the needs of the children first.

3. The finding that middle schools within the three socioeconomic communities (low, middle and upper) were providing adequate programs for students with disabilities implies that economic status of a community does not dictate the extent of which a school's program will be implemented for meeting all the needs of its pupils.

4. The finding that teachers between 37 - 47 years of age agreed as well as disagreed more with inclusion of students with disabilities into regular programs than
any other age group implies that age was not a significant factor in contributing to the attitudes of teachers toward inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes.

5. The finding that a majority of the teachers ranked the following variables as reasons for the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes: educational goals are individualized; the self-concept of students with disabilities can be enhanced; court actions; parental concerns and rejection of labeling of the children implies that the teachers are aware of the educational significance and basis for inclusion.

Recommendations

In accordance with the findings, conclusions and implications, it seems feasible to recommend:

1. That training sessions be reinstituted for the regular education teachers of Atlanta Public Schools in the area of modification of attitudes, including methods and techniques for working with students with disabilities.

2. That in-service workshops, institutes, seminars and especially simulation programs be organized for the teachers to better prepare them for meeting the needs of students with disabilities through inclusion.

3. That the planning and establishing of goals for students with disabilities be done by involving the regular classroom teacher as well as other personnel that will
be working with the disabled student.

4. That considerable attention be given to the fact that teachers play a most significant role in establishing an effective program for inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classes. Therefore, provisions for teacher input, group discussions and teacher to teacher conferences and discussions should be given top priority throughout the school system.

5. That faculty in the school needs support and assistance in developing and implementing inclusion and they are the best source of information about their needs.
Appendix A

Instrument
INCLUSION INVENTORY

DATA INVENTORY

Strictly Confidential

Directions: This data inventory consists of two parts:

Part I: Social-Occupational Characteristics
Part II: Inclusion Analysis

Please answer each question. Use a check (x) mark to indicate your choice of only one answer in each question. If exact answers are not possible, give your best estimate.

PART I: SOCIAL-OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. What is your age?
   ____ 25 or under
   ____ 26-36
   ____ 37-47
   ____ 48-58
   ____ 59-69
   ____ 70 or older

2. What is your sex?
   ____ Male  ____ Female
3. Number of years as a classroom teacher.
   ___ 1-5
   ___ 6-10
   ___ 11-15
   ___ 16-20
   ___ 21-30
   ___ 31 or above
   ___ None

4. Number of undergraduate and/or graduate courses that you have taken in Special Education.
   ___ 1-3
   ___ 4-7
   ___ 8-10
   ___ 11-13
   ___ 14-17
   ___ 18 or above
   ___ None

5. Socioeconomic status of community where the school is located (check one).
   ___ low        ___ middle        ___ upper
6. Types of program(s) in your school for students with disabilities

- Self-contained classes
- Inclusion classrooms
- Resource room
- None
- Other (Specify): 

7. Have you worked as a classroom teacher where special classes and/or services were provided for students with disabilities

- Yes
- No

PART II: INCLUSION ANALYSIS

8. Please answer each question. Use a check (x) mark to indicate your choice of only one answer in each question.

   a. Court actions have accelerated changes in special education procedures.

       - Strongly agree
       - Agree
       - Disagree

   b. Educational goals are individualized.

       - Strongly agree
       - Agree
       - Disagree
c. Parental concerns are being expressed more directly and forcefully.

_____ Strongly agree
_____ Agree
_____ Disagree

d. The students with disabilities cannot compete with other children.

_____ Strongly agree
_____ Agree
_____ Disagree

e. There is a lack of effective screening and individualized decision-making in determining which child can function successfully within the regular classroom.

_____ Strongly agree
_____ Agree
_____ Disagree

f. Students with disabilities are more sensitive to their differences.

_____ Strongly agree
_____ Agree
_____ Disagree

g. The self-concept of students with disabilities can be enhanced.

_____ Strongly agree
_____ Agree
_____ Disagree
Please choose one answer for each of the following questions and place a check mark in the space provided.

9. As a regular classroom teacher you feel competent to teach (meet the educational needs of) students with disabilities.
   
   ____Strongly agree
   ____Agree
   ____Disagree
   ____Strongly disagree
   ____Uncertain

10. Teaching students with disabilities through inclusion is a part of your job.
    
    ____Strongly agree
    ____Agree
    ____Disagree
    ____Strongly disagree
    ____Uncertain

11. Basically, as a regular classroom teacher, you are responsible for teaching students with disabilities who have been served through inclusion.
    
    ____Strongly agree
    ____Agree
    ____Disagree
    ____Strongly disagree
    ____Uncertain
12. Working with supportive services in your school would make a difference in your attitude toward teaching students with disabilities.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Uncertain

13. As a regular classroom teacher you have the training and competency to teach students with disabilities through inclusion even if not provided with supportive services to help.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Uncertain

14. The classroom teacher, as well as her students, should be prepared in advance for the types of students with disabilities that will be placed in her class as a result of inclusion.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Uncertain
15. There is poor communication between special teachers and classroom teachers concerning the child's needs and accomplishments of students with disabilities.

_____ Strongly agree
_____ Agree
_____ Disagree
_____ Strongly disagree
_____ Uncertain

16. Basically, do you consider yourself to be an advocate of inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom?

_____ Strongly agree
_____ Agree
_____ Disagree
_____ Strongly disagree
_____ Uncertain
Dear

As a graduate student pursuing a Specialist Degree in Special Education at Clark Atlanta University, I must include in my thesis certain information which is to be obtained from select individuals. This inventory is part of the information I will need. It is designed to ascertain the attitudes of middle school classroom teachers toward inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes.

I realize that there are numerous demands on your time, but I sincerely wish that you would take time out of your busy schedule to fill this questionnaire out and return it to me.

By obtaining answers from a large number of regular classroom teachers to the questions submitted on the attached questionnaire, valuable information should be provided concerning teacher attitudes toward inclusion.

Please answer this questionnaire with thoughtfulness, and promptness. Send it as soon as possible, on or before March 19, 1997. A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Your name or your school will not be used in interpreting the data from this questionnaire.

Please return to:

Mr. Albert Ray Ward, Jr.
5248 Panola Mill Drive
Lithonia, Georgia 30038

Thank you for your help in this matter. Your time and contribution is truly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Albert Ray Ward, Jr.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Atlanta Public Schools System Staff Handbook. 1996.


Haager, D. 1994. Adaptations for mainstreamed students in the regular classroom: Desirability and feasibility. RACE.


The social behavior survival program (SBS): A systematic approach to the integration of handicapped children into less restrictive settings. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 6, 421-441.


