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Perceptions on Inclusion in Elementary Schools

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Perceptions on Inclusion in Elementary Schools

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine how perceptions on inclusion impact supports of both special needs and regular education students in first grade. In order to grow a stronger understanding of what perceptions are in place, the perception had by teachers and administrations, and their direct impact on supports provided, two first grade classes, two classroom teachers, and one administrator were used to seek the answers we were looking for. This study explored the impact perceptions had on two first grade teachers, one administrator, and the impacts of support on 32 first grade students. Quantitative and qualitative methods of data were collected using semi-structured interviews, observations, the *Teacher Attitudes Towards Inclusion Education* survey, and a self-created survey modeled by the *Teacher Attitudes Towards Inclusion Education* survey. Over a six week data collection period, themes were noted between teacher and the administrator responses with a direct connection to supports and inclusion efforts discovered during the two classroom observations. The research recommended two implications to practice. These implications included recommendations for administrators to be more aware of how their perceptions directly impact measures of inclusion occurring in the school and teachers, as well as administrators, sharing their perceptions freely amongst each other to set forth effective inclusion measures to best meet all student needs.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Over the past century much controversy has been around special education. Inclusion has been a widely discussed topic amongst administrators, teachers and parents nationwide. Inclusive education means "students with disabilities are supported in chronologically age-appropriate general education classes in their home schools and receive the specialized instruction delineated by their individualized education programs (IEP's) within the context of the core curriculum and general class activities" (Halvorsen, 2001, p. 9). Also, in the school district of which I presently work, a special education audit was conducted in the past year to evaluate the special education system and policies in place. The idea for this research topic came out of the results from the audit as well as experiences with the special education program and staff while working in the district over the past three years. Different problems of inclusion occur for all participants involved, which directly impact their perceptions. Gerber (2011) found classroom teachers struggle with inclusion as they are expected to choose an educational methodology that best suites each students. However, so many students are uniquely different. If students with special needs are in classes, who have severe learning delays, developmental issues, or who speak little or no English, this task can feel almost insurmountable – especially if the inclusive classroom does not include a co-teacher.

Research focusing on placement, planning and analysis concluded the importance of providing the least restricted environment for special education students and the work of the teacher as the most important. Further research in the areas of instruction and student achievement meant also found the development of learners to be key. A study conducted by Ormrod (2006) indicated several benefits of placement in the general education classroom as the programs were tailoring to student specific needs and levels by adjusting materials and instruction is important in order to reach success and growth of all learners. Teachers were

flexible and regular evaluation of student growth was conducted in order to identify instructional

goals and strategies that are suitable to all students, specifically those with special needs.

The purpose of this study was to identify the perceptions of both the teaching staff and

administration on inclusion and its relation to the supports in place within the regular education

classroom. The literature indicated a strong correlation between the perceptions and attitudes of

staff in relation to the success of inclusion programs. The case study allowed the opportunity for

data to be collected in multiple modes to track perceptions, program implementation and

academic growth.   Yazan (2015) indicated that a case study was intrinsic, instrumental and

collective, as it was an "empirical inquiry that investigates a case or cases by addressing the

'how' or 'why' questions concerning the phenomenon of interest" (p. 138). As such, this

methodology allowed the opportunity to examine how perceptions of inclusion has on a group of

first grade students over a period of six to eight weeks. The most important component of

inclusion and supports is their direct impact and effectiveness on student learning. Exploring

directly how inclusion models impact student looks primarily at best practice initiatives for

inclusion, methods teachers are taking in order to ensure individualized education plan (IEP)

goals are being addressed and met (Bergin & Logan, 2013). Analyzing current practices and

identifying challenges facing teachers is a significant component to understanding inclusions

success.

These ideas of inclusion measures and practices were explored in this case study. Yin

(2003) described three different types of case studies; explanatory, exploratory and

descriptive. For this case study, an exploratory case study was used. This type of case study was

the best fit for the research questions proposed because it explored the perceptions of

administrators and teachers, as well as look closely at supports in effect in the setting. A single

case study was selected because it looked at two classes of first grade students in a single

setting. The same researcher conducted the study with both classes, as well as work closely with teachers and administrators so that consistency is possible and generalizations were made.

The study explored the following questions:

1. What are teacher's perceptions on inclusion?

2. What supports are in place for promoting effective inclusion and what is their fidelity?

3. What are administrators' perceptions that impact supports?

Summary

This research came as a result of recent happenings and conversations around inclusive education. Much controversy over the past years has left the idea of what inclusion should look like as a mystery. Different problems of inclusion occur for all participants, as many perceptions are present. Gerber (2011) believes the best educational methodology for inclusive classrooms includes co-teaching. Appropriate placement, planning and analysis in order to provide the least restricted environment for special education students is essential. Ormrod (2006) highlighted benefits of special needs students in the general education classroom, where programs are tailored to meet student's specific needs.

Identifying the perceptions of both the teaching staff and administration on inclusion and its relation to the supports in place within the special education classroom was discovered in this research. The literature indicated a strong correlation between the perceptions and attitudes of staff in relation to the success of inclusion programs. This exploratory case study allowed the opportunity for data to be collected in multiple modes and was intrinsic, instrumental and collective tool. The opportunity to examine how perceptions of inclusion had on a group of first grade students over a period of six to eight weeks occurred and the most important component of inclusion and supports is their direct impact and effectiveness on student learning. Three research questions were answered through this research study: what are teacher's perceptions on

inclusion?, what supports are in place for promoting effective inclusion and what is their

fidelity?, what are administrators' perceptions that impact supports?.

In chapter 2, I will examine the current and past research on inclusive education.

National policies are explore to gain a clear understanding the meaning of inclusion and its

currently practices. Research trends to investigate principal's attitudes towards inclusion are

extracted and hypothesized through numerous forms of research. The research methods are then

described and sources are listed with key words presented that were used in the searches. The

chapter will continued with the each area expressed: placement, planning, and analysis,

instruction and student achievement, staff attitudes, perceptions and development. Research

pertaining to the topic will be expressed with relevance of importance to each research question.

In chapter 3, I will discussed the methodology used while reviewing the purpose of this

study to express the reasoning behind selecting such methodology. Three research questions will

be presented that were answered in this study. The research design is described with the goal of

the study restated and clarified. A case study was selected and research is provided to support

such methodology used. Highlights from the research are explained to express the importance of

how a case study best supports the research within this study. This study was conducted in

Winchester, Connecticut with the participants being two first grade classrooms and one

elementary level administrator. Qualitative and quantitative data measures were collected

through three different measures: interviews, observations, and online surveys. Research around

each data collection method is provided to express why such measures were selected in this

study and tools used to collect each form of data are explained with research to support each.

Next, data analysis methods are presented for both the qualitative and quantitative research.

Inductive analysis is used with *Microsoft (MS) Word* and *Survey Monkey* as the tool. Research is

used to present the steps of which analysis occurs and both tools are used to collect and sort

through the data effectively for qualitative measure. For quantitative methods, descriptive

statistics are used to analyze the data collected. Research that supports such measures of data

collection are presented to support the method selected. *MS Excel* was selected as the tool to

collect the quantitative data and research on this program from Salkind (2013) is used to

highlight the benefits of using *MS Excel*. Then validity and reliability measures will be

expressed that were taken during the study to ensure the results/data was true. First the

definition of validity and reliability will be clarified to show their importance before discussing

each instrument that was used during the study to ensure validity and reliability in the study.

How inter-rater reliability, member check, and triangulation of data occurred across all measures

will be outlined.

In chapter 4, I will provide results and discussions for the data collected. An introduction

opens this section with a brief recap of the purpose of the study and research questions that were

the focus of the study. Then for each of the three research questions, themes extracted from all

the research are expressed. Data will be presented in support of answering each question. Many

artifacts, direct quote from observation along with interviews, and data collected is included for

review. Tables and graphs will be used to display data in order to make the results clear and

highlight the different themes. A discussion will follows for each question in an effort to explore

further what they research shows and its implication to practice. This chapter will conclude with

a summary with each theme clearly outlined.

In chapter 5, I will look closer into the research and discussions from chapter four to

express conclusions and implications in the research. First a conclusion for each research

question will be presented as a means to summarize the reasoning behind the research, data

collected, and analysis of such data presented. A review of the process of this study will also

include while focusing on currently research as support.

Definition of Terms

Inclusive education: "Students with disabilities are supported in chronologically age-appropriate general education classes in their home schools and receive the specialized instruction delineated by their IEP's [Individualized Educational Plan] within the context of the core curriculum and general class activities" (Halvorsen, 2001, p. 9).

Individualized Education Plan (IEP): "The Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is a plan or program developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives specialized instruction and related services" (University of Washington, 2015, p. 01).

Mainstream education: "Mainstreaming, in the context of education, is the practice of educating students with special needs in regular classes during specific time periods based on their skills" (Wikipedia, 2015, p. 01).

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Inclusion in schools has been a lasting debate across decades within public schools that administrators have had to address and accommodate. National policies and acts have been put into place, within the public education system, which consistently include the word "inclusion." These policies and acts date back to the 1990s and continue into this 21st century (Bhattacharya, 2010). To begin, 'inclusion' must be defined. According to The Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (2015), "inclusion means that students with disabilities are educated full-time in age appropriate general education classrooms in their neighborhood schools with support provided to enable students, teachers and the entire school community to succeed" (p. 1). This arrangement for providing services has created numerous challenges for all those involved including the principals. When investigating principal's attitudes towards inclusion trends become clear in their responses. Numerous measures come into play, which impact thus attitudes and is explored throughout this paper. It is hypothesized that positive attitudes by administration and teachers on inclusion results in positive outcomes for the inclusion programs.

The purpose of the following literature review is to demonstrate and support this hypothesis, as an effort to address problems regarding inclusion. Assuring the opportunity for effective instruction can occur and student achievement is a result, it is important to focus on the impact of the variety of learning in the inclusion setting. The following research studies support the hypothesis of this paper. The methods used to collect research found in this study were discovered through different sources. The sources used were the *Google Scholar* search engine, *Elton B. Stephens Company (EBSCO)*, *Education Research Information Center (ERIC)* and the Sacred Heart University library. When researching, key words used were 'inclusion in school setting,' 'perceptions of teacher's and administrator's on inclusion,' 'pros and cons for inclusion in the elementary setting.' Various measures were taken in order to determine if research articles obtained were credible and worthy of including, for example locating well known researchers on

the specific topic, monitoring publication dates to ensure information is most recent up to date,

determining the set audience at which the study was written for as well as reading each student to

take into consideration the author's point of view to ensure the sources do not limit their

discussions on one side of the topic.

In this literature review, an overview of research around three basic areas is explored.

These areas include: placement, planning and analysis, instruction and student achievement, along

with staff attitudes, perceptions and development. For each area, research pertaining to the topic

is expressed with relevance to the importance of this topic and research study. A summary

concludes the review, where important research is restated and interpreted, with connections made

the study.

Placement, Planning and Analysis

Over the years the idea of inclusion has risen to the idea of including children with

disabilities with their nondisabled peers in the general education classroom. In order for this

model to reach its goal of effectiveness for all those involved, programming measures are

essential as well as frequent monitoring and assessment of programs. Both Hollenbeck (2012)

and Irvine, Lupart, Loreman, and McGhie-Richmond (2010) focused on the importance of

creating a strong, supportive inclusion program. Hollenbeck (2012) used a model that benefited

inclusion when proper supports are in place. Inclusion is sought to be an enriching experience

for students with severe psychiatric impairments and growth in their social and educational lives.

This begins with the development of a partnership within programs. The study was conducted

on students who needed a further restricted setting beyond that the typical self-contained

classroom model in the public school setting. Many psychological disabilities were seen in the

sample and three classrooms were run by the hospital for grades pre K to one, grades one to

three, and grades three to five. In each classroom there was one teacher and one behavior

specialist, with an addition two behaviorist floating between classrooms for assistance when

needed. Challenges and points of success were determined to be with staffing limitations, scheduling, and curriculum as being the major challenges and the successes were the relationships build, opportunities for support, and flexibility in being able to meet the needs of individual learners. The importance of creating a wholly integrated school culture that has meaningful and purposeful programming and supports to meet the needs of all individual learners, specifically those with special needs as highlighted in this study was the main point leading to the importance of structure, warmth and support as the root of inclusion program success.

Irvine et al. (2010) reached similar findings in their research, however, took their study a step further to focus on the idea that inclusion is viewed positively and extends beyond the classroom to meet the diverse needs of students within a regular education classroom in the public school setting. The key factors of effective and positive inclusion, as revolving around collaboration of main participants in the student's education, supported establishment of well planned programs where teachers have appropriate professional development and training in the model as well as best practice measures for running a classroom of inclusion. Another resource, Norwich (2002) conducted an overview of current policies, practices and upcoming trends were reviewed with an interdisciplinary model being recommended to further understand interactions and individual needs to explore the tensions and links between social and individual values and models for students with difficulties and disabilities. Creating school improvement measures, in relation to goal setting for program improvement, and allowance for ideological purity was the main purpose of this study. Limitations did include the small sampling and selection of populations used to support findings. Past research of Minow (1985) on 'dilemmas of difference' was referenced in resolving the dilemmas on the importance of fulfilling all values. A framework for meeting requirements of special needs students and truly resolving the dilemmas around values is concluded, however, holds some implications on proper program

planning. A list of schemes, which were broken down into three elements, met these requirements of educational needs. The overall findings, looked at the major differences between inclusion and individuality. For future special education, some degree of provision in the settings and a positive vision based on acceptance of ideological impurity are discovered. Ensuring there are equal opportunities and education for all students, no matter their needs, is expressed under the importance of meeting each and every student's individual needs. Proper program planning and analysis as an effort to reduce dilemmas around inclusion and rather focusing on educating young children no matter their needs is the main driver of this work is essential.

When considering program analysis, Ryan (2008) and Pickard (2009) both focused on developing models and tools to measure program success. The research study by Ryan (2008) explored measures for inclusion analysis. Developmental background of this tool's and their benefits are highlighted as means to support and to show student and school improvement, when inclusion programs are in place and running effectively. The *Index for Inclusion* was used as the starting groups for this study. The model of disability and special educational needs is explored to highlight how it is appropriately and successfully used and perceived from schools that have used the tool. The necessary steps and measures to prepare for inclusion prior to the analysis tool being implemented and then after implementation allows the author to paint a picture of inclusion in education. Findings from this exploration reported positives outcomes for using the tool, however, the need for further research in regards to the use of tools in school in relation to validity and reliability presented as a problem. This study noted further research was needed to determine the overall effectiveness of the tool and impact on students. The results in this study supported the hypothesis that if proper measures were set up for assessing and evaluation of inclusion programs and student disabilities were addressed effectively under the Index of Inclusion, than attitudes of inclusion would be positive likewise success of such programs.

Similarly Pickard (2009) used the *Welsh Inclusion Model* to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusion effects on elementary students. Through a qualitative case study, the effectiveness of implementation of the model and how the program affects student learning occurs. A sample was collected when the researchers visited a Title I school in North Carolina, which was on their second year of implementation of the *Welsh Inclusion Model*. Interviews and, surveys, as well as analysis measures and rubrics were used to determine how the model was being implemented and its effects on programs and student learning. The increases noted in student achievement measures were noted as the indicator for program success. Where deficiencies were located goals were established to address quickly and effectively. Both studies concluded that further research is needed in developing such analysis measures, like the *Index for Inclusion* and self-evaluation measures, to determine effectiveness or to gather information from schools to scientifically evaluate the validity and reliability of the data.

Bergin and Logan (2013) focused primarily evaluating an individual's education plan and how the inclusion model directly impacts students. Best practice initiatives for inclusion education, for example, methods teachers are taking in order to ensure individualized education plan (IEP) goals are being addressed and met, help focus the discussion around how an effective inclusion model might look in the regular education setting. An analysis of current practices is used to identify challenges to teachers with the ideology of inclusion. A survey on 160 teachers and concludes positives and negatives in the overall planning and placement team process and implementation of goals as well as impacts on both the IEP student and classmates when students are working towards goals in the regular education classroom. There was significant motivation and large benefits associated with including the pupil's voice in the IEP process. They found the best way to do so was through educating the teachers appropriately through the use of professional development, which directly impacted student achievement and worked toward

program success. This study supported the idea of appropriate and meaningful planning to occur

for special needs students with placements in the regular education classroom.

Instruction and Student Achievement

Within establishing the model comes the planning for teaching with the inclusion model.

Just like effective measures for program set up and analysis must occur, continuous planning

needs to occur in order to assure effective instruction measure are in place. Ormrod (2006)

stated if proper instruction measures were in place to meet the diverse group of learners within

the inclusion setting that higher academic achievement would be discovered. The most

important factor, in regards to instruction in the inclusion model, is the development of learners.

Ormrod (2006) focused on the development of learners within the inclusion setting, with

emphasis on the exception learners. Research studies were used to indicate several benefits of

placement in the general education classroom. Tailoring to student specific needs and levels by

adjusting materials and instruction is important in order to reach success and growth of all

learners. Being flexible to adjust the general education classroom to meet the needs of diverse

learners and maintain a productive classroom environment for all students is essential. Teachers

must evaluate regularly student growth and look to identify instructional goals and strategies that

are suitable to all students, specifically those with special needs. Effective instruction is also

supported when promoting personal, social, and moral development in students with special

needs in the inclusion classroom. This can happen hand-in-hand with educational development

and through the use of various strategies. Perceptions of the learning and instructional strategies

revealed when individualized learning modalities were utilized they reached full academic

success regardless of the level of difficulty. Allowing teachers to have the freedom of using a

variety of instructional strategies to enhance integration and promote overall student success is

key (Pickard, 2009).

Dessemontet and Bless (2013) conducted research to assess the impact of intellectual

disability (ID) students in general education classrooms and the direct impact on the academic

achievement. The study consisted of two groups, students with ID and non-disabled students,

with achievement data collected from literacy and mathematics tests and a section of the *Culture*

Fair Intelligence Test (Cattell, Wei, & Osterland, 1997). There was no significant difference in

achievement of low-, average-, and high-achieving peers from classroom with and without ID

peers. The results show students with learning disabled (LD) in the regular education setting,

with proper support and target instruction, show academic growth. Findings also suggested that

LD students do not have a direct impact on the academic achievement of their peers without

disabilities resulting in student achievement being reached for all members of the group.

Chandler-Olcott and Kluth (2009) conducted a research study to highlight the benefits of

providing improved literacy instruction for all learners. The degree to which how closely teachers

monitored students to provide the most specific and meaningful instruction and interventions

were studied. A framework for teaching literacy to autistic students was recommended for

students to grow in inclusive literacy classrooms and to ensure all students reading needs were

being met. Benefits for improving results for all learners' has caused a decrease in the

achievement gap as literacy is expanding throughout the day in an inclusion classroom. For

example, classroom activities might include a list of tools and/or strategies for teaching to

implement with students to support writing and representations (Kemple, Hartle, Correa, & Fox,

1994). Also, the ability and opportunities for teachers to appropriately promote positive social

interactions and accountability for instructional planning was expressed as essential. Focusing on

the learning outcomes rather than activity outcomes, which is typically used, expresses the

importance of student centered learning and setting appropriate goals/outcomes for individual

students.

Scientifically based reading research recommended efficacious models of curriculum and

teachers holding the role of the inquirers, who advocate for their students (Chandler-Olcott &

Kluth, 2009; Copeland & Keefe, 2007; Leyser, Zeiger, & Romi 2011). Therefore we must then ask; what does effective and meaningful literacy instruction need look like? An effective model of literacy instruction is required in order to reach academic success with students with moderate or severe disabilities. First, it is important to note the physical presence alone of students with autism and other moderate disabilities are in regular education settings need to be offered equal choice and opportunities as their regular education peers in order for inclusion measures and the teaching of literacy instruction in the setting to be positive and successful (Copeland & Keefe, 2007). In a study conducted by Belle Gardners School in FairFax County shows how staff embraces the responsibility of meeting all students' learning needs and full participation for all learners was the goal (Chandler-Olcott & Kluth, 2009). With this approach, the inclusion of students with autism in the learning community has positive impact on literacy development for all students in the learning environment. This study supported the hypothesis completely as the study demonstrates first hand how positive attitudes and effective implementation of the inclusion model can allow for instruction to take place and growth amongst all students.

Staff Attitudes, Perceptions and Development

Adequate and effective staffing is imperative in order for an effective inclusion program. As stated above in the hypothesis of this paper, it is perceived that positive attitudes by administration and teachers on inclusion result in positive outcomes for the programs. This section investigates studies that focus on staff qualification, attitudes and experiences that impact inclusion programs.

First, it is important to notice the chances and challenges that are facing the education system. Leyser, Zeiger, and Romi (2011) looked closely at special educational needs in the general education settings and the mandates through special education legislation at the forefront. The differences between each legislation and consideration of socio-economical, political and cultural traditions played a key role with the main purpose being to evaluate if

teacher's sense of efficacy changed during pre-service programs, notice perceptions of self-efficacy impacts differently depending on the severity of experiences involved and if the participation in conferences and workshops on inclusion impact this self-efficacy for teaching students with diverse, special needs. Past research, like Bandura's (1977, 1986, 1997) studies of self-efficiency in the social learning theory, highlight the importance of self-efficiency in relation to the impacts of teaching experiences. Teachers were questioned on their abilities to teach students with a variety of diverse needs and abilities within one classroom setting. A sample of 687 students in the general education major and 305 were in special education with a variety of ethical and religious representations completed a ten-item survey developed by Rich, Lev, and Fischer (1996). Data found efficacy for social relations was the only effect for the years of pre-service experience and students with more experience typically held higher scores than those without the experience. The intensity of the different programs each student was in showed to have an impact on results. The results supported the idea of most experienced staff/educators teaching in the inclusion settings will lead to more success and happiness of programs in relation to increases in student achievement (Leyser, Zeiger, & Romi, 2011).

Studies that focus on level of experience in relation to program success and development included both Ko and Boswell (2013) and Praisner (2003). Praisner focused on the attitudes of principals, elementary level, toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular education classroom. The purpose was to learn more about administrator's attitudes on inclusive education. She was eager to discover what attitudes exist towards inclusion in the general education setting, the relationship between principals' personal experiences and the school characteristics and attitudes towards inclusion and also the relationship between principals' perceptions of appropriate placements for students with different disabilities. Surveys were mailed to randomly selected administrators at the elementary level in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to determine that degree of which the administrators were trained, their

experiences and programming with relation to their attitudes and beliefs extracted. Findings

determined concluded the significance and importance of attitudes in relation to how students

with special needs are being placed in school settings. Overall ratings were favorable attitudes

towards inclusion as there was a significant positive correlation between attitude towards

inclusion and the number of special education credits, in-service hours, specific topics taken and

experience levels. In support of the hypothesis, the more positive experiences with inclusion

yielded more favorable attitudes towards inclusion. It should be noted that only one state was

chosen for the population and elementary principals. Assumption were assumed in regards to the

working conditions, believing they are the same and levels are experience were assumed to be

within the same range without surveying. Ko and Boswell (2013) constructed along the same

measures and purpose, emerged data into four themes of teacher's perceptions, practices,

learning, and needs including their dedication to inclusion, adaptation, experimental practices

and challenges. Findings suggested that more teacher professional development was needed for

program efficacy and success. From this came the creation of the Feiman-Nemser's (2001)

framework for teacher development was used to shape the themes from this study. The

framework identified elements of teaching that were used to prepare teachers to progress.

Teachers believed hands-on experiences are essential for successful implementation of inclusion

along with the need for continuous professional development. Competent teachers who are

experiences in the areas of expertise needed for working with students with disabilities is

essential.

Ball and Green (2015) also investigated the attitudes of school leaders toward the

inclusion of students with disabilities within the general education setting and found similar

results. Results fell under six specific headings: limited training and experiences for school

leaders in relation to special education and inclusive practices, school leaders have a negative

attitude towards inclusion, inclusive placements are supported by school leaders however

differences exist with different disabilities, and lastly the number of students with IEPs in the

regular education classroom should be indicators for appropriate placements, and addressed the

underlying measures that need to be appropriately and effectively in place so that growth can

occur. Components of the study showed many foundational skills and steps are required in order

for inclusion to be effective. Many attitudes and misconceptions discovered through this study

were due to lack of professional development/training and negative previous personal

experiences with inclusion. Gokdere (2012) similarly used his study to determine the challenges

and negative attitudes and perceptions in current educational setting. This was in an effort to

solve problems that are being faced in most inclusion practices in the public school setting. The

study looks at the attitudes, concern and interaction levels of elementary school teachers and

teacher candidates. The main goals of the study related directly to determining aspects of the

hypothesis:

> How are the attitudes of the teacher candidates towards the inclusive education?, How are
>
> the anxiety levels of the teacher candidates for the implementation of inclusive education?,
>
> Is there a relationship between the interaction level and the students taking inclusive
>
> education?, Is there a relationship between gender and the attitudes towards inclusive
>
> education?, Is there a relationship between gender and anxiety levels for the practice of
>
> inclusive education?, and Is there a relationship between gender and the interaction with
>
> the students taking inclusive education? (p. 2802)

Data gathered concluded significant differences between in-service and pre-service teachers

attitudes towards both inclusive education and overall interactions with special needs students.

Again, professional development was needed, primarily focusing on the basics of inclusive

education, to enhance qualifications and increase overall knowledge.

In a study by Bentley-Williams and Morgan (2013) conclusions from the study revealed

clear themes: "self as learner, prejudices, misconceptions and ethical behavior, understanding of

inclusive education, collaboration and expanding consciousness as measures of inclusion's impact on students and programs" (p. 178). There was an increased understanding of diversity and teaching role in the inclusive education setting evident and college preparation programs were beginning to adopt research-based learning programs to strengthen best practice measures in the inclusion settings. The perspectives of pre-service teachers and implications for teacher preparation programs they attend hold meaningful insight to the findings. Participation in such programs, exclusion from culture, curriculum and community mainstreaming were explored. The adoption of social justice orientation allowed for the true benefits to focus not only on academics but also the social contexts of peer acceptance, building self-esteem, opportunities for learning and reducing stigma attached to segregated out of classroom programs. Further research needs to be conducted in the areas of diverse curriculum development and cognitive responses to instruction along with data collected from further sampling population and size.

Subsequently, Irvine et al. (2010) looked at the experiences of principals in a rural school district as educational leaders with a goal of creating authentic inclusion schools. The ideas that inclusion is viewed positively and extends beyond the classroom to meet the diverse needs of students within a regular education classroom were concluded. Key factors of effective and positive inclusion revolving around collaboration of main participants in the student's education and meaningful and appropriate opportunities for professional development, was clear. They asked, "does inclusion works?" and "what can be done to make it work appropriately?" (p. 75). A survey, individual interviews and a methodology of multi-perspective case study was conducted within a Canadian school district; it should be noted one limitation of this study is the small sample size and lack of research from other demographic areas. The interviews focused on acquiring an in-depth understanding of inclusive practices in their schools and their specific experiences and allowed administrators to explore and recall their personal experiences with inclusion. Small samples of students were identified for purposes of in-depth case studies, as a

means to broaden the research study. The data confirmed experiences of all the principals

participating were relatively positive in nature, thus again completely supporting the hypothesis.

Schools in rural settings had no alternatives for exceptional needs in their general education

classrooms whereas those situated in an urban setting were exploring alternative programs for

inclusion; thus showing a vast difference in experiences of each setting. Similar themes were

feelings of ownership and responsibility in schools, school teams, preparedness and adaptability,

valuing and promoting student diversity and the parent-school partnership.

Summary

In this literature review, the inclusion model in the general education classroom is

explored to determine if there is an impact on professional's attitudes and perceptions in relation

to how successful the program is. First, the overall planning and programming of inclusion

model was discussed with findings all relating to the importance of careful, considerate and

meaningful planning with the overarching goal to meet the needs of all learners, both

academically and developmentally. Once programs are in place, regular analysis, evaluation and

assessment is needed to ensure a high level of expectation is achieve and goals are being met.

Once programming is set, effective instruction is essential. Proper instruction measures need to

be in place to meet the diverse group of learners within the inclusion setting. Strategies and tools

are introduced to support the growth of all learners and regular progress monitoring is conducted

to ensure instruction is focused and at a level of appropriateness for all. Lastly, the effectiveness

of staff performance, level of professionalism and amount of training directly affects inclusion.

In the themes, evolves the perceived and attitudes of staff. Findings supported the correlation

between level of training, degree of experience and qualifications to be directly related to the

overall degree of which inclusion is occurring and its underlying effectiveness.

Upon completion of the research analysis, gaps were noted that needed to be addressed.

More information related to students with IEPs showing increases educationally within the

inclusion setting from diverse populations and the attitudes related. Also, it would be important

to obtain further information on other reasons that can be taken into consideration for the

negative attitudes and perceptions. For example, are the attitudes because of lack of support or

funding, etc. Another gap in the research is locating the root of such attitudes and perceptions.

Are the negative perceptions primarily related to personal experiences, current challenges in

inclusion practices and/or common beliefs on inclusion? This study investigated teacher's

perceptions on inclusion, supports in place for promoting effective inclusion and their fidelity, as

well as administrator's perceptions and impacts on supports in place.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

The review of literature found a strong correlation between the perceptions and attitudes of staff in relation to the success of inclusion programs. Based on this observation, the purpose of this study was to explore how inclusion is being implemented in the elementary school setting. The study explored the following questions:

1. What are teacher's perceptions on inclusion?

2. What supports are in place for promoting effective inclusion and what is their fidelity?

3. What are administrators' perceptions that impact supports?

The study was focused on a sample of first grade students, teachers and an administrator from two classes in the same elementary school who are part of an inclusion setting, a case study was the most appropriate methodology used to explore implementation of inclusion at this site.

Research Design

The goal of this study was to examine how perceptions on inclusion impact supports on both special needs and regular education students in first grade. The literature indicated a strong correlation between the perceptions and attitudes of staff in relation to the success of inclusion programs. A case study allowed the opportunity for data to be collected in multiple modes to track perceptions, program implementation and academic growth. Yazan (2015) indicated that a case study was intrinsic, instrumental and collective, as it was an "empirical inquiry that investigates a case or cases by addressing the 'how' or 'why' questions concerning the phenomenon of interest" (p. 138). As such, this methodology allowed the opportunity to examine how perceptions of inclusion has on a group of first grade students over a period of six to eight weeks. The most important component of inclusion and supports is their direct impact and effectiveness on student learning. Exploring directly how inclusion models impact student looks primarily at best practice initiatives for inclusion, methods teachers are taking in order to

ensure individualized education plan (IEP) goals are being addressed and met (Bergin & Logan, 2013). Analyzing current practices and identifying challenges facing teachers is a significant component to understanding inclusions success. These ideas of inclusion measures and practices were explored in this case study.

Yin (2003) described three different types of case studies: explanatory, exploratory and descriptive. For this case study, an exploratory case study was used. This type of case study was the best fit for the research questions proposed because it explored the perceptions of administrators and teachers as well as looked closely at supports in effect in the setting. This was a single case study because it is looking at two classes of first grade students in a single setting. The same researcher conducted the study with both classes and worked closely with teachers and administrators so that consistency was possible and generalizations could be made.

Participants

The town of Winchester was situated in the mountains of Litchfield County with a population of roughly 11,000. The community had much to offer, being located on a well know lake – Highland Lake – and including a scenic downtown. The population varied in culture and ethnicity, with a large number of low-income families. A large percentage of families lived with extended family or in hotels because of homelessness. The housing available around the lake was generally owned by out of town residents due to cost.

Winchester Public Schools hosts three schools: Batcheller Early Education Center holds grades preschool through grade one, Hinsdale Elementary holds grades two through four, and Pearson Middle holds grades five and six. Two first grade classes at Batcheller Early Education Center located in Winchester, Connecticut were selected by availability and willingness of staff. These classes consisted of a total of 34 students, both with 17 students. Class one had eight boys and nine girls and class two had seven girls and 10 boys. In class one, 75% of students were of special needs requiring special education students and in class two roughly 25% of students were

currently enrolled in special education. Also, class two had two non-English speaking students and both classes had a moderate amount of behavior concerns.

Data Collection Methods

In this study, quantitative and qualitative research methods were used to conduct a study to answer the research questions set forth in Table 1 below.

Table 1.

Research Questions and Methods

Research Questions	Methods
1. What are teacher's perceptions on inclusion?	- Semi-structured interviews - Surveys (online)
2. What supports are in place for promoting effective inclusion and what is their fidelity?	- Observations - Surveys (online)
3. What are administrator's perceptions that impacts supports?	- Semi-structured interviews - Surveys (online) - Observations

The three research questions described in the chart above were answered through the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. In the next section, each of the methods are described in detail.

Qualitative Methods

Two qualitative methods were used in this study to reach acquire data in obtaining answers to the research questions proposed. These two methods were observations and semi-structured interviews.

Semi-structured interviews. The researcher used semi-structured interviews to gain

more information from the surveys to answer all three of the research questions. Participants of

both surveys were asked to provide contact information if they are interested in participating,

therefore, completely voluntary. This was the most appropriate way to seek participation when

taking in mind the samples educational obligations and personal life. This way participants were

not feeling obligated or pressured to participate, rather just encouraged to expand data of the

research. Tourangeau and Smith (1996) expressed the importance of integrating technology into

data collection methods and its benefits. They state interviews conducted based off online

surveys as well as interviews conducted digitally allow for higher levels of participation and

interest. Semi-structured format was chosen as the best approach to be sure appropriate data is

collected in the need to answer the questions purposed and to be sure information was collected

from each participant on the same subject and topics for validity (Ruona, 2005). This approach

has set questions to be asked, however, allows for new ideas to be brought up as a result of what

the interviewee says; which is important in this study to reach data on each participant's

perceptions and ideas (Creswell, 2012)

For these interviews, willing participants were contacted upon request through the survey

response. Interview questions were generated by the research and carried out with each

participant in a group setting (i.e., two-three other interviews). Interview questions were

generated by the researcher and in the best interest of obtaining information for this research (see

Appendix A for a copy of this instrument). A series of eight to 10 formal questions were asked

with opportunities for extensions and additions, if candidates wish to follow the semi-structured

interview model. Questions concentrated on answering one and three of the research questions.

Interview questions were extracted from the *Teacher Attitudes Towards Inclusion Education*

with a few additional questions *(*Creswell, 2012).

Observations. Observations are most appropriate for collecting data on naturally occurring behaviors in their usual contexts, therefore, are most appropriate for this study as they allow for the opportunity of in the field data to be collected (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). First hand data obtained through observations allowed the researcher to answer the second research question. The researcher was able to see current practices and support in place for effective inclusion and its fidelity as well as further understand data collected from the surveys. Observations added further explanations to support the surveys conducted and provide in-depth information to each specific practice in the inclusion settings (Creswell, 2003).

To conduct observations, the researcher visited both first grade classrooms twice over the course of this study. Anecdotal notes were taken during each observation. Two overarching topics were the focus of the observation; inclusion support recommended and supports in place. These observations were conducted near the end of the research for the researcher to take into consideration all data presented. This helped with locating supports that were recommended and focus the observation and discussions with teachers.

Quantitative Methods

One quantitative methods was used in this study to reach acquire data in obtaining answers to the research questions proposed. This method was surveys.

Surveys. Two surveys were used to collect qualitative research for this study: the *Teacher Attitudes Towards Inclusion Education* and a self-created instrument modeling the previous survey. Surveys were chosen as the most appropriate method of use as they offered the results at which I was looking to collect. Surveys are simple questionnaires that would be accessible for this population and appropriate in gaining information on their demographics and perceptions as well as current practices (Creswell, 2012). Both were online surveys, to meet twenty-first century skills as well as promote further interest and participation. Online surveys reach the virtual community at which most teachers are actively part of. Such surveys were also

more time efficient for research as the data collection process is generated through the software used, in this case *Survey Monkey* was utilized (Wright, 2006).

Based on the literature review, one survey was adopted from Kern (2006), to distribute to the teachers. This survey was created to address issues pertaining to teacher perceptions on training, administrative support, peer support, collaboration and student variables relating to inclusion. The survey entitled *Teacher Attitudes Towards Inclusion Education* (see Appendix B for a copy of this instrument), consisted of three parts. The three parts cover gathering demographic information, a forty-two questionnaire relating to attitudes, and open-ended responses relating to teacher training. For this particular study only the first two parts were used. Measures of reliability and validity were conducted before using the survey showed appropriateness of the instrument. This survey was most appropriate for this study as it examined the perceptions of teachers, administrative supports and all aspects related to all three of the research questions in this study. The questions within the questionnaire could be answered on a 4-point Likert scale (i.e., strongly disagree to strongly agree). The survey was distributed to two teachers of the first grade classes in this study. The questions were turned into an online survey, using *Survey Monkey*, and sent to teachers digitally. Teachers were asked to complete as honestly, to the best of their knowledge and sent back to the research following a deadline. The deadline was set two weeks after sending survey out to allow for reasonable time to complete (Wright, 2006).

Because the literature review did not assist in adaptation of a survey to obtain appropriate information on administrators' perceptions, the second survey was created from scratch from the researcher, with the use of the *Teacher Attitudes Towards Inclusion Education* as a model (see Appendix C for a copy of this instrument). This survey was also created through the use of *Survey Monkey* and distributed to the one administrator in this study. This survey followed a similar format to the survey distributed to teachers. Two sections were distributed to first gather

demographic information and then a thirty-eight questionnaire. This method was most effective

in obtaining data to answer specifically the third research question and further understand

supports and their fidelity.

Data Analysis Methods

Once the data was all collected and gathered effectively from the various methods,

analysis was necessary to determine the results of the study. Analysis of both qualitative and

quantitative data occurred and the results were organized to establish answers to each research

question and the overall purpose of this study.

Qualitative Methods

The data generated in this study was analyzed using an inductive analysis approach.

According to Merriam (1998) inductive analysis approach identified themes that emerged

directly from data where abstractions, concepts and hypotheses could be discovered. I decided to

utilize constant comparative method, where I organized data into categories in order to fully

understand what each participant meant in their responses and then taking it a step further to

generate relationships between each category (Ruona, 2005).

I used *Microsoft (MS) Word* as the tool for qualitative data analysis (Ruona, 2005). With

having a large amount of experience using this software, I found it to be the most appropriate

method for my analysis. LaPelle (2004) explained the many benefits that the table structure of

MS Word as it acts as a database. These supports included formatting, modifying coding by

adding rows and sorting in columns, merging table of data for additional focus groups or

informants, and using features to search for keywords or codes. Charts and tables were created

to clearly understand themes in the data. Ruona (2005) described a four-stage process for

developing charts and tables on *MS Word*. She also described different features that are

available to conduct more systematic representation of qualitative data and analysis. Stage one,

data preparation, requires the transcribing all interviews and observation notes collected. Each

transcription was double checked for validity and confirmed by participants. Once transcriptions

are approved, a table was created where data were formatted into columns. Stage two,

familiarization, data was analyzed deeper to capture meaning segments of data and insights. In

order for this to be possible, I reviewed all data and began to notice the main themes in the data

emerge. In stage three, *coding*, it was time to code the data presented. Since data is very

familiar up to this point, coding involved categorizing themes with a code. The coding method is

a procedure in which text from transcripts in organized and patterns are clearly discovered.

Patterns lead to discovery of the major concepts and insights on the data (Auerbach &

Silverstein, 2003). A coding table was created to insure consistency and reliability to analysis.

Open coding is used for this study where a four-digit coding number was assigned to each

category and then subsequent sub-categories. This allowed for clear and easy sorting abilities to

take place in assuring data was under its appropriate category. After all data was coded and

sorting, stage four began. During stage four, *merging and working with all data to generate*

meaning, all data was merged into one document in order to conduct a group-level analysis.

Data was organized in the master document by code and then grouped concepts by their

categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). From this stage, data was grouped thematically to reflect

on themes of all participants, data was then segmented further, new insights on data shined

through with each segmentation, interpretation and generation of meaning occurred, and a final

data set was organized.

Quantitative Methods

Quantitative analysis involves using descriptive statistics to improve and further

understand numerical data (Li, 2013). Quantitative data in this study was analyzed using

descriptive statistics. The survey data was first scored in order for analysis to occur. According

to Creswell (2012), preparing and organizing the data for analysis consists of scoring data,

creating a codebook, determining scored that were used, selecting a program to use, inputting the

data into the program, and then clearing the data. To score the data, I assigned a numeric score

to each category of response. Each response category on the instrument received a numeric

value to make data analysis possible. A codebook was created in order to assist in assigning

scores. Summed scores provided a detailed analysis to calculate participants overall perceptions,

determined by multiple questions on the survey. Individual item responses were added to

compute an overall score for a variable (Creswell, 2012).

MS Excel was used as the tool for quantitative data analysis. *MS Excel* was the most

appropriate tool for analysis. This program allowed for data to be input easily and presented

clearly through the use of clear graphs, figures and charts. Data presented clear for analysis and

conclusions to be made appropriately with reliability and validity accessible. (Salkind, 2013)

Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability measures took place in order to ensure data is true. Measures of

validity and reliability were used "to ensure "trustworthiness" are credibility, fittingness,

auditability and conformability" (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Actions for both qualitative and

quantitative measures to ensure validity and reliability are explained below. Validity and

reliability closely examine the scores of each instrument. Reliability looks to be sure that the

scores from the instrument are stable and consistent (Creswell, 159). Validity examines to

ensure that the instrument demonstrates interpretation of which it was intended to when entering

the study. To ensure reliability and validity in each measure, the following estimators were used:

pilot testing (i.e., self-made survey), inter-rater reliability, and member checking.

One of the instruments used in this study, was an established instrument created by Kern

(2006). Kern reviewed and had the instrument approved by a group of peers prior to

administration, however, did state it has never been empirically tested. Overall, she described

the instrument as being approved as being a valid and reliable instrument. Ensuring validity and

reliability of this instrument will assist in ensuring valid results. According to Creswell (2003),

content validity can be established and work to improve formatting and questions of the instrument being used. A group of volunteers, similar to the intended group, were selected and participated in the study as a trial run. Inter-rater reliability was used to assess the degree that each raters gave consistently as anticipated on the same idea or concept (Trochim, 2006). This helped detect and consider distractibility and inconsistency in participant's responses for all of the data collection methods.

Member check was also used, when participants were asked after the survey, interviews and observations if the data concluded adequately presented their ideas, thoughts, and perceptions (Simon, 2011). Member checking increased reliability and validity as it asks feedback on the results directly from the participants themselves. This approach was used across measures (i.e., surveys, observation notes, and interview notes/transcriptions). A colleague reviewed the instrument to offer feedback and suggestions for revision before conducting with the sample.

Finally, triangulation of data across all measures used was essential. Methods triangulation is the most appropriate type of triangulation to promote validity (Creswell, 2012). Methods triangulation considers both sets of data used in this study (i.e., qualitative and quantitative). Multiple methods of data collection were used in order to address each research questions involved in this study. This helped with triangulation as it assisted in determining the reliability and validity in each participant's response. This approach explained aspects of both sets of data revolving around the same research questions and topics as it provides the most insight for qualitative research (Patton, 1999).

Summary

In this chapter, the research design, participants, data collection methods, data analysis methods along with validity and reliability were described. As explained above, the research design for this study was an exploratory case study, where it will focus on seeking theory and

then testing the theory as it explores the perceptions of administrators and teachers. The

participants used in this case study was a sample of two first grade classes, roughly 34 students,

from Batcheller Early Education Center, located in Winsted, Connecticut. Data was collected

through the use of both qualitative and quantitative measures. Three research questions were

answered in this study: what are teacher's perceptions on inclusion, what supports are in place

for promoting effective inclusion and what is their fidelity and what are the administrator's

perceptions that impact supports. Data was collected through multiple measures. To answer

these questions the use of semi-structured interviews, online surveys and observations were used.

Once the data was collected, it was analyzed using various methods. Qualitative data was

analyzed using *MS Word* and for quantitative *MS Excel* was used. For analysis, coding occur for

each question in order to increase validity and reliability.

Chapter 4 – Results & Discussion

Data for this research paper was collected from a small sample of participants in Winsted, Connecticut. Two first grade classes were of focus from the Batcheller Early Education Center, part of Winchester Public Schools in Winsted, Connecticut. The classes consisted of a total of 34 students, both with 17 students. Class one had eight boys and nine girls and class two had seven girls and 10 boys. In class one, 75% of students were of special needs requiring special education students and in class two roughly 25% of students were currently enrolled in special education. Also, class two had two none English speaking students.

Both teachers from these classes were part of the interview and survey process. Two observations were conducted over the past three weeks in both of these classes to see current practices of inclusion in action. The building principal, who was hired at the beginning of this year, was the administrator who took part in the administrator's survey and interview. All participants volunteered to take part in this process and were willingly active participants throughout this entire research process. The students within each other the classrooms were also eager participants during the observations.

The demographics for the three participants are as follows in the chart provided below.

Table 2.

Demographic Questions

Question	**Responses**		
1. Gender	Female	Female	Female
2. Age range	Below 25	36-45	36-45
3. Educational level	Bachelors	Masters	Masters +15

4. Level (grade)	Elementary	Elementary	Elementary
5. Number of years at level	4	12	15
6. Number of years in position	4	12	15
7. Amount of experience with children with special needs	2	1	12

Below is an analysis of data from this research organized by each of the research questions. For each question themes are reported with evidence from the data collected through the three forms of data collection: surveys, interviews, and observations. The data is also supported with current research from the literature review.

Teacher's Perceptions

For the first question, what are teacher's perceptions on inclusion, significant themes were noted across the board in participant responses. The themes were evident similarities in all participants definition to what inclusion is, a clear vision that there is a mutual responsibility of both the regular education teacher and special education teacher to who is responsible for students with an Individualize Education Plan (IEP) and the severe lack of training and experience that directly impacts teachers work towards inclusive education.

Teacher's perceptions on inclusion stem from their understanding in the definition of inclusion; in both the interviews and surveys collected their ideas of inclusion were presented. In the survey, when teachers were asked their definition of inclusion the responses are included in Table 3 below.

Table 3.

Interview Definitions of Inclusion

Teacher 1	"Inclusion means being sure to include all students no matter their needs and abilities in my classroom. Being able to service a variety of needs in my regular education classroom."
Teacher 2	"Inclusion means that practice of including special education students into my regular education classroom and meeting their specific needs."

There were clear similarities in their responses within the interview data and also when looking at the survey data. On the survey, questions 7-11, 23-25, and 36 all were designed to answer this question. Responses for both teachers were similar and demonstrated teachers ideas that inclusion includes all students in their classroom no matter their needs all in the positive nature. Below is the data extracted from the two surveys completed. Teacher 1 responses are provided in yellow and teacher 2 is in light blue.

Table 4.

Survey Responses for Questions 7-11, 22-25, 36

7.	Students presenting 2 or more years below grade level should be in special education classes.	SD SD	D	A	SA
8.	Students diagnosed with Autism need to be in a special education classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
9.	All efforts should be made to educate students who have an IEP in the regular education classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
10.	Students who are diagnosed as developmentally delayed should be in	SD	D	A	SA

	special education classes.				
11.	Students who are verbally aggressive towards other can be maintained in regular education classes.	SD	D	==A== ==A==	SA

23.	Regular education teachers should not be responsible for teaching children with special needs.	==SD==	==D==	A	SA
24.	Students who are physically aggressive towards others can be maintained in regular education classrooms.	SD	D	==A== ==A==	SA
25.	All students who have an IEP for any reason need to receive their education in a special education classroom.	==SD== ==SD==	D	A	SA

36.	Students who are 1 year below grade level should be in special education classes.	==SD==	==D==	A	SA

One can see from the data, the teacher's perceptions on inclusive education are similar and positive in nature.

The second theme noted in the data was that there is a clear vision of who is responsible for students with an IEP in the inclusive education setting. There is a mutual responsibility of both the regular education teacher and special education teacher to who is responsible for students with an IEP. This can be seen in both the interview and survey data collected. In the interviews, number questions asked lead to responses for this research questions. For each of these questions, both teachers discussed the importance of a mission to have a strong collaborative approach with special education and regular education teacher in the school.

Interview question 9, for example, specifically asked participants if the general classroom with special education consultant services an effective environment to educate students with special needs. Teacher responses were as follows.

Table 5.

Interview Responses Regarding Responsibility of IEP Students

Teacher 1	"No, because they have the inability to focus, there is a lot of distractibility around them. I feel, however, this type of setting can be effective if regular education teachers and special education teacher are working collaborative to meet the specific needs of all students. One teacher can assist in the focus piece with students while the other is providing whole group instruction, just for example."
Teacher 2	"Yes, it can be effective. I think it depends on the teachers involved and the supports in place unfortunately. I wish the mindset could be shifted so this is just a norm and students are getting everything they need in the regular education environment. If both the regular education teacher and special education teacher worked together collaborative, possible in a co-teaching model, where both are responsible for the special education teachers everything would run much smoother. The possibilities would be endless."

Similar findings were presented in the survey responses collected from both teachers. A large number of survey questions provided data for this research question. Questions 5-6, 12-13, 22-23, and 27-28. Responses to each question are provided below.

Table 6.

Survey Responses for Questions 5-6, 12-13, 22-23, 27-28

5.	I feel comfortable in working collaboratively with special education teachers when students with an IEP are in my classroom.	SD	D	A A	SA
6.	I welcome collaborative teaching when I have a student with an IEP in my classroom.	SD	D	A	SA

12.	Collaborative teaching of children with special needs can be effective particularly when students with an IEP are placed in a regular education classroom.	SD	D	A A	SA
13.	Special education teachers should teach students who hold an IEP.	SD	D	A A	SA

22.	I can approach my colleagues for assistance when needed if I have students with special needs in my classroom.	SD	D	A A	SA
23.	Regular education teachers should not be responsible for teaching children with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA

27.	I should only be responsible for teaching students who are not identified as having special needs.	SD SD	D	A	SA
28.	Both regular education and special education teachers should teach	SD	D	A	SA

students with an IEP.			

From this data it can be explained that teacher's believe that both the regular education teacher and special education teacher has a shared responsibility of the special education students within the building. Not one hold the other solely responsible and teachers are always working together collaborative for their students.

The final theme noted in the data was teachers felt there is a severe lack in training, which hinders their ability to provide appropriate and effective supports for all their students. This was extracted from all of the data collection mentions: the interviews, observations and surveys. In the interviews, question 11 asking factors of which are barriers to successful incorporation of students with special needs in the general education class, both teachers mentioned the lack of training and level of experience necessary for successful inclusion programs to occur. Teacher 1 believed the main barrier for successful implementation at this time is due to the "lack of teacher knowledge and supports available to support what is best for teachers to do with special needs students. Training is also missing in order for me and my colleagues to be the most effective we can be." Teacher 2 also explained:

> training is absolutely missing for all of us with special needs students in our classrooms.
> Training is needed on how to meet the needs of all IEP students on top of those without
> an IEP. Training and time allotted is need in the areas of planning and collaboration. For
> collaboration I mean new learning on the most effective ways to use the collaborative
> time for planning, especially with the busyness of all of our schedules.

From both responses, one can see teachers both found that the biggest barriers to successful inclusion programs is the lack of experience and training of the teachers involved and working first hand in inclusive classrooms. Many survey question responses and evidence from the classroom observations also support this theme. Teacher survey questions 1-2, 16-18, 19, 21,

30-33, 34, and 40 all provided support in their responses to this theme. Questions 25 and 30 on the survey along with evidence from both classroom observations provided strong evidence to the theme of teachers felt lack of training was the leading cause to difficulties implementing inclusive measure in their general education classroom. Teacher responses to these questions are provided below.

Table 7.

Survey Responses for Questions 21, 30

21.	I am provided with enough time in order to attend conference/workshops on teaching students with special needs.	SD	D D	A	SA

30.	I am provided sufficient materials in order to be able to make appropriate accommodations for students with special needs.	SD	D D	A	SA

During the observations, teachers demonstrated confusion when teaching in small groups of students with IEPs and those requiring additional support. In one case, a regular education teacher was working with a small group of students, with four out of six students holding an IEP, focusing on math. Students within the group were struggling to solve the math story problem provided. When looking at the materials presented there was no clear differentiation to meet each individual students needs. After the small group, the teacher provided a reflection of the experience stating,

> It was hard to meet all of their needs in this small group. I wasn't sure how to make the concept be accessible to all my learners. I usually get ideas from my grade-level colleagues, however, I ran out of time. I haven't really had much training.

It is clear from the statement provided that teachers welcome students with a set of diverse

needs, however, strongly feel that due to the lack of resources they are provided they can not

provide what is best for all of their students.

These themes mean teacher's perceptions of inclusion were relatively positive in nature.

Teachers have a positive attitude towards what inclusion is, entails, and should look like in the

regular education setting. Responses demonstrated teacher's ability to understand a clear

definition of what inclusion is and how it may look in a general education setting. From the

surveys it is clear that regular education teacher feel they are primarily responsible for students

with an IEP in their classroom no matter their level of need and support required. They believe

they should set forth strategies and tools to support these diverse learners in their regular

education setting. Even when students are physically aggressive and/or two or more years below

grade level, teachers believed these students should be included in their regular education setting.

Teachers are welcoming of students with severe delay in skills and even behavioral struggles. It

was witnessed during the observations, on numerous occasions, teachers having to intervene with

behavioral interventions. All of the behaviors in the two first grade classes were students with

special needs. Their behaviors ranged from hands-on with peers to throwing furniture in the

classroom. When a behavior occurred the regular education teacher was the one to provided the

behavior interventions first and if the behaviors escalated they were directed, by a policy in

place, to call for help. The help of which came was not always trained in how to intervene with

behaviors and students with special needs. Within all of this uncertainty and disruption of

instruction at times, teachers still felt these students should remain in their regular education

classroom. This finding is supportive of the research by Hollenbeck (2012). Hollenbeck

expressed in his study the positive attitudes and experiences the teachers were providing to their

students in the inclusion environment, however, challenges were presented that hindered success.

Challenges noted in his study matched some of the challenges discovered in this research. Staff

limitations, curriculum, and effective scheduling all presented a major challenge in Hollenbeck's research. In this research, staff limitations and curriculum also presented as impacts to implementing effective inclusive measures.

The data also supported the second theme discovered in the research being teachers, both regular education and special education, feel mutually responsible for students with an IEP. These finding supports the research study conducted by Irvine, Lupart, Loreman, and McGhie-Richmond (2010), which reached similar findings. Teachers demonstrated a positive attitude towards inclusion and as a result programming was supported in the regular education setting. For the final theme, it can be concluded training was an area teachers felt they were lacking. Perceptions teachers felt toward inclusion directly impact their level of training received. Teachers felt they were not able to provide their fullest degree of support as they required training. They did not feel supported for professional growth resulting in their negative perceptions on what inclusion should look like since proper measures could not be implemented always in the classroom. There was a significant lack in materials and tools as well for teachers to use. In the observations, teachers felt they had a lot of demands to meet with limited support to help insure all of their students needs were being met. Numerous avenues of research support the idea that curriculum, training, and staff directly impact the success of inclusion environment.

Through the observations, it was apparent the level of frustration these teachers were facing. This reminded me of the research by Ormod (2006), where he expressed the need to implement instructional measures that meet each student in the diverse group of learners. A factor that appears to be missing was the development of the learner in the inclusion setting. Teachers were struggling to determine was what students need developmentally due to the lack of training they are provided. Development of the learner within the inclusion setting is the primary focus. It was clear through discussion with teachers just that, teachers have very positive perceptions on wanting the best for their students. They work regularly to provide the

best for their students with what they have and are provided. Teachers may not always know

exactly how to effectively provide for each specific need or challenge they face, however, they

collaborate with colleagues in an effort to be flexible and adjust their instruction to meet the

needs. The research by Pickard (2009) also supported these findings. Teachers were working

hard to provide instruction and differentiated instructional strategies to enhance their instruction

to meet the needs of all learners.

Supports and Fidelity

When extracting data on research question number two, what supports are in place for

promoting effective inclusion and fidelity, themes were present in many ways. The themes noted

were there were limited supports in place for students in need, both behaviorally and

academically, collaboration regularly occurs amongst the special education teacher and regular

education teacher, and both regular education and special education teachers provide the best

services possible with the supports they are provided.

A theme that appeared to be limited supports in place for students in need, both

behaviorally and academically; observations provided data to support current support practices

and their fidelity. During the observations, it was noticed that students who were 'high-flyers'

meaning those who run around, run out, or are physically aggressive have paraprofessional

support with them throughout the day. Those less severe cases, students requiring strictly

academic support, do not have the same level of support provided. Teachers commented to the

difference in the level of support and presented it in a negative tone. When observing in

classroom one, there were two one-on-ones students both behaviorally and classroom two there

was one student with one-on-one paraprofessional support. The overall IEP population of both

classrooms was as follows: classroom one had six IEP students and classroom two had two IEP

students. The classrooms observed showed data tracking sheets provided which showed the

level of supports provided according to the IEP allotted hours. These tracking sheets were

created through the state audit currently being conducted in the district. Teachers reported from

the tracking sheets the following for supports implemented consistently: classroom one – 56%

and classroom two – 67%.

　　　For theme two, collaboration was regularly occurring amongst special educational and

regular education, survey questions were used as the primary data source to find that teachers

work in collaboratively in order to provide the best services possible for their students. Survey

question responses for questions 6 and 12 provided a great snapshot to supports that are in place

to support inclusion.

Table 8.

Survey Responses for Questions 6, 12

6.	I welcome collaborative teaching when I have a student with an IEP in my classroom.	SD	D	A	SA

12.	Collaborative teaching of children with special needs can be effective particularly when students with an IEP are placed in a regular education classroom.	SD	D	A A	SA

As one can see teachers welcome the support of each other through collaboration and co-

teaching to meet the needs of all IEP students even when seeking other interventions and tools to

use with the students.

　　　In the observations, regular meetings between the regular education teacher and special

education teacher were present. Teachers had a weekly schedule for meeting with an agenda

created to ensure each student with an IEP was discussed. There were also discussions with

support staff (e.g., occupational therapist and speech) regarding specific students. Student goals

were discussed during their interaction with goals being discussed to best support students

specific needs. Also program analysis was evident, documents were shared that teachers were using to be sure IEP student needs are being met. Teachers shared they had a chance to discuss fidelity of such implementation both during their meeting with their special education colleague and occasionally at staff meetings.

Also it was clear for the data and themes provided above that both regular education and special education teachers provide the best services possible with the supports they are provided, was collected from classroom observations as well, which is mentioned above. Inclusion was viewed positively with collaboration at the front point. With the positive attitudes in place and teachers working collaboratively, it was clear teachers were providing the best support they could for their students. The observations showed perceptions of the areas of need of the administrator was that students with severe behavioral disruption were to get the most supports and that was the only supports provided. Many teachers felt their students with IEPs for academics were not getting their hours as the other students were taking them due to the extent of their behaviors. Classroom observation data was proof of this perception and practices in place. The data tracking sheets observed during the visit showered that even the consistency of measures put into place, for the behavioral students, were not even consistent. This was due to teacher absences and lack of substitutes or paraprofessionals being pulled to support elsewhere where the need was greater.

The data suggested there were limited supports in place for students in need, both behaviorally and academically; showed clearly the actual supports that are in place for inclusion and its degree of fidelity. During the observations students who demonstrated a high degree of need were provided with the supports necessary to support their success, those of which were the behavioral students. This is an area of research that needs to be explored further in the future.

Developing programs and support systems that are supportive to all IEP students in the mainstream classroom is essential. Teachers noted the difference in the level of support

provided for students depending on their level of behavioral need. Observations showed the

students how were a 'flight risk' were the primary students who were provided consistent

support they needed, even when lack of staffing was a challenge. If staffing wasn't available

these students would be provided an alterative setting, outside of their classroom, to spend the

day. When looking back at current research presented, inclusion success involves the

development of specific supports and programs that are well developed, in place, and

consistently in place with fidelity. In this study, it was clear the challenges teachers were facing

with staffing limitations and curriculum directly impacts programing in place. All students with

an IEP have a specialized program set for them, however, such measures are not followed

through with fidelity, therefore, further challenges that arise.

Determining the most effective models of support and programing is essential, as

supported in the current research by Chandler-Olcott and Kluth (2009). Not only adjusting the

physical appearance and layout of the environment to meet all needs of students but also

ensuring they have the supports in place. This looked at the paraprofessionals, additional time

spend out of the classroom for additional instruction or re-teaching, and differentiated materials

provided to all students throughout the day. Working with both the regular education teachers

and special education teachers to ensure these structures are in place are an essential measure to

ensure programs are effective in meeting student's specific needs and fidelity of such measures

are in place, all a mandate of the IEP.

Collaboration between both the special education teacher and regular education

classroom teacher presented as another theme in the data. The data showed teachers value

collaboration and working directly to plan for their students with special needs. As presented in

the data by Ormod (2006) as well as Chandler-Olcott and Kluth (2009), focusing on the

development of learners within the inclusion setting is key. With collaboration occurring in

order to ensure tailoring to students specific needs and levels as the focus, it directly related to

the development of learners. During the meetings teachers were discussing and evaluating

student growth regularly and working together to identify instructional goals and strategies. This

supported the findings in Ormod's research, as he found successful inclusion programs were a

result of teachers working together collaboratively to meet student's needs. Chandler-Olcott and

Kluth (2009) supported the final theme presented in this case study. Through the collaborative

measures came the final theme noted in the data. Both the regular education and special

education teacher worked to provide the best services they possible could with the supports and

materials they had. When teachers worked collaboratively to provide the best services to

students with a range of materials provided inclusion program success could occur. This all

stemmed from the degree of which teachers monitor students, thus monitoring occurs with the

data collection measures observed during the observations of the case study. Teachers were not

only regularly monitoring supports and their fidelity, but their relation to their academic and

social growth. Creating a list of tools, strategies, and resources during the collaborative meetings

based off of the growth noted was occurring and supportive of the current research presented by

Chandler-Olcott and Kluth. Teachers were focusing on the learning outcomes for students and

providing the best services they could with the tools, resources, and strategies they were

provided and obtained collaboratively, mostly during their meeting times.

Administrator's Perceptions

In the final research question, what are administrator's perceptions that impacts supports,

it was discovered that the administrator's perceptions of what inclusion should be and look like

directly impacted that supports and philosophy of inclusion programing. Through the use of the

interviews and surveys it was found that the support of administration and their attitudes towards

inclusion directly impact the teachers attitudes and classroom practices. The interviews of both

the teachers and administrator showed a negative correlation between the idea of collaboration

and time allotted to collaborate. Both teachers and administrator found it essential for

collaboration to occur, however, the administrator found other necessities, which pushed such

practices back. Thus leading to teachers wanting the ability to collaborate, stressing its

importance, however, were denied access due to time restraints driven by administrative goals.

The administrator expressed in her interview the importance of attending training and extreme

need, however blamed the lack of opportunities on lack of funding allotted for professional

development.   It is important to remember with these results that the administrator was a special

education teacher before moving into her administrative position so she has a strong special

education background.

In the survey collected from the administrator, her perceptions of what inclusion is and

measures that should be implemented was clear in her favorable responses to questions 4-6, 12,

22-23. The questions stood out specifically because they show the importance towards

collaborating for success in the inclusive setting. Questions 4-6 presented as follows.

Table 9.

Survey Responses for Questions 4-6

4.	Teachers and support staff collaborate on issues which may arise with students with an IEP	SD	D	A	SA
5.	I feel comfortable in working collaboratively with special education teachers and regular education teachers regarding students with IEPs.	SD	D	A	SA
6.	I belief and welcome collaborative teaching with students with IEPs.	SD	D	A	SA

The administrator showed a strong belief that success of inclusive education comes for the

collaboration between the regular education teacher and support staff, specifically the special

education teacher. This theme was comparable to the perceptions seen on the teacher surveys,

similar to research question one presented above. Teachers also believed in collaboration to best

meet the needs of all students. Co-teaching was also supported by both the teachers and

administrators through the survey and mentioned by the administrator during the interview.

The administrator's response to interview question two and three supported her

perception and strong believe towards both inclusion and co-teaching between the regular

education teacher and special education teacher. Her responses to questions two and three are

presented below.

Table 10.

Interview Responses Regarding Collaborating and Co-Teaching

Question Two	To what extend should special education teachers assist in the instruction of students with special needs in the general education classroom? "Special education teachers must collaborate with the general education teacher in order to assist students with special needs, IEPs, in that classroom. I strongly believe in co-teach. It is best for special needs students in the general education classroom. The teachers work together and use both of their expertise to provide what is best for all students. "
Question Three	How can special education teachers meet the needs of students identified with special needs in the general education classroom? "Special education teacher need o meet the needs of all IEP students. They can do this by collaborating and meeting regularly with other support staff and the regular education teacher. This is beneficial to effectively and appropriately plan for each student. Professional development is needed"

The observations showed that teachers appear standoffish toward special education students.

This was seen when support staff enters the room there is little communication and reserved

body language between the teacher and support staff. Supports appeared to be offered only to

certain population of students as mentioned above and others who require academic support were

not receiving IEP allocated services due to behavioral needs. Additional services were provided

for those who were getting pulled to aid to the high-flyers only as mentioned above with research

question two. Regular education teachers did have scheduled meeting times weekly with the

grade-level special education teacher. Each meeting had an agenda, which was mutually created

a week prior by both teachers. Agendas included discussing specific student plans, setting or

evaluating goals, and planning for small groups. The classroom teachers appeared to have a

positive attitude towards the meetings when sharing during the observations. The one challenge

they expressed was always being able to hold the meeting as they frequently miss their planning

time because they are called to assist with other behaviors throughout the building. Frustration

was expressed for when meetings were cancelled as teachers expressed they were not able to

plan differentiated lessons together for their special needs students, a benefit of meeting and

collaborating with the special education teacher.

This data supports the current research study by Irvine, Lupart, Loreman, and McGhie-

Richmond (2010). They concluded the attitudes of school leaders towards inclusion and their

experiences directly impact inclusion measures set forth. Like in the data, they found a

correlation between positive attitudes on inclusion, positive perception of programming, and the

degree of which each student's diverse needs is being met. With the administrators degree of

experience she is able to set forth foundational measures to promote success for inclusion. Her

feeling a sense of ownership and responsibility in the school was clear, another point of the study

that was expressed.

In the research collected by both Ko and Boswell (2013) and Praisner (2003), the

attitudes of principals towards the inclusion of students in the regular education classroom

directly impact the success of programs. Since the administrative participant in this case study

has a strong background in special education with positive experiences herself, it directly

impacts her perceptions and the messages she sends to her staff. This supports the findings of

the research as the administrator has a strong positive attitude inclusion and therefore is

supportive to measures for inclusion success. It could be said that the administrator's personal

experiences hinders to the success of the programs put forth. The most positive experiences are connected to the positive perceptions on inclusion.

The strong positive perception of collaboration between staff as measures to effective inclusion was also a theme presented in the data. The data presented above in question two also supports this finding. It is also important to see how the collaboration and work during these collaboration times directly relates to their level of training and abilities to provide services to special needs students. Research by Bandura (1997) focused on how collaboration for efficiency led to success in inclusion programs, as well as academic and social growth for students. Collaboration was key in providing the best inclusion for special needs students. When collaboration occurred and there were positive perceptions to support the growth, happiness in programs increased in student achievement was warranted.

A challenge seen in the data that brought about negative perceptions from the administrator was the resistance toward implementation of some supports due to financial short falls and the districts incentives. The lack and need for professional development was discovered. Teacher professional development is a leading factor in the success of inclusion programs, as presented in the research of Feiman-Nemser (2001). Feiman-Nemser developed a framework for teacher professional development as the shape for promoting success in inclusion programs even when negative perceptions occur. It was the belief that opportunities for hands-on experiences are essential for successful implementations of inclusion programs. This supported the finding for the need for professional development discovered in the results under research question three.

Summary

In this chapter, the results for the research collected were presented in themes and a discussion was provided. For question one, what are teacher's perceptions on inclusion, themes noted were a common definition of what inclusion means for both the administrator and teachers,

shared vision of who is responsible for teaching students with an IEP, a severe lack of training provided to staff by the district, and the level of experience of the teachers working directly with special education students. Research question two, what supports were in place for promoting effective inclusion and what its fidelity, themes were support staff (e.g., paraprofessionals) were structured and in place for students who were severely behavioral and/or were a flight risk are in place and collaboration was regularly occurring amongst special educational and regular education in order to provide the best services possible for their students. For the final question, question three – what are administrator's perceptions that impacts supports, a theme that was especially clear was the fact of the support of administration and their attitudes towards inclusion truly impact the teacher's attitudes and practices. All of the themes discovered were extracted from the methods of data collect from both teachers and administrator used in this study, including observations, interviews and the surveys.

Chapter 5 – Conclusions & Implications

From the beginning of determining the research topic, developing the research questions, through the process to data analysis much has been discovered on to current research and practice on inclusion.   The purpose of this study was to examine how perceptions on inclusion impacts supports of both special needs and regular education students in first grade. The literature reviewed for this research indicated a clear need for further study to be done on reasons for negative attitudes and perceptions as well as measures to meet the educational needs of diverse populations in the inclusion setting.   Another gap in the research was looking into the root of such attitudes and perceptions on inclusion by both teachers and administrators. The specific research questions in this case study were:

1. What are teacher's perceptions on inclusion?

2. What supports are in place for promoting effective inclusion and what is their fidelity?

3. What are administrator's perceptions that impact supports?

Over the last twelve months, this case study provided valuable information that addressed each of these research questions. This information was discussed in Chapter Four.

The case study allowed for inclusion measures and practices to take place using the three research questions created. The literature review provided explicit background research to support the purpose of this case study. Research was focused in on three areas: planning, placement and analysis, instruction and student achievement, staff attitudes, perceptions and development. Major highlights in the research found were the importance of careful, considerate and meaning planning with goals for all learner needs (i.e., academically and socially), strategies and tools that support growth for diverse learners, importance of effective staff performance and level of training related to staff effectiveness. The research discovered gaps of which the purpose of this study came to life. From here ideas began to fly on the most appropriate

population to use for this case study. With our district currently undertaking a special education audit it appeared clear on the population of which should be selected. Two first grade classes and our building administrator was chosen to participate using a volunteer process. It was concluded looking at the task and participants the best methods of data collection would be semi-structured interviews, online surveys, and two classroom observations over a course of six to eight weeks. From here data analysis measures were selected based on the researchers level of experience with programs and current programs and practices available.

Then for each research question data was collected through all the qualitative and quantitative collection measures and themes were extracted. Questions one, what are teacher's perceptions on inclusion, themes extracted were clear and similar positive definitions of inclusion across participants, clear vision of a mutual responsibility for IEP students, and teachers felt there was a significant lack of training and experience they needed to teach effectively in their inclusive classrooms. Questions two, what supports are in place for promoting effective inclusion and what is their fidelity, concluded two themes from the research collected. Both teachers noted limited supports in place for all student with an IEP and a clear collaboration measures were in place to ensure student success was at the for front and data was collected to provided the best supports possible with the limited resources that are had. And the final question, what are administrators' perceptions that impact support; it was clear that the attitudes of the administration directly impact what practices include in the classroom. Administrative goals and incentives not focused on inclusion measures often took away from effective inclusion measures being implemented. Both teachers and administrators again felt collaboration was essential. Teachers desired more time for collaboration, as administration could not support due to other initiatives. This resulted in negative feelings towards support of inclusion and decreased teacher's attitudes toward implementing effective measures.

Implications for Practice

Based on what was learned from this study, I would recommend two implications to practice. The two implication I would recommend are for administrators to be more aware of how their perceptions impact measures of inclusion occurring in the school and teachers as well as administrators should share their perceptions freely amongst each other and collaborate on the most effective inclusion measures to set forth to best meet the needs of all students with special needs.

First, I would make a recommendation to the administrations. The research expressed that administrator's should be more aware of how their perceptions directly impact what occurs in their schools. This was evident through both the qualitative and quantitative methods. Administration was aware of what was needed in the building however, did not feel obligated or responsible for acting on it. If administration was more aware of the specific needs and acted on these needs the inclusion programs would improve drastically, even with the low level of supports provided. Making administration more aware of what is happening and setting an action plan for how to assist in meeting teacher's specific needs is essential. Consistent data tracking should put in place to track the levels of supports implemented and their fidelity. There were data measures put into place, however, they were not consistent and require some development.

Secondly, I would recommend teachers and administrators should share their perceptions freely amongst each other and collaborate on the most effective inclusion measures to set forth to best meet the needs of all students with special needs. Research collected showed some disconnect between administration and teachers in regards to philosophies and perceptions. Teachers had strong believes in specialized training and professional development around meeting students needs, which would be beneficial to share with administration. It was not clear through the interviews and observations that the administrator knew of such requests and

willingness of growth. The teachers wanted to implement measures to best support and meet

their student's diverse needs and administration was not aware of this need.

Suggestions for Future Research

Through this study I have learned that perceptions on inclusion have a direct impact on

teachers and practices implemented in schools. However, there are three questions I would like

to investigate further in regards to inclusion. I would recommend further research around the

topics of qualifications of staffing, both teachers and paraprofessionals, and their degree of

service they are providing related to supports in place.   The other topic of interest is the training

of staffing working directly with students in the inclusion setting. This staffing includes regular

classroom teachers, special education teachers, and administration and the final question in need

to explore further is looking closer into severely behavioral students with IEPs and supports in

place to ensure success and decrease interrupted instruction time.

Based on what was learned from this research, looking more into these topics would

allow for further discovery to the types and degree of supports implemented and chosen as well

as look more specifically at the qualifications as to which they are implemented. This could

extend on to looking into training that is offered to staff and its effectiveness. I also wonder if

student with IEPs who are severely behavioral are receiving the services they need with fidelity.

Through observations such students appeared to be the only students to receive the IEP obligated

supports they were entitled to, I wonder if this is a measure that is consistent across the state and

other measures that are implemented that support their needs as well as allow for instruction in

the classroom to occur without disruption.

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Appendix A

Interview questions:

1. What is your definition of inclusion?

2. To what extend should special education teachers assist in the instruction of students with special needs in the general education classroom?

3. How can special education teachers meet the needs of students identified with special needs in the general education classroom?

4. How can general education teachers meet the academic needs of students with special needs in their classrooms?

5. What types of the instructional skills do general education teachers have to teach both students with special needs and general education students?

6. What types of instructional skills do special education teachers have to teach both students with special needs and general education students?

7. What types of instructional skills are general education teachers lacking to teach both students with special needs and general education students?

8. What types of instructional skills are special education teachers lacking to teach both students with special needs and general education students?

9. Is the general classroom with special education consultant services an effective environment to educate students with special needs? If yes then why? If no then why not?

10. What factors facilitate successful incorporation of students with special needs in the general education class?

11. What factors are barriers to successful incorporation of students with special needs in the general education class?

Appendix B

Teacher survey questions:

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Part A
Teacher Attitude Towards Inclusive Education Demographic Information:

1. Gender: (please circle) Male   Female

2. Your age range: (please circle)
   below 25   25-35   36-45 46-55 55+

3. Your educational level (please circle):

   Bachelors

   Bachelors + 15

   Bachelors + 30

   Masters

   Masters + 15

   Masters + 30

   Doctoral

4. Current level you are teaching: (please circle)
   Elementary Middle High School

5. Number of years teaching at this level:_____

6. Number of years teaching in total:_____

7. Amount of courses received in teaching children with special needs: _____

8. Amount of experience with teaching children with special needs in your classroom:_____

Teacher Survey

Instructions: Please complete the following scale by circling the appropriate response corresponding to your belief. Use the following key to determine your answer. Please circle a response and do not indicate responses between choices.

SD=Strongly Disagree
D=Disagree
A=Agree
SA=Strongly Agree

1.	My educational background has prepared me to effectively teach students with cognitive delays and deficits in daily living skills.	SD	D	A	SA
2.	I need more training in order to appropriately teach students with an IEP for learning problems.	SD	D	A	SA
3.	I am encouraged by my administrators to attend conferences/workshops on teaching students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
4.	My colleagues are willing to help me with issues which may arise when I have students with an IEP in my classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
5.	I feel comfortable in working collaboratively with special education teachers when students with an IEP are in my classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
6.	I welcome collaborative teaching when I have a student with an IEP in my classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
7.	Students who are 2 or more years below grade level should be in special education classes.	SD	D	A	SA
8.	Students who are diagnosed as autistic need to be in special education classrooms.	SD	D	A	SA
9.	All efforts should be made to educate students who have an IEP in the regular education classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
10.	Students who are diagnosed a mentally retarded should be in special education classes.	SD	D	A	SA
11.	Students who are verbally aggressive towards others can be maintained in regular education classrooms.	SD	D	A	SA
12.	Collaborative teaching of children with special needs can be effective particularly when students with an IEP are placed in a regular classroom.	SD	D	A	SA

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13.	Special education teachers should teach students who hold an IEP.	SD	D	A	SA
14.	I can approach my administrators with concerns I hold regarding teaching students who have special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
15.	I feel supported by my administrators when faced with challenges presented by students with behavioral difficulties in my classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
16.	My district provides me with sufficient out of district training opportunities in order for me to appropriately teach students with disabilities.	SD	D	A	SA
17.	My educational background has prepared me to effectively teach students with behavioral difficulties.	SD	D	A	SA
18.	My educational background has prepared me to teach students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
19.	I am provided with sufficient in-service training through my school district which allows me the ability to teach students with an IEP.	SD	D	A	SA
20.	My administrators provide me with sufficient support when I have students with an IEP in my classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
21.	I am provided with enough time in order to attend conferences/workshops on teaching students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
22.	I can approach my colleagues for assistance when needed if I have students with special needs in my classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
23.	Regular education teachers should not be responsible for teaching children with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
24.	I like being the only teacher in the classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
25.	Students who are physically aggressive towards others can be maintained in regular education classrooms.	SD	D	A	SA
26.	All students who have an IEP for any reason need to receive their education in a special education classroom.	SD	D	A	SA

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27.	Students who display speech and language difficulties should be in special education classes.	SD	D	A	SA
28.	I should only be responsible for teaching students who are not identified as having special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
29.	My colleagues are approachable when I ask for their advice when I teach students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
30.	Both regular education teachers and special education teachers should teach students with an IEP.	SD	D	A	SA
31.	I am provided with sufficient materials in order to be able to make appropriate accommodations for students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
32.	My educational background has prepared me to effectively teach students who are 1 year below level.	SD	D	A	SA
33.	My educational background has prepared me to effectively teach students with speech impairments.	SD	D	A	SA
34.	I need more training in order to appropriately teach students an IEP for behavioral problems.	SD	D	A	SA
35.	I feel supported by my administrators when faced with challenges presented by students with learning difficulties in my classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
36.	I am provided with monetary support in order to attend conferences/workshops on teaching students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
37.	I feel comfortable in approaching my colleagues for help when I teach students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
38.	Students who are 1 year below grade level should be in special education classes.	SD	D	A	SA
39.	Students who are identified as depressed but do not display overt disruptive behavior should be in regular education classes.	SD	D	A	SA
40.	Special education teachers might lose their jobs if I teach children with an IEP.	SD	D	A	SA

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41.	My colleagues will try to place all of their special needs students in my classroom if I start including students with an IEP in my regular classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
42.	My educational background has prepared me to effectively teach students who are 2 or more years below level.	SD	D	A	SA

Part C

What type of delivery method do you believe would benefit you most in receiving training regarding including special education students in your classroom?

(rank from 1=most beneficial to 7=least beneficial)

_____ District level in-service training

_____ Out of District training

_____ Coursework at college/university

_____ School building level training

_____ Article(s) provided to you

_____ Time for consultation with school psychologist

_____ Time for consultation with special education teachers

Please list other methods of training delivery you believe would be helpful in receiving information on inclusive education:

_____

_____

_____

Please list any other topic(s) on which you would like training regarding inclusive education:

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND INPUT.

Appendix C

Administrator survey questions:

Part A
Administrator Attitude Towards Inclusion Education
Demographic Information

1. Gender: Male   Female

2. Age range: Below 25   25-35   36-45   46-55   55+

3. Educational level: Bachelors +15   Bachelors +30   Masters   Masters+15
                        Masters+30   Doctoral

4. Level of administration: Elementary   Middle   High School

5. Number of years at this level: _____

6. Number of years in administration total: _____

7. Amount of experience with children with special needs: _____

Part B
Administrator Attitude Towards Inclusion Education
Survey

Instructions: Please complete the following scale by circling the appropriate response corresponding to your belief. Use the following key to determine your answer. Please circle a response.

SD= Strongly Disagree
D= Disagree
A=Agree
SA= Strongly Agree

1.	My educational background has prepared me to effectively plan and advocate for students with cognitive delays and deficits in daily living skills.	SD	D	A	SA
2.	I need more training in order to appropriately plan and advocate effectively for students with an IEP for learning problems.	SD	D	A	SA
3.	I regularly encourage teachers to attend conferences and workshops on teaching students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
4.	Teachers and support staff collaborate on issues which may arise with students with an IEP	SD	D	A	SA
5.	I feel comfortable in working collaboratively with special education teachers and regular education teachers regarding students with IEPs.	SD	D	A	SA
6.	I belief and welcome collaborative teaching with students with IEPs.	SD	D	A	SA
7.	Students presenting 2 or more years below grade level should be in special education classes.	SD	D	A	SA
8.	Students diagnosed with Autism need to be in a special education classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
9.	All efforts should be made to educate students who have an IEP in the regular education classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
10.	Students who are diagnosed as developmentally delayed should be in special education classes.	SD	D	A	SA
11.	Students who are verbally aggressive towards other can be maintained in regular education classes.	SD	D	A	SA
12.	I believe collaborative teaching of children with special needs can be effective particularly when students with an IEP are placed in a regular education classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
13.	Special education teachers should teach students who hold an IEP.	SD	D	A	SA
14.	I approach teachers with concerns I hold regarding teaching students	SD	D	A	SA

	who have special needs.				
15.	I approach my immediate supervisor with concerns I hold regarding teaching students who have special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
16.	I believe teachers feel supported when faced with challenges presented by students with behavioral difficulties in the classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
17.	Teachers are provided with sufficient training opportunities in order to teach students with disabilities.	SD	D	A	SA
18.	My background has successfully prepared me for managing, planning, and advocating for students with behavioral difficulties.	SD	D	A	SA
19.	My background has successfully prepared me for managing, planning, and advocating for students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
20.	Teachers are provided with sufficient support for students with IEPs in their classrooms.	SD	D	A	SA
21.	Teachers feel comfortable in approaching colleagues for assistance, when needed, for students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
22.	Regular education teachers should not be responsible for teaching children with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
23.	I believe in co-teaching (regular education teacher and special education teacher).	SD	D	A	SA
24.	Students who are physically aggressive towards others can be maintained in regular education classrooms.	SD	D	A	SA
25.	All students who have an IEP for any reason need to receive their education in a special education classroom.	SD	D	A	SA
26.	Students who display speech and language difficulties should be in special education classes.	SD	D	A	SA
27.	Regular education teachers should only be responsible for teaching students who are not identified as having special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
28.	Both regular education and special education teachers should teach students with an IEP.	SD	D	A	SA
29.	Teachers are provided with sufficient materials in order to be able to make appropriate accommodations for students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
30.	My background has successfully prepared me for managing, planning, and advocating for students with speech impairments.	SD	D	A	SA
31.	Teachers need more training in order to appropriately teach students with IEP for behavioral problems.	SD	D	A	SA

32.	Teachers feel supported when faced with challenges presented by students with learning difficulties in their classrooms.	SD	D	A	SA
33.	Teachers are provided with monetary support in order to attend conferences/workshops on teaching students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
34.	Teachers feel comfortable in approaching their colleagues for help when teaching students with special needs.	SD	D	A	SA
35.	Students who are 1 year below grade level should be in special education classes.	SD	D	A	SA
36.	Special education teachers might lose their jobs if regular education teachers teach students with IEPs.	SD	D	A	SA
37.	Teachers who include students with IEPs in their regular classroom are given students with IEPs during class placement times.	SD	D	A	SA
38.	My background has successfully prepared me for managing, planning, and advocating for students who are 2 or more years below grade level.	SD	D	A	SA

What delivery method do you believe would benefit teachers most in receiving training regarding including special education students in the regular education classroom?
(rank from 1= most beneficial to 7= least beneficial)

    ____ District level in-service training
    ____ Out of district training
    ____ Coursework at college/university
    ____ School building level training
    ____ Article(s) provided to teachers
    ____ Time for consultation with school psychologist or other support staff
    ____ Time for consultation with special education teachers

       Please list other methods of training delivered teachers believe are helpful in receiving information on inclusion education:

_____
_____

Please list other topics on which you feel teachers would like training in regards to inclusion education:

_____
_____