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2015

Teacher Attitudes: An Analysis of Middle School Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion

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Teacher Attitudes: An Analysis of Middle School Teachers' Attitudes Towards

Inclusion

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Abstract

The demands for general education teachers to meet the diverse needs of their students has increased greatly over recent years. The attitudes of these teachers towards the practice of inclusion greatly influences the successful of inclusion itself. In this study the attitudes of teachers towards inclusion was investigated. Findings indicated that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are split. Teachers' attitudes towards specific disabilities are clear. Findings indicate more teachers believe students with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, visual and hearing impairments, communication disorders and health impairments should be educated in a regular classroom where students with mental impairments (cognitive disabilities/developmental delay), behavioral disorders and multi-disabled students should not be educated in regular classrooms. Discussion of these findings are provided. Since teachers' attitudes towards inclusion vary, more research is needed to further clarify degrees of negative attitudes and causes for these attitudes and to replicate these results.

Keywords: inclusion, attitudes, middle-school teachers, students with disabilities

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Inclusion is viewed as the fundamental human rights of all individuals with disabilities to be a part of the general education classroom (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2012). It is the ideology of acceptance and belonging so that a class is structured to meet the needs of all its students (Gal, Schreur, & Engel-Yeger, 2010). This inclusion is targeted to offer equal opportunities for all students. The inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education environment is an important component of modern classrooms.

The process of inclusion has been incorporated in general education classrooms since the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) was introduced in 1975. The updated Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) states the purpose of the act is to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education, under IDEA special education and related services are designed to meet the unique needs of students and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living. In order for students with disabilities to be successful in each aspect of their education, they must experience positive attitudes from each member of their educational team. These teacher attitudes play an integral part in the success/failure of a student being included in their classrooms. The purpose of this study is to investigate the attitudes of middle school teachers in Raleigh County, West Virginia towards inclusion.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, the educational inclusion of students with disabilities has been advocated. This endorsement has led to the growing number of these students receiving most of their education in the general education classroom (Mastropieri and Scruggs,

2001). The attitude of the general education teacher influences the effectiveness of

teaching in inclusion settings. There are many factors that can influence the teachers'

attitudes such as but not limited to experience, education, personal contact with disability,

requirements for accommodations, and potential behavior problems (Gal, Schreur &

Engel-Yeger, 2010). The attitudes of teachers may be affected by only one factor or a

combination of several factors. In order for inclusion to work in the general education

setting, the teacher must be prepared for success. The teacher must be dedicated to

extending extra efforts to ensure techniques are put into place that will cultivate learning

for the student with disabilities.

A teacher who has had previous experience with inclusion, whether those

experiences are positive or negative experiences, will have preexisting attitudes that may

reflect those past experiences. The attitude of the teacher regarding additional staff

contributing to their instruction can alter a teacher's attitude. The teachers must be

willing to compromise and accept that the curriculum involves various levels of

interactions with different faculty who serve different roles in education (Causton-

Theoharis & Theoharis, 2009).

The teachers' past experiences will alter the strategies and techniques they use to

handle education and interactions with students with disabilities. These strategies and

techniques also contribute to the inventory of resources a teacher has to assist in

accommodating a student with disabilities. The additional availability of materials that

correlate between class level material and the student with disabilities level is another

factor that contributes to success or failure of inclusion.

Less experienced teachers exhibit more positive attitudes towards inclusive classrooms and a higher level of willingness to include students with disabilities possibly due to being taught the philosophy of inclusion in their pre-service teacher education programs (Hwang & Evans, 2011). The main focus of teacher-preparation programs should reflect concerns expressed by current classroom teachers (Fuchs, 2010). Ongoing professional development and modeling of effective teaching practices for more seasoned teachers may promote a more positive attitude toward inclusive teaching (Hwang & Evans, 2011). These professional development opportunities can create opportunities for teachers to facilitate inclusion through peer-mentoring, co-teaching and inservice training (Swain, Nordness, & Leader-Janssen, 2012).

The amount of time required to provide additional support for students with disabilities may also affect teacher attitudes toward inclusion (Rae, 2010). It seems clear that teacher attitude towards inclusion is influenced by teacher perception of the amount of time required to implement inclusion procedures and the amount of additional effort required beyond that already being exerted by the teacher (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2001). The more familiar a teacher becomes with inclusion practices, the teacher's attitudes should improve regarding further implementation of those inclusion strategies.

To reduce teacher anxiety levels, policies addressing training programs for all staff that emphasize instructional strategies and skills necessary for accommodating students with disabilities need to be pursued (Center and Ward, 1987). Quantitative research procedures may indicate the most effective teaching strategies for students with disabilities and these procedures may guide such trainings (Mastropieri and Scruggs,

2001). Additionally, by providing properly targeted training, teachers will have a more

positive attitude toward participating in inclusive teaching (Burke & Sutherland, 2004).

The amount of input teachers are permitted to impart on inclusion policy at their

school can alter their attitude concerning those policies. Young teachers reported not

being trained adequately to be prepared for students with disabilities. These teachers

stated that all teachers need better trainings and improved administrative support with

reasonable workloads, reasonable working hours, appropriate budgets, and assistance

(Gal, Schreur & Engel-Yeger, 2010). Teacher attitudes can be improved by allowing

teachers to have input as these policies are being developed.

The success of a general education classroom with inclusion largely falls upon the

general education teacher in the classroom and their attitude toward inclusion itself. If the

teacher believes inclusion is a burden that hinders the learning of general education

students, they will struggle to incorporate students with disabilities in their classroom.   If

the general education teacher is a proponent of inclusion, they will be more readily

prepared to make inclusion work in their classroom. As the drive for inclusion increases,

the attitudes towards inclusion have become more positive (Rae, 2010).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate attitudes of middle school teachers

towards inclusion. Participants were sixth, seventh and eighth grade teachers in a

southern county of a Mid-Atlantic state. The teachers included general education

teachers, related arts teachers, and special education teachers. Participants took a survey

which included questions regarding their overall positive or negative attitudes regarding

the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms.

Rationale for the Study

Students with disabilities are increasingly being included in general education classrooms. The attitudes of the teachers responsible for educating these students influence the attitudes of all students in these classrooms. These attitudes may also affect the effectiveness of learning in these classrooms. Recognizing and addressing factors that influence teachers' attitudes can improve those attitudes and increase positive results of including students with disabilities in the general education classrooms.

Research Question

The purpose of this study was to investigate the attitudes of middle school teachers in a southern county in a Mid-Atlantic state towards inclusion. Therefore, the research question for this study is: *What are the attitudes of middle school teachers towards inclusion?*

Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature

Every student deserves every opportunity to be successful (Burke & Sutherland, 2004). The focus of educational inclusion of students with disabilities has resulted in the continued increase of students with disabilities receiving instruction in the general education classroom (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2001). The successful execution of inclusion is contingent on the attitudes of teachers who instruct these students (Burke & Sutherland, 2004). There are many factors that can influence the teachers' attitudes such as but not limited to: experience, education, personal contact with disability, classroom size, working hours, requirements for accommodations, and potential behavior problems (Gal, Schreur & Engel-Yeger, 2010). The attitudes of teachers may be affected by only one factor or a combination of several factors.

What is Inclusion

The *Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act* (IDEA) of 2004, entitles individuals with disabilities programs and services that allow them equal access to education despite their disability (Burke & Sutherland, 2004). Furthermore, IDEA states that all students, regardless of disability, are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. In order for these individuals to receive the type of education they deserve, recent trends have moved toward inclusion classrooms.

What is inclusion? Inclusion is a worldwide trend in education requiring the collaboration and involvement of educational professionals (Hwang & Evans, 2011). Inclusion is defined as "students with disabilities receiving some or all of their instruction in the general education setting as appropriate to meet students' academic and social

needs" (McCray & McHatton, 2011, p. 137). Hwang and Evans (2011), further suggest that all students in a school, regardless of weaknesses or strengths in an area, are included or made a part of the school student body. The philosophy of inclusion is affixed to equal opportunities to participate and notions of basic human rights (Gal, Schreur & Engel-Yeger, 2010).

Mastropieri and Scruggs (2001), suggest seven characteristics of a successful inclusion classroom. A successful inclusion classroom receives administrative support at the building and district level. The successful inclusion classroom receives support in assistance with planning, co-teaching, adaptations with instruction, and assistance from special education staff and teachers. The successful inclusion classrooms reflects a positive atmosphere that was accepting of students with differences and their influence on the classroom. An accommodating curriculum that emphasizes meaningful and concrete applications of the content to be learned was another characteristic of a successful inclusion classroom. The classroom teacher must possess effective teaching skills: structure, clarity, redundancy, enthusiasm, appropriate pace, and maximized engagement. Effective peer assistance is a necessity of a successful inclusion classroom. Finally a successful inclusion classroom teacher demonstrates effective skills that are targeted toward the special learning needs of individuals with disabilities.

Inclusion has evolved to more than simply including students with disabilities in general education classrooms, and now focuses on including all students with a wide range of special needs, specifically those students who were previously marginalized and were unable to attend regular classes (Forlin, Decillo, Romero-Contreras, Fletcher, & Rodriguez-Hernandez, 2010). This is due in part to educators demonstrating a positive

acceptance of all students in their classrooms. This model of accepting behavior leads to greater approval by the students in an inclusion classroom (Forlin et al., 2010).

The mandate of least restrictive environment was written into law in the 1970s; however, it has taken much longer to implement this law in the school setting (Swain, Nordness, & Leader-Janssen, 2012). When the law was implemented, individuals with disabilities were primarily educated in separate classrooms away from peers their same age. As time progressed, so did the practice of inclusion. Students were increasingly mainstreamed into courses such as art, music, and physical education. Currently, students with disabilities are being educated to the maximum extent possible in the general education environment through accommodations and adaptations. The term inclusion has replaced the term integration as it relates to students with educational needs. This change is part of a mainstream emphasis to accommodate the needs of all children regardless of their ability or disability (Rae, Murray, & McKenzie, 2010).

Cornoldi, Terreni, Scruggs, & Mastropieri, (1998), discuss a national policy adopted by Italy in 1977 titled Law 517. Under this law, students with disabilities are taught primarily in the general education classroom. Classrooms cannot contain more than 20 students in all and only one student with a disability is permitted in that classroom. General education teachers are supported by special education teachers (called a support teacher) in their classrooms for varying periods of time, which is dependent on the disability certification level of the student with disability. The support teacher can have no more than four students with disabilities on their caseload. The support teacher also received the same salary as the general education teacher. The implementation of Law 517 essentially eliminated separate schools for students with

disabilities in favor of implementing the inclusion of those students in general education classrooms. This movement of inclusionary instruction in Italy is similar to "one teach while one assists' model teaching used in the United States (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2012). This form of co-teaching refers to one teacher taking the primary teacher role while the other teacher serves as a support teacher who assists as needed. Special educators who co-teach often take a secondary role to general education teachers in the classroom (Pugach & Winn, 2011).

The U.S. Department of Education (2009) reports that most students identified as having moderate and severe disabilities receive special education supports and services in a self-contained setting. This remains the case despite findings that confirmed the benefits of inclusion teaching environments that place these students alongside peers without disabilities (Carter & Hughes, 2006; Downing & Peckham-Hardin, 2007; Staub & Peck, 1995 all cited in Fisher & Rogan, 2012). Access to general education instruction alongside general education peers continues to be a struggle to achieve for students with disabilities. This denial of opportunity remains a problem for educators responsible for those identified students (Fisher & Rogan, 2012).

Who are students with disabilities

With the growing numbers of students with special needs served in the general education classrooms, teachers need more knowledge about characteristics of these students (deBettencourt, 1999). The *Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act* (IDEA) of 2004, defines a child with a disability as a child:

with mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or

language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious

emotional disturbance (referred to in this title as 'emotional disturbance'),

orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments,

or specific learning disabilities; and who, by reason thereof, needs special

education and related services. Additionally, 'child with a disability' aged 3

through 9 (or any subset of that age range, including ages 3 through 5), may, at

the discretion of the State and the local educational agency, include a child

experiencing developmental delays, as defined by the State and as measured by

appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in 1 or more of the following

areas: physical development; cognitive development; communication

developments; social or emotional development; or adaptive development and

who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services [Title 1,

Section 601 (d) (1) (a)].

IDEA, (2004) further defines a specific learning disability as a disorder in one or

more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using

language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to

listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. Specific learning

disability, disorders that are included are: conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain

injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. IDEA includes:

a learning problem that is primarily resulting from visual, hearing, or motor disabilities,

mental retardation, emotional disturbance, environmental, cultural or economic

disadvantage. Specific learning disability students are difficult to service due to

difficulty determining the area of focus.

Research does not suggest an association between self-concept and educational placement (Wong-Ratcliff & Keung, 2011). Elbaum, 2002 (as cited Wong-Ratcliff & Keung, 2011) suggests no one placement develops self-concepts considerably over another placement. Elbaum did note that learning disabled students may be significantly affected by a placement that jeopardizes their self-esteem (as cited Wong-Ratcliff & Keung, 2011). Elbaum further indicated that when making decisions regarding educational placement, that the student's emotional and social needs and their personal preferences should be taken into consideration. Most students with learning disabilities require intense, direct instruction in math and reading language arts and often their needs are not met in the general education classroom or the special education classroom (Gal, Schreur & Engel-Yeger, 2010). Students with learning disabilities were more likely to have behavioral disorders, emotional disorders, demonstrated difficulty with daily activities and have fewer social contacts; which often presented more challenges for the inclusion teachers (Gal, Schruer & Engel-Yeger, 2010).

Children with sensory/motor disabilities are another type of students with disabilities. These students are considered to be easier to manage in general education classroom environments (Gal, Schruer & Engel-Yeger, 2010). The severity of the students' disabilities determines the placement of students in various educational settings.

There has been a recent surge in students with special educational needs who demonstrate emotional and behavioral difficulties (EBD), attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) and conduct disorder (CD) (Scanlon & Barnes-Holmes, 2013). These sub-categories can be more demanding as the challenges associated with these impairments are grouped according to difficulties of

behavior more than difficulties associated to impaired intellectual functioning. Emotional and behavioral difficulties lack a consensus definition. This lack of agreement stems from different views on the origins of the difficulties, whether within-child variables (medical model which summarizes general definition of EBD) or socially mediated phenomenon (contemporary view as more context-based set of problems arising within specific surroundings and scenarios). The US Department of Education (2005) reported that 80% of all students identified as having emotional and behavior problems receive education in the general education classroom. The numbers of students demonstrating emotional and behavioral difficulties are increasingly becoming the most integrated disability group in general education classroom settings (Ajuwon, Lechtenberger, Griffin-Shirley, Sokolosky, Zhou, & Mullins, 2013).

Middle School Teachers

    Education. Effective teacher education should include specialized knowledge and information, address teacher skill development for inclusion, and challenge teacher beliefs about problems in learning located within the child (e.g., Brady & Woolfson, 2008; Symeonidou & Phtiaka, 2009; Woolfson & Brady, 2009). As the practice of inclusion becomes more prevalent, teachers demand more training and support (Forlin, Romero-Contreras & Rodriguez Hernandez, 2010). Additionally, problems in inclusion indicate that teachers/teacher candidates working in inclusion environments need to be prepared with information gained during teacher trainings in universities (Melekoglu, 2013). Jordan, Schwartz, & McGhie-Richmond (2009) suggest that once teacher candidates begin teaching, it is extremely difficult to change their attitudes and behaviors. McCray and McHatton (2011) suggest student teachers should receive structured and

supported opportunities to work collaboratively prior to teaching to gain skills required in the classroom once teaching begins. Additional research is needed to assist schools and teacher preparation programs in understanding challenges in inclusion classrooms and improve pre-service and in-service education (Fuchs, 2010).

Secondary teachers with higher degrees (i.e. master's degrees and higher) showed more negative attitudes toward inclusion than teachers with lower levels of educational degrees (Stoler, 1992). In a study conducted by Kim (2011), similar results were found. Teachers who completed more special education coursework demonstrated more positive attitudes toward inclusion. Additionally, teacher candidate programs should include field experience in an inclusion setting in special education courses to better prepare those teachers (Swain, Nordness & Leader-Janssen, 2012).

McCray and McHatton (2011) suggest mandate requires special education teachers be highly qualified in special education as well as their primary content area but there is no such requirement for general education teachers. They further suggest appropriate education and trainings will better ensure positive outcomes and the continued development of preservice programs by universities will provide teacher candidates a more comprehensive understanding of the elements involved in teaching in an inclusive environment (Burke & Sutherland, 2004).

Teacher Experience. Teacher experience can affect attitude towards inclusion. The teachers must be willing to compromise and accept that the curriculum involves various levels of interactions with different faculty who serve different roles in education (Causton-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2009). Causton-Theoharis and Theoharis further suggest that teachers in the general education setting may demonstrate reluctance to allow

inclusion staff to assume an active role in teaching the class as a whole. This attitude can

negatively impact the overall success/failure rate in an inclusion classroom (Boyle,

Topping & Jindal-Snape, 2013).

MacFarlane and Woolfson (2012) examined 111 general classroom teachers to

determine their beliefs and behaviors towards students with social, emotional and

behavioral difficulties. They found that teacher experience predicted teacher's feelings

and willingness to work with students with social, emotional and behavioral difficulties

negatively. Teachers who have greater experience with students with social, emotional

and behavioral difficulties possessed less positive feelings and more unwillingness to

work with those students than teachers with less experience.

Boyle, Topping, and Jinal-Snape (2012) suggest teachers beginning their careers

(probationary year or first year) were more willing to remain positive toward inclusion

than teachers with more years of teaching experience. They further suggest beyond the

first year of experience, there are not any significant differences between years of

experience and attitude towards inclusive teaching. The difference in positive attitude

between first year of experience and every other length of service was significant;

however, the difference in any other length of service was minimal. Boyle et al. suggest

the reasoning of inclusion may not be used to the same level as the teacher progresses

into their second year of teaching. Additionally, they suggest the effects of teaching may

alter the perspective of teachers after they gain experience. Intervention is required to

prevent teachers from leaving the profession and also to support the teacher in their

inclusion efforts (Boyle, Topping, & Jindal-Snape, 2013). Villa, Thousand, Meyers, and

Nevin (1996) suggest findings indicate that years of experience in including children with

additional assistive needs did not have a significant impact on the general education teachers. Avradmidis and Kalvya (as cited in Sharma, Moore & Sonawane, 2009) found that teachers who had actively taught students with disabilities in their classrooms demonstrated considerably more positive attitudes towards inclusion than similar teachers with limited experience.

Teacher Supports. Teachers may feel a lack of support for the student by the school administration (Gal, Schreur & Engel-Yeger, 2010). Gal, Schreur and Engel-Yeger (2010) suggest teachers also expressed a lack of indirect support for the teacher by the school administration and from the general education system. General educators reported the need for more collegiality among special and general educators and more administrative support (Fuchs, 2010). Generally, teachers are fearful of inclusion due to their lack of knowledge or fear of limited support (Wilkins & Nietfeld, 2004).

Fuchs (2010) researched general education teachers' attitudes towards mainstreaming practices. Fuchs found that teachers were candid in their perception of a lack of sufficient planning time, collaboration time, and instructional time. Additionally, it was found that participants perceived low levels of administrative support, unrealistic job expectations and responsibilities. Administrators have an important task in communicating clear expectations of inclusive character and promoting an atmosphere of efficacy (MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013).

Fuchs (2010) also found that general education teachers expressed dismay over lack of assistance or low quality of assistance from special education support staff. This could be a product of special education teachers experiencing confusion about their roles in inclusion classrooms and not always being recognized as a full team member (Pugach

& Winn, 2011). Many general educators express the notion that special educators lack content knowledge and function more as secondary support or aides in inclusion classrooms rather than primary instructors (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2012). Hwang and Evans (2011) found that teachers acknowledged their lack of skills and knowledge of inclusion teaching strategies yet they found it difficult to accept support from other teachers. Fuchs (2010) found a distinct strain between general and special education teachers associated with power struggles over unequal distribution of duties and access to information. General education and special education teachers demonstrated a distinct separation of ownership of students with disabilities, with an atmosphere that general education was more important than special education (Fuchs, 2010).

Fisher and Rogan (2012) investigated organized conversation with a small group of teachers of students with disabilities and university educators over the period of one school year. Participants shared, discussed, and supported each other's efforts. After one year, participants communicated positive change in their own performance, creation of a new support network, and an improved understanding between participating teachers and the university participants. They found that participants discovered the modified professional development to be encouraging and a purposeful process to explore common interests. These findings suggest that ideal common ground between theory and practice is found when the two groups worked together toward common interests.

Teacher involvement in development of inclusion policy. Teaching staff must be involved in inclusion policy at all levels to ensure that the policy is properly accepted and implemented throughout the school (Boyle, Topping & Jindal-Snape, 2013). The plans that involve major change tend to be dependent upon those staff that is most

involved in the implementation of the inclusion change process. Boyle, Topping and Jindal-Snape (2013) suggests, if teachers and staff who have to implement the policy at ground level, are not in agreement with the philosophy of inclusion standards at their school, then the chances of success are diminished. Teachers who feel that they have a say in policy are more likely to follow through in implementation. If teachers are included in the development of inclusion policy, their concerns and needs will be accurately addressed in the policy development. Additionally, focus groups and interviews lead to a better understanding of teachers' context, their vantage point and feelings reported in the teachers' own words (Fuchs, 2010).

   Personal Contact with Disability. Teachers' willingness to implement inclusion was directly correlated with the severity of the disability and the intensity of the inclusion effort to be implemented (Cook, 2002; Scruggs and Mastropieri, 1996). Further findings indicate pre-service teachers' extremely low level of direct and ongoing contact with persons with a disability (Sharma, Moore, & Sonawane, 2009). This lack of contact with persons with disabilities and consequently the lack of knowledge of those persons' capabilities, can further foster the ideals that teachers are willing to make adaptations for special education students but believe that those students cannot successfully master classroom course content (Santoli, Sachs, Romey & McClurg, 2008). Teacher attitudes appear more favorable toward the integration of students with learning disabilities and least favorable toward the integration of students with severe disabilities (Kim, 2011). In an effort to exhibit the positive effects of including students with disabilities in general education settings, schools should expose teachers to students with disabilities (Burke & Sutherland, 2004).

Teacher Preparedness. The level of teacher preparedness plays an integral role in the frustration or confidence level of educators. Pre-service training has been identified through research as being key to teacher acceptance of inclusion-based practices (Wilkins & Nietfeld, 2004). Shippen, Crites, Houchins, Ramsey and Simon (2005) reported that future general education teachers had the highest anxiety levels regarding teaching students with disabilities. Boyle, Topping and Jindal-Snape (2013) suggest that teachers who are confident in the area of including children with special education needs are less likely to be concerned about inclusion (Sharma, Moore, & Sonawane, 2009) and more positive towards inclusion (Sharma, Forlin, & Loreman, 2007).

Lack of preparedness negatively affects teachers' abilities to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities successfully (Fuchs, 2010). Alternately, preservice teachers who were part of teacher preparation programs demonstrated positive attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities, their task of making suitable adaptations for students with and without disabilities, and collaboration with other inclusive classroom teachers (Kim, 2011). Kim further finds preservice teachers' attitudes toward varying levels of disability severity were more positive than in previous findings. Programs in special education and general education have the responsibility to better enhance their preservice programs so that they identify the needs of general classroom teachers (Fuchs, 2010).

Behavior. There is a positive relationship between teacher and student behaviors and the effects are strong between teacher behaviors on their students (Sazak-Pinar & Guner-Yildiz, 2013). According to Sazak-Pinar and Guner-Yildiz teachers recognized or

responded less to behaviors of students with special needs than to their non-typical peers. When dealing with problem behaviors, many teachers use negative reinforcements in efforts to decrease this behavior. Their findings stress the importance of training programs to educate teachers in best practices for dealing with problem behaviors and further suggest additional research be conducted to analyze teachers' approval and/or disapproval behaviors and their full effects on students' success in mainstreaming practices.

The findings of Sazak-Pinar and Guner-Yildiz (2013) are contradictory to those findings of a study completed by Wallace, Anderson, Bartholomay and Hupp (2002). Wallace et al. found that more often students with disabilities were the focus of the teachers' attention as compared to students without disabilities. It was noted the results of the study conducted by Wallace et al. may have been limited due to schools being observed were chosen based on their history of success.

Swinson and Harrop (2001) conducted a study of teachers in junior and infant schools to analyze teacher use of approval/disapproval relative to student on-task behavior. Their findings indicate that student's on-task behavior increased with higher levels of approval received from their teacher. The study also suggested disapproval levels did not significantly effect on-task behavior and too little or too much disapproval could be counterproductive. The researchers emphasized caution when adjusting disapproval levels as too much of an adjustment in either direction could result in low levels of on-task behavior.

Topic Statement

Current legislative and social climates mandate the practice of inclusion. Teacher attitudes towards inclusion affect the outcome of the productiveness of those inclusion classrooms. Teachers' education, experience, preparedness, support, involvement in development of inclusion policy, personal contact with disability, and behavior all affect teacher attitudes. The topic investigated in this study is the attitudes of middle school teachers in a southern county of a Mid-Atlantic state towards inclusion.

Chapter 3: Methods

The purpose of this study was to investigate attitudes of middle school teachers towards inclusion. This chapter provides a description of the methods used to examine this topic. It also includes the research question, a description of the research design and an explanation about how data will be collected.

Research Question

The research question for this study is: *What are the attitudes of middle school teachers towards inclusion?* By determining teacher's attitudes toward inclusion a correlation can be identified between the teacher's attitude and the teacher's confidence and perceived effectiveness in teaching student's with disabilities.

Research Design

Setting and Participants. Participants for this research project were middle school teachers in a southern county in a Mid-Atlantic state. There were three middle schools that the teachers were surveyed from. All of the middle schools are comprised of grades six through eight. One of the middle schools is in a metropolitan area and two of the middle schools are in rural areas.

The school in the metropolitan area has a total of 407 students and has the smallest student body of all of the middle schools in the county. The percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch is 52.1%. The ethnic make-up of the school consists of 305 White students (74.9%), 68 African American students (16.7%), 6 Asian students (1.5%), 11 Hispanic students (2.7%), 1 American Indian student (0.2%), and 16 two or more races (3.9%). There are 34 full-time teachers at the school and the student/teacher ratio is 12.1.

The first school in a rural part of the county has a total enrollment of 679 students. The number of students receiving free or reduced lunch is 46.4%. The ethnic make-up of the school consists of 667 White students (98.2%), 5 African American students (0.7%) and 4 Asian students (0.6%). There are 45 full-time teachers at the school. The student/teacher ratio is 16.5 and is the highest among the middle schools in the district. The second middle school in a rural location of the county has a total enrollment of 471 students. The percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch is 65.2%, The ethnic make-up of the school consists of 453White students (96.2%), 10 African American students (2.1%), 1 Asian student (0.2%), 6 Hispanic students (1.3%), and 1 two or more races students (0.2%). There are 43 full-time teachers employed at the school. The student/teacher ratio is 11.6, which is the lowest among the middle schools in the district.

Procedures. The director of secondary education for the selected county was contacted to obtain permission to gather information from full-time, middle school teachers by means of an on-line survey. Permission was granted with the stipulation that each school's principal also grant permission for their school. Of the five schools invited to participate in the survey, three schools granted permission (see Appendix A). A message was sent via a third party service (see Appendix B) to all full-time teachers via email explaining the purpose of the research study and asking for their participation by completing the online survey. A second email (see Appendix C) was sent to all invitees reminding them about the survey. This email also emphasized the importance of each response.

Teacher Questionnaire. Teachers were asked to complete a survey (see Appendix D) that consisted of 21 questions consisting of demographic questions, Likert scale questions and one open-ended question. The demographic portion of the survey addressed categorical data such as: the gender of the teachers, age, numbers of years of teaching experience, academic area of expertise, and grade level of instruction. The Likert scale questions were set-up in a four-point scale format ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questions asked reflected the teachers opinions in regards to inclusion, inclusion students, curriculum offered, accomodations/modifications offered for special education students, student behavior expectations and discipline. The open-ended question asked participants if the had any questions, comments, or concerns. The targeted participants were full-time teachers at middle schools in a southern county of a Mid-Atlantic state.

Chapter 4: Results

This study was designed to ascertain the attitudes of middle school teachers towards inclusion. Of the 114 initial emails with links to the survey sent out (see Appendix B), 19 (17%) were returned. Following a second distribution of emails and survey links (see Appendix C), 9 (8%) additional surveys were returned. Overall, 28 (25%) of targeted teachers responded to the survey. A limitation of this study is the low return rate. This low rate may be due in part to poor weather that occurred during the time the survey was distributed. There was a record amount of snowfall in the target area, which led not only to school being cancelled for two weeks but also led to power outages. The survey (see Appendix D) consisted of five nominal questions, fifteen Likert scale questions, and one open ended question. The Likert scale questions were set-up in a four-point scale format ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Question 1 of the survey addressed the gender of respondents (see Table 1). Twenty (74%) of the teachers were female, 8 (26%) were male and one respondent did not identify their gender.

TABLE 1 GENDER		
Gender		
	Responses	**%**
Female	20	74%
Male	7	26%
	answered question	*27*
	skipped question	*1*

Question 2 through 5 of the survey focused on background information (see Table 2). The mode age range of the responding teachers was 41 to 50. Question 2 focused on the age of respondents. The mode age range of the teachers was 41 to 50. Overall, 1

(4%) was under the age of 25, 3 (11%) were in the age range of 26-30, 6 (22%) were in

the age range of 31-40, 13 (48%) were in the age range of 41-50, 4 (15%) were in the age

range of 51-60, and one respondent did not identify an age.

TABLE 2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION		
Age		
	Responses	**%**
Less than 25	1	4%
26 to 30	3	11%
31 to 40	6	22%
41 to 50	13	48%
51 to 60	4	15%
61 to 70	0	0%
71 or older	0	0%
answered question 27		
skipped question 1		
Years Teaching		
	Responses	**%**
1 to 5	8	30%
6 to 10	5	19%
11 to 15	3	11%
16 to 20	6	22%
21 or more	5	19%
answered question 27		
skipped question 1		
Academic subject you teach:(Check all that apply)		
	Responses	**%**
English Language Arts	5	18%
Math	3	11%
Social Studies	4	14%
Science	2	7%
Related Arts	7	25%
Special Education	9	32%
answered question 28		
skipped question 0		
Grade level teach		
	Responses	**%**
6th	5	18%
7th	4	14%
8th	7	25%
All three grade levels	12	43%
answered question 28		

Question 3 concentrated on teacher experience (see Table 3). Eight respondents (30%) had less than 5 years of teaching experience, 5 respondents (19%) had 6 to 10 years of teaching experience, 3 respondents (11%) had 11 to 15 years teaching experience, 6 respondents (22%) had 16 to 20 years teaching experience, 5 respondents (19%) had 21 years or more of teaching experience, and one respondent did not identify years of teaching experience. Question 4 focused on subject respondents teach. Of all respondents, 5 (18%) teach English Language Arts, 3 (11%) teach Math, 4 (14%) teach Social Studies, 2 (7%) teach Science, 7 (25%) teach related arts, and 9 (32%) teach special education. Question 5 reflected grade level taught. Five respondents (18%) teach 6th grade, 4 (14%) teach 7th grade, 7 (25%) teach 8th grade, and 12 (43%) teach all three-grade levels.

Question 6 of the survey measured teacher preparedness. The participants felt overall that they were prepared to teach in an inclusion classroom, with 7% strongly agreeing and 57% agreeing. However, 29% disagreed and 7% strongly disagreed with their preparedness to teach in an inclusion classroom.

Questions 7 and 8 measured teachers' attitudes towards inclusion as a desirable educational practice for students. Question 7 focused on special education students, with 7% strongly agreeing and 50% agreeing that inclusion is a desirable educational practice for special education students; while 36% disagreed and 7% strongly disagreed that inclusion is a desirable educational practice for special education students. Question 8 reflected a slightly lower percentage of participants agreeing that inclusion is a desirable educational practice for general education students, with 4% strongly agreeing and 46% agreeing that inclusion is a desirable practice for general education students; while 32%

disagreed and 18% strongly disagreed that inclusion is a desirable educational practice for general education students.

Questions 9 through 11 focus on teachers' attitudes towards academics and teacher willingness to make needed modifications and collaboration (see Table 3). Question 9 measured teachers' attitudes towards students with disabilities academic performance in an inclusion classroom. Participants strongly reflected their disagreement that students with disabilities perform better academically in an inclusion classroom, with 64% disagreeing and 4% strongly disagreeing. Conversely, 25% agreed and 7% strongly agreed that students with disabilities perform better academically in an inclusion classroom. Question 10 resoundingly reflected teachers' agreeing attitudes that they 100% are willingly to make needed modifications for students with disabilities. Respondents also predominantly agreed their willing to collaborate with other teachers in inclusive classrooms with 82% agreeing, 14% strongly agreeing and only 4% disagreeing with their willingness to collaborate.

Questions 12 through 15 measured behavior and discipline (see Table 3). Question 12 measured participants' comfort with their behavior management in their classroom. Participants reflected a high level of comfort with their behavior management in their classrooms with 18% strongly agreeing and 71% agreeing and only 11% disagreeing with their comfort with their current behavior plan. Question 13 measured participants' attitudes towards behavior standards. Majority of participants agreed that all students should be held to the same standards of behavior with 21% strongly agreeing and 50% agreeing. Participants reflected a 25% disagreement and 4% strong disagreement. Participants reflected a mixed response of their attitudes towards

disruptiveness due to students with disabilities being educated in a regular classroom with 54% disagreeing and a slightly lower combination of 46% (32% agreeing and 14% strongly agreeing) agreeing that students with disabilities disrupting education in a regular classroom. However, as reflected in Question 15, participants completely agree that improvement in overall discipline has a positive impact on academic achievement as 54% strongly agree and 46% agreeing.

Questions 16 and 17 measured social skill development of students with disabilities in an inclusion classroom (see Table 3). Participants completely agree that the try to help students find appropriate ways to deal with their feelings with 25% strongly agreeing and 75% agreeing. The majority of participants believe students with disabilities are likely to improve their social skills when placed in a regular education classroom as 18% strongly agreed and 57% agreed while 25% disagreed those students' social skills improve when placed in a regular classroom.

Questions 18 and 19 measured students with disabilities success in a regular classroom setting (see Table 3). Question 18 measured participants' attitudes on whether students with disabilities ability to be educated in the regular classroom setting. Participants disagree with students with disabilities being educated in a regular classroom setting with 54% disagreeing and 14% strongly disagreeing. Only 32% agreed that students with disabilities could be educated in a regular classroom setting and no participants strongly agreed that students with disabilities could be educated in a regular classroom setting. The majority of participants felt that students with disabilities lack the skills needed to master regular classroom course content with 33% strongly agreeing and 44% agreeing. Only 19% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed.

TABLE 3
QUESTION RESPONSES

QUESTION	Strongly Disagree	%	Disagree	%	Agree	%	Strongly Agree	%
Q6. I was prepared to teach in an inclusion classroom.	2	7%	8	29%	16	57%	2	7%
Q7. Inclusion is a desirable educational practice for special education students.	2	7%	10	36%	14	50%	2	7%
Q8. Inclusion is a desirable educational practice for general education students.	5	18%	9	32%	13	46%	1	4%
Q9. Students with disabilities are likely to do better academically in inclusive classrooms.	1	4%	18	64%	7	25%	2	7%
Q10. I am willing to make needed instructional modifications for students with disabilities in my classrooms.	0	0%	0	0%	12	43%	16	57%
Q11. I can collaborate productively with other teachers in inclusive classrooms.	0	0%	1	4%	23	82%	4	14%
Q12. I am comfortable with the plan for behavior management in my classrooms.	0	0%	3	11%	20	71%	5	18%
Q13. All students should be held to the same standards of behavior.	1	4%	7	25%	14	50%	6	21%
Q14. Educating students with disabilities in the regular classroom is disruptive to other students.	0	0%	15	54%	9	32%	4	14%
Q15. Improvement in overall discipline has a positive impact on academic achievement.	0	0%	0	0%	13	46%	15	54%
Q16. I try to help all of my students find appropriate ways to deal with their feelings.	0	0%	0	0%	21	75%	7	25%
Q17. Students with disabilities are likely to improve their social skills when placed in a regular education classroom.	0	0%	7	25%	16	57%	5	18%
Q18. Most students with disabilities (regardless of the level of their disability) can be educated in the regular classroom.	4	14%	15	54%	9	32%	0	0%
Q19. Many students with disabilities lack skills needed to master the regular classroom course content.	1	4%	5	19%	12	44%	9	33%

Question 20 measured participants' attitudes towards specific disabilities being educated in regular classrooms (see Table 4). Participants agreed (11% strongly and 59% agreed) that students with learning disabilities could be educated in a regular classroom with only 22% disagreeing and 7% strongly disagreeing. Participants disagree that students with behavior disorders should be educated in a regular classroom with 48% disagreeing and 22% strongly disagreeing and only 30% agreeing those students should be educated in a regular classroom. Participants overwhelmingly agreed (30% strongly agreed and 59% agreed) that students with physical disabilities should be educated in a regular classroom and only 4% disagreeing and 7% strongly disagreeing. Participants agreed that students with hearing disabilities should be educated in a regular classroom (15% strongly agreed and 70% agreed) with 15% disagreeing. Participants also agreed that students with visual impairments should be educated in a regular classroom with 15% strongly agreeing and 63% agreeing and 22% disagreeing in their education in a regular classroom. Participants agreed students with communication disorders should be educated in a regular classroom with 7% strongly agreeing and 63% agreeing while 26% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed. Students with health impairments were agreed upon by participants as being able to be educated in a regular classroom with 19% strongly agreeing and 63% agreeing while 19% disagreed that they could be educated in a regular classroom. Participants disagreed with students with mental impairments (cognitive and developmental delay) with 67% disagreeing and 7% strongly disagreeing while 22% agreed and 4% strongly agreed that students with mental impairments being educated in a regular classroom. Participants disagreed that students with multi-disabilities being educated in a regular classroom with 8% strongly disagreeing and 59%

disagreeing and 31% agreeing that students who are multi-disabled being educated in a

regular classroom.

TABLE 4
ATTITUDES TOWARDS SPECIFIC DISABILITIES

Q20. In my view, most students with the following disabilities should be educated in regular classrooms:

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	%	Disagree	%	Agree	%	Strongly Agree	%	Responses
Learning disabilities	2	7%	6	22%	16	59%	3	11%	27
Behavioral disorders	6	22%	13	48%	8	30%	0	0%	27
Physical disabilities	2	7%	1	4%	16	59%	8	30%	27
Hearing disabilities	0	0%	4	15%	19	70%	4	15%	27
Visual impairments	0	0%	6	22%	17	63%	4	15%	27
Communication disorders	1	4%	7	26%	17	63%	2	7%	27
Health impairments	0	0%	5	19%	17	63%	5	19%	27
Mental impairments (cognitive disabilities/developmental delay)	2	7%	18	67%	6	22%	1	4%	27
Multi-disabled	2	8%	16	59%	8	31%	0	0%	26

answered question **27**
skipped question **1**

There was one open-ended question at the end of survey. The respondents were

asked if they had any questions, comments or concerns. Of the 13 respondents, five

responded with a no response. Eight responded with concerns about how inclusion is put

into practice.   Participants expressed concerns in areas of education of all students

suffering from the practice of inclusion and concerns of students with IEP's losing their

individualized education when placed in inclusion classrooms.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This research focused on the attitudes of middle school teachers towards inclusion. By conducting this research, the aim was to determine if middle school teachers attitudes towards' inclusion were influenced by such factors as age, experience, type of class being taught, grade level being taught, past history of teaching students with disabilities, behavior, social skills, type of disability, and the level of impairment affected teachers' attitudes.

Interpretation and Implications of Results

The primary implication from this survey is that middle school teachers are torn on their opinion if inclusion is a desirable educational practice for students with and without disabilities. Just over 50% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that inclusion is a desirable educational practice for students with disabilities. Teachers are equally in disagreement about the desirability of inclusion as an educational practice for students without disabilities (see Table 3).

Teachers strongly felt they are willing to make needed instructional modification for students with disabilities with 100% of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing. These participations also agree they are willing to collaborate with other teachers in an inclusion classroom. They believe that all students should be held to the same standards of behavior and that they have a good plan in place to manage behaviors issues in their classroom (see Table 3).

Participants strongly reflected their attitude toward the types of disabilities students exhibit. Participants were clear in their responses that of those students with disabilities, there is a strong attitude difference between students with learning

disabilities, physical disabilities, hearing and visual impairments, communication disorders, and overall health impairments versus students with cognitive disabilities, behavior disorders and multi-disabled students (see Table 4). Participants' attitudes regarding students with cognitive disabilities, behavior disorders and are multi-disabled were reflected as should not be educated in regular classrooms. Whether this disagreement of education is due to teachers' perceptions that those students would not benefit from instruction in a regular setting or if the teachers disagree with inclusion for those students based on the teachers' actual inability or refusal to provide instruction for those students is unclear. Additional research on this topic would be beneficial.

One open-ended question asked if teachers had any questions, comments or concerns. Of the responses, eight responded with concerns about how inclusion is put into practice. Participants expressed concern that the education of all students might be suffering from the practice of inclusion. Responses reflected a central theme of "teaching to the middle" or focusing instruction to the average level of participants in a classroom is not beneficial to all students involved. Teachers expressed concern of high performing students and students with disabilities (specifically students with cognitive disabilities, behavior disorders, and multi-disabled students) not having their educational needs meet. The participants reflected attitudes that a growing number of students are not receiving educational benefit due to teachers targeting instruction to mid-level performing students. Teachers additionally reflected attitudes that inclusion should only be practiced in classrooms that academically teach more functional academics. One respondent stated that inclusion should only be practiced in classes such as PE or art. This statement goes

along with traditional thinking that inclusion is a beneficial practice but not in their classroom. Further research into this area would be beneficial.

Limitations

There was only a 25% return rate, producing the largest limitation. There are several factors that may have contributed to the low return rate. There was a record amount of snowfall during the survey availability time frame. This snowfall led to schools in the county being cancelled for 12 school days during the four-week survey window. Additionally, when teachers returned to the classroom, they were overwhelmed with paperwork and may have been less likely to have extra time for non-essential email and work.

There were only three middle schools surveyed creating another limitation. The Mid-Atlantic state the survey was conducted in has diverse socioeconomic and cultural areas. The three schools surveyed are located in the southern part of the state. The perceptions of teachers in this area may be different from perceptions of teachers in other parts of the state or the nation. Two of the three schools are located in rural parts of the county and one school is located in the urban part of the county. This difference adds validity to the study. A larger survey pool would have decreased the limitation of this study.

The length of the survey is an additional limitation. In an effort to keep the survey in a manageable length to increase returns, the researcher did not include enough questions to discern a clear reflection of why inclusion is not beneficial to all students in all academic areas. It was not determined if students with disabilities who were perceived as should not be taught in a regular classroom is due to teachers inability or

unwillingness to teacher to those students. Teachers may feel overwhelmed with their

caseload and may simply not have enough time to dedicate to offering one-to-one

instruction to those students. Additional questions on this topic would have been

beneficial in better discerning this negative attitude.

Further Research

As the push for inclusion increases, the need for additional research also

increases. Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion play an integral role in the success of

inclusion in the classroom. Determining areas that alter teachers' attitudes towards

inclusion and information on ways to improve teacher preparedness, teachers' knowledge

of various disabilities, and coping strategies for handling students with disabilities can

improve teachers' attitudes.

A more in-depth survey needs to be developed as a follow-up. This survey needs

to investigate additional ways teachers' attitudes can be influenced and ways teachers'

attitudes can be improved upon. More Likert scale questions should be added to more

closely pinpoint causes of negative and positive attitudes. Additional open-ended

questions should be included to allow teachers opportunities to expand on thoughts and

concerns.

Conclusion

In conclusion, teachers are primarily proponents of the educational practice of

inclusion. They believe the practice of inclusion is beneficial to students with

disabilities; however, how beneficial it is to the students is dependent upon the type of

disability and how involved the disability is. Teachers believe inclusion is not beneficial

in all school environments and believe inclusion should not occur in all general education

environments but should instead occur in less academic classes such as PE and Art.

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Appendix A

Site Approval Letter

December 15, 2014

   This letter is to document that Jennifer Holley has permission to conduct a research study at _____ Middle School in _____ once Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval has been obtained. I understand that this study involves a confidential survey. I also understand that this project is part of school requirements for CISP-615-Research II at Marshall University. The instructor for this course is Lori Howard, Ph.D.

   Dr. Howard will act as the on-site supervisor and can be contacted by phone at 304-746-2076 or by email at howardl@marshall.edu.

Signed,

Principal, _____ Middle School

Appendix B

Initial E-mail

To: recipients
From: "holley62@marshall.edu via surveymonkey.com"
<member@surveymonkey.com>
Subject: Survey Request: Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: Teacher Attitudes: An Analysis of Middle School Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion designed to analyze teacher attitudes towards inclusion. The study is being conducted by Lori Howard, Ph.D. and Jennifer Holley from Marshall University and has been approved by the Marshall University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This research is being conducted as part of the thesis course requirements for Jennifer Holley.

This survey is comprised of a combination of multiple-choice, Likert and open-ended questions. The survey should take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Your replies will be anonymous, so do not type your name anywhere on the form. There are no known risks involved with this study. Participation is completely voluntary and there will be no penalty or loss of benefits if you choose to not participate in this research study or to withdraw. If you choose not to participate you can leave the survey site. You may choose to no answer any question by simply leaving it blank. Once you complete the survey you can delete your browsing history for added security. Completing the on-line survey indicates your consent for use of the answers you supply. If you have any questions about the study you may contact Lori Howard at howardl@marshall.edu or Jennifer Holley at holley62@marshall.edu.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant you may contact the Marshall University Office of Research Integrity at (304) 696-4303.

By completing this survey you are also confirming that you are 18 years of age or older.

Please print this page for your records.

Here is a link to the survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

Thanks for your participation!

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx

Appendix C

Follow-Up E-mail

To: recipients
From: holley62@marshall.edu via surveymonkey.com <member@surveymonkey.com>
Subject: Survey Request Reminder: Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion

Body: Your opinion is important. Recently you received an e-mail asking for your help in completing an online research study. This reminder is going out to everyone who was invited to participate. Your opinion is important to us. If you have not already taken this survey, we urge to participate. If you have already taken this survey, thank you for your input. Below you will find a copy of the original invitation:

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: Teacher Attitudes: An Analysis of Middle School Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion designed to analyze teacher attitudes towards inclusion. The study is being conducted by Lori Howard, Ph.D. and Jennifer Holley from Marshall University and has been approved by the Marshall University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This research is being conducted as part of the thesis course requirements for Jennifer Holley.

This survey is comprised of a combination of multiple-choice, Likert and open-ended questions. The survey should take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Your replies will be anonymous, so do not type your name anywhere on the form. There are no known risks involved with this study. Participation is completely voluntary and there will be no penalty or loss of benefits if you choose to not participate in this research study or to withdraw. If you choose not to participate you can leave the survey site. You may choose to no answer any question by simply leaving it blank. Once you complete the survey you can delete your browsing history for added security. Completing the on-line survey indicates your consent for use of the answers you supply. If you have any questions about the study you may contact Lori Howard at howardl@marshall.edu or Jennifer Holley at holley62@marshall.edu.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant you may contact the Marshall University Office of Research Integrity at (304) 696-4303.

By completing this survey you are also confirming that you are 18 years of age or older.

Please print this page for your records.

Here is a link to the survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

Thanks for your participation!

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list. https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx

Appendix D

Teacher Attitude Survey

We would like to know a little more about your perspectives on inclusion. Please complete this short survey. There are no wrong or right answers. Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Gender: Female   Male

Age: Less than 25   26-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61-70 0ver 70

Number of years teaching: 1-5   6-10   11-15 16-20 over 20

Academic subject you teach:
(Check all that apply)
_____ English Language Arts (Reading)
_____ Math
_____ Social Studies
_____ Science
_____ Related Arts
_____ Special Education

What grade level do you teach: 6th   7th   8th   All three grade levels

Evaluation:
(Please select the response that most accurately reflects your feelings.)

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
I was prepared to teach in an inclusion classroom.	1	2	3	4
Inclusion is a desirable educational practice for *special* education students.	1	2	3	4
Inclusion is a desirable educational practice for *general* education students.	1	2	3	4
Students with disabilities are likely to do better academically in inclusive classrooms.	1	2	3	4
I am willing to make needed instructional modifications for students **with** disabilities in my classrooms.	1	2	3	4
I am willing to make needed instructional modifications for students **without** disabilities in my classrooms.	1	2	3	4
I can collaborate productively with other teachers in inclusive classrooms.	1	2	3	4

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am comfortable with the plan for behavior management in my classroom.	1	2	3	4
All students should be held to the same standards of behavior.	1	2	3	4
Educating students with disabilities in the regular classroom is disruptive to other students.	1	2	3	4
Improvement in overall discipline has a positive impact on academic achievement.	1	2	3	4
I try to help all of my students find appropriate ways to deal with their feelings.	1	2	3	4
Students with disabilities are likely to improve their social skills when placed in a regular education classroom.	1	2	3	4
Most students with disabilities (regardless of the level of their disability) can be educated in the regular classroom.	1	2	3	4
Many students with disabilities lack skills needed to master the regular classroom course content.	1	2	3	4
In my view, most students with the following disabilities should be educated in regular classrooms:	1	2	3	4
Learning disabilities	1	2	3	4
Behavioral disorders	1	2	3	4
Physical disabilities	1	2	3	4
Hearing impairments	1	2	3	4
Visual Impairments	1	2	3	4
Communication disorders	1	2	3	4
Health impairments	1	2	3	4
Mental impairment (cognitive disabilities/developmental delay)	1	2	3	4
Multi-disabled	1	2	3	4

Please list any questions you have in your role as a general educator serving students with disabilities in an inclusion setting: