ATTITUDES OF EDUCATORS TOWARD INCLUSION:

A Q-METHODOLOGICAL STUDY

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PREFACE

This study was conducted to investigate the attitudes and beliefs of educators toward inclusion of children with disabilities within the general education classroom. The practice of no longer placing children with disabilities in separate classrooms is increasing. The evidence, however, is conflicting as to the benefits of inclusion for children with disabilities as well as nondisabled children. Conflicting opinions exist among educators as to the viability of inclusion. Specific objectives of this study were to determine (1) the types of beliefs and attitudes educators have toward inclusion; (2) any differences which exist among general education and special education teachers; and (3) any differences which exist among inservice and preservice teachers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The appropriate educational placement for children with disabilities continues to

be a debated issue in education. The mainstreaming model used extensively in the 1970's

and 1980's was designed to meet the mandate of P.L. 94-142, Education of All

Handicapped Children Act (now called Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or

IDEA), which required children with disabilities to be educated to the maximum extent

possible with nondisabled peers. The failure of mainstreaming to meet the intent of

federal legislation (Skrtic & Meyen, 1995) has resulted in the current movement to

include more children with special needs in regular education classrooms. The Thirteenth

Annual Report to Congress on Implementation of IDEA revealed the placement of

students requiring special education services in general education classrooms for part or

all of the day was increasing, with 68.6 percent now receiving some proportion of

education in mainstreamed classes (US Dept. Of Education, 1991). More school districts

are educating students in general classrooms rather than the traditional pull-out or

resource class programs. With this increased number of general education placements,

the need to understand the educational environment into which children with disabilities

are placed and expected to thrive likewise increases.

Attitudes and Belief Systems

In order to understand the educational environment into which children with disabilities may be placed, an examination of the teacher's belief system which influences the classroom climate is warranted. A teacher's belief system impacts the educational environment of general or special education classrooms by influencing the educator's conduct in the classroom and resultant student behavior and achievement (Schmelkin, 1981). The beliefs of the teacher concerning children with disabilities influence such behavior variables as the type of questions teachers ask (Alves & Gottlieb, 1986), the kind of reinforcement provided (Smey-Richman, 1989), and the nature of feedback given (Good, 1982). Larrivee (1982) surveyed four groups of educators: special education administrators, elementary school principals, classroom teachers, and special education teachers. His results indicated that general classroom teachers were least positive about the academic benefits of children with disabilities being included in their classes. Teachers' attitudes were shown to affect their expectations for students and their responses during teacher-student interactions. He concluded that, while mainstreaming may be imposed by binding laws, "the manner in which the classroom teacher responds to the needs of the special child may be a far more potent variable in ultimately determining the success of mainstreaming than any administration or curriculum strategy" (p. 374).

In addition to affecting behavior, attitudes and beliefs affect two additional components of classroom climate, teacher expectations and instructional goals (Agne, Greenwood, & Miller, 1994). A positive classroom climate has been shown to produce a

higher rate of learning and lower dropout rate (Paredos & Frazier, 1992). The importance of teacher expectations in the formation of classroom climate was demonstrated in a study conducted by Siperstein and Goding (1985). Surveyed teachers described the population of children with learning disabilities as "hyperactive," "aggressive," "unable to accept responsibility," and "less desirable to have in class." Subsequent observations in classrooms revealed teachers had more negative interactions with students with learning disabilities and gave more corrective behavior responses. An attempt to change teachers' behavior resulted in a change in the quality (less negative) of the behavior, but not a change in the frequency of interactions. Discerning the beliefs of teachers regarding the philosophy and practice of inclusion of students with disabilities may provide direction for a clearer understanding of the rationale behind certain expectations, behaviors, and instructional plans.

Attitudes of Professionals Toward Inclusion

The achievement of successful inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms is highly dependent upon the attitudes and beliefs of educators and peers toward these students (Schumm, Vaughn, Gordon, & Rothlein, 1994). In a study reported by Garver-Pinhas and Schmelkin (1989), the attitudes of teachers concerning students with disabilities were shown to be the most significant factor accelerating or hindering integration efforts. Attitudes and beliefs are thought to form into systems and self-perpetuate. In a classic research study performed by Henry in 1957 and reported in Horne (1985), the classroom itself was defined as a dynamically interrelated attitudinal

3

structure that not only sustains attitudes created in the home, but reinforces, de-emphasizes, and creates its own attitudes. Belief systems shape perception and influence thought. They function as "filters" for interpreting reality and influencing behavior (Pajares, 1992). For example, research indicates that successful integration of children with disabilities is dependent, at least partially, on the belief of the necessity and the willingness of the classroom teacher to make adaptations to accommodate individual differences (Schumm, et al., 1994).

During the last twenty years, research has been conducted investigating teachers' feelings and concerns about mainstreaming and inclusion (Alexander & Strain, 1978; Coates, 1989; Garver-Pinhas & Schmelkin, 1989; Hannah & Pliner,1983; Johnson, 1993; Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar, 1991); however, these mainly empirical studies appear to center on management issues such as resource materials, class size, discipline techniques, and experience with special needs students. For example, in a study conducted by Larrivee (1982), five factors were found to influence teachers' attitudes toward inclusion: general philosophy, classroom behavior of children with disabilities, perceived ability to teach special needs children, classroom management issues, and academic development.

Two additional studies identified different variables influencing teachers' attitudes concerning mainstreaming of special needs children into the general education classroom. Schmelkin (1981) identified two general factors: academic costs of mainstreaming and socioemotional costs of segregation. In a second study seeking to identify factors involved in teachers' attitudes toward mainstreaming, two foundational

principles were found to influence teacher's perceptions of inclusion. The study conducted by Wilson and Silverman (1991) found teachers' beliefs to be divided into two perspectives: (1) perceptions of difficulties due to problems with students, labeled the "restorative viewpoint," and (2) perceptions of difficulties due to interaction of the special needs child with the educational environment, called the "preventive viewpoint."

While the majority of the studies were based principally on objective research, a more subjective exploration of the fundamental perspectives of teachers' beliefs concerning inclusion is necessary to understand how attitudes and belief systems may affect the classroom climate and the decisions which teachers make (Pajares, 1992). In order to explore the attitudes and beliefs of teachers, however, a research approach that will illuminate the subjective feelings of each respondent educator is required.

Subjective Research

For many years, the defense of special education and its methodology have relied upon empirical data from traditional research studies (Reid, Robinson, & Bunsen, 1995). These empirical studies seek explications that are context-free and universal. The researcher computes statistical tests and strives to maintain objectivity. To establish objectivity, the researcher uses data collection and analysis techniques that return results which are reproducible and verifiable by others using identical techniques. The results are therefore "externalized" (Worthen & Sanders, 1989) from the evaluator. Statistics measuring internal validity, external validity, and reliability authenticate results. Based on positivism, these empirical, objective studies see reality as external to the individual

5

and as measurable, predictable, and transferable across settings. Results can be verified and duplicated using empirical methods.

In order, however, to explore the social world in which the school exists and the beliefs and attitudes that provide the basis for interpreting interventions in special education, the need exists to rely on other than empirical, objective methods. The use of more interpretive, subjective research methods permits examination of ideas such as intentionality, consciousness, belief systems, and mental states in order to enrich understanding of these instructional issues in special education and enable the more effective service of students with disabilities. Subjective research employs a phenomenological, constructivist perspective, where the meaning of social reality is perceived as created within a specific context of social interaction (Reid, et al., 1995). Reality is interpreted through human perception, and subjects illuminate the social practices and situations of which they are a part. Explications are, therefore, context sensitive and specific. The constructs of validity and reliability are less important than credibility and confirmability to establish authenticity.

Another difference existing between objective and subjective research methods is the viewpoint of the researcher. Some objective, empirical research studies are conducted by the investigator from an external standpoint. A viewpoint is envisioned and then measured in respect to that standpoint. The researcher theorizes, hypothesizes, constructs or chooses measures, and obtains and analyzes scores that purportedly quantify some trait or attitude. By defining what trait or attitude will be measured by what instrument, the researcher measures the reality of the construct based on its own definition. Specification

of a certain response to a scale, for example, as representative of that trait reinforces the researcher's initial operational definition. The operational definition that the scale proports to measure places constraints upon the meaning of the subject's response. The possibility exists that the subject's response on the scale item in reality differs significantly from the researcher's initial concept, especially since language used in the measurement may have different meanings. Therefore, although often viewed as an unbiased measurement, such devices may be inherently biased.

In contrast to the external viewpoint or definition of the subject is an internal perspective, where the respondent speaks without any parameters prescribed by the researcher. Expression of the respondent's viewpoint can be characterized as both subjective and operant. The expression is subjective because the viewpoint belongs to the respondent who establishes the reality of the viewpoint through a personal perspective. The expression is considered operant because the effect of the viewpoint occurs in the natural setting and is not produced in an artificial experiment. A subjective operant, then, is not characterized as right or wrong; it simply exists as the perception of the respondent. No outside criterion or constructed condition is used to judge or constrain the respondent's viewpoint.

Subjectivity, by definition, is the condition of viewing things exclusively through the medium of one's own mind (Stephenson, 1981). It embodies communication in functional-interactional situations. This subjective form of communicability exists within the thoughts, wishes, emotions, opinions, fantasies, dreams, and beliefs of the mind. The study of subjectivity, then, becomes a study of self-reference. Subjectivity discovers and

explains the workings of the human mind and forms a basis for describing the attitudes and belief systems involved in the study of inclusion.

One self-referent research technique for studying subjectivity, relative to communicability, employs Q methodology as developed by Stephenson (Brown, 1980). In Q methodology, each idea, emotion, attitude, or belief can be represented by an infinite number of statements, all having self-referent meaning to the respondent. By rank-ordering each statement according to each person's subjective viewpoint, attitudes and beliefs, which are always present but often undetected, will become manifested. The Q-sort becomes a model of the viewpoint, a direct representation of each respondent's belief.

Mainstreaming and Inclusion Models

The need to investigate educators' beliefs toward inclusion of students with disabilities is propelled by the current reform movement for a unitary educational system. Inclusion is a term that has evolved in response to the perceived need to reform current educational practice concerning students with disabilities. In the 1960's, the traditional segregated model of education for children with disabilities was exposed as racially biased, instructionally ineffective, and psychologically and socially damaging (Skrtic, 1991). A new model, based on a "cascade of services" (Deno, 1970) and referred to as "mainstreaming" was initiated to resolve the issue of discriminatory placement of children with disabilities. The mainstreaming model responded to the mandate set forth by the Education of Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142, and referred to as EHA)

providing a free, appropriate public education for all students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Implementation of the mainstreaming model altered the practice of special education with the guarantee of certain rights to students and parents such as education in the most integrated setting appropriate, participation in decision making, and recourse through due process of law (Skrtic & Meyen, 1995; Turnbull, 1993). Under the mainstreaming model, educational placements within a segregated setting, a resource-room, or a general classroom were all possible if deemed appropriate for academic success for the child with a disability.

The mainstreaming model has come under severe criticism in the last decade for promoting the identical problems it was designed to eliminate. Issues of racial, cultural and linguistic bias, instructional ineffectiveness, and psychological and social damage to students (Skrtic & Meyen, 1995) within the mainstreaming model sparked a new movement, originally called the "regular education initiative" and, more currently, the "inclusive education movement" or inclusion. Inclusion promotes the concept of education for all children in the general education classroom, supported by any special services necessary for children with disabilities to be successful within the general classroom (Stainback & Stainback, 1992). Proponents of the inclusion movement seek an end to the dual system of general education and special education services by providing a unified educational system that meets the unique needs of all children within the general classroom setting.

Although both the mainstreaming and inclusion models resulted from a perceived need for reform in the educational system, an important distinction exists between the two

9

practices. Under the mainstreaming model, students with disabilities receive their primary instruction within the special education classroom. Students may receive some instruction in a general education classroom when deemed appropriate by the interdisciplinary committee which writes the educational program; however, the special education teacher has the primary responsibility for the educational program of the student. Under the inclusion model, the student's educational placement is in the general education classroom, with necessary support services provided to achieve successful educational goals.

Students who once received educational services in segregated, often isolated, settings are now being placed in general education classrooms under the inclusion model (Anderson, 1994). Historically, a small nucleus of family members influenced and educated children with disabilities; however, with the advent of mainstreaming from federal mandates of the 1970's and currently with the focus on inclusionary practices, the potential influence of teachers and peers has greatly increased. With this increase in influence and the increase in general education placements, the need to investigate the beliefs of educators concerning students with disabilities that will significantly affect the successful placement also grows.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to describe the operant subjectivity or basic belief structure of teachers toward inclusion and provide insight toward rationale for decisions to be made in the education of children with disabilities. The theories used to investigate

belief structure toward inclusion abound, but share similar components. Four philosophical perspectives emerge from literature concerning inclusion of students with disabilities: (1) cognitive requirements, (2) socialization needs, (3) legal rights, and (4) integrative philosophy. The cognitive or academic perspective centers on the ability of children with special needs to successfully learn intellectually alongside their nondisabled peers. The socialization perspective concentrates on the social benefit of integrating special needs children with nondisabled peers. The legal rights perspective is based on the establishment and protection of the judicial rights of students. In addition to academic, social, and legal rights issues, another perspective upon which decisions about inclusion may be reached involves a philosophical interpretation of the meaning of integration, where every child is part of the school community regardless of academic, behavioral, or physical differences.

Are teacher's attitudes and beliefs about inclusion consistent with these theoretical perspectives? To describe the attitudes and beliefs of educators concerning inclusion that form the rationale behind placement decisions and educational plans, this study explored the underlying belief structure by allowing each respondent to operantly define personal beliefs about the philosophy and practice of inclusion.

The research questions investigated were:

1.   What types of beliefs about inclusion of children with disabilities in general education classrooms exist among public educators?

2.   In what ways do the types of beliefs concerning inclusion differ between inservice teachers and preservice teachers?

11

3. In what ways do the types of beliefs concerning inclusion differ between general education teachers and special education teachers?

Definitions of Terms

Attitudes and beliefs -- Includes values, judgments, opinions, assumptions, perceptions and orientations which influence behavior

Belief System -- A set of conceptual representations which signify to its holder a reality of sufficient validity and/or trustworthiness to warrant reliance upon it as a guide to personal thought and action

Concourse -- A collection of stimuli or opinion statements that represent a complete set of viewpoints on a selected topic

Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) -- Passed in 1975, this act requires the states to provide full educational opportunities to all children with disabilities (zero reject policy)

Factor Array -- A composite Q-sort representing a distinct point of view statistically solved for each factor

Free Appropriate Public Education -- The legal principle mandated in P.L. 94-142 designating special education and related services are to be provided at public expense and conform to the requirements of the individualized education program

General Education Program -- Educational services provided by the local school district

Inclusion -- The education of students with disabilities in the general classroom they would normally attend if not disabled; full inclusion refers to the inclusion of students with severe disabilities

Individualized Educational Program (IEP)--Mandated by P.L. 94-142, an IEP is

written for each child with a disability and contains an assessment of the child's

current level of educational performance, annual goals and objectives, and

specific services to be provided

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)--Passed in 1990, IDEA (P.L. 101-

476) revised EHA. It added autism and traumatic brain injury to classifications of

disabilities and elaborated services to be rendered.

Integration --The social and academic inclusion of students with special education needs

in general education classrooms including any assistance and support needed for

students to be successful in general education classes

Least Restrictive Environment -- Refers to legal principle that students with disabilities

are educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not

disabled

Mainstreaming -- An education term referring to the practice of placing students with

disabilities in general education classes with appropriate support for all or part of

the school day

Normalization -- A social principle which states that the pattern of life for the disabled

should approximate as close as possible life patterns for others members of

society

Objective Based Research - Research based on positivism where results are considered

measurable, predictable, generalizeable, and replicable

Operant -- Term used to describe opinions that occur within a natural setting as opposed to those created experimentally

P-set or P sample -- In Q methodology, the set of persons performing the Q-sorts

Pragmatic Sampling -- A type of sampling in which persons are chosen randomly without any particular referent characteristic

Regular Education Initiative -- An effort to combine general education and special education into one system which serves all children in the general education classroom

Resource Room Program -- Services for children with disabilities are provided in a separate classroom and taught by a special education teacher who is certified to teach exceptional children

Subjective Based Research -- Research that examines reality from the internal standpoint

Subjectivity - The study of the working of the human mind within the framework of communicability. In terms of Q methodology, subjectivity means the study of a person's communication of his or her own viewpoint.

Support Services -- Special services provided to children with disabilities beyond their basic educational program which may include speech-language therapy, physical therapy, and psychological services

Theoretical Sampling -- A type of sampling in which persons are chosen for a particular characteristic related to the research study

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

With the advent of the inclusion movement, more students with disabilities are

being served in general classroom settings. Within these general classrooms, the

teacher's attitudes and belief system will influence the educator's behavior and resultant

student behavior and achievement. The manner in which the classroom teacher responds

to a child with a disability may be the most important variable in determining the success

or failure of the inclusion of the student in the general classroom (Johnson, 1993). A

thorough investigation of the subjective beliefs of teachers toward inclusion is necessary

to understand how attitudes and belief systems may affect the classroom climate and the

placement and instructional decisions which teachers make concerning students with

disabilities.

This chapter reviews the literature related to attitudes and beliefs of teachers

toward inclusion. The first discussion is the historical importance of the legal mandate to

integrate people with disabilities into the educational setting, as well as the establishment

of the principles of free and appropriate education (FAPE) and the least restrictive

environment (LRE). The models of mainstreaming and inclusion proposed to satisfy the

legal mandate are discussed. Literature is reviewed concerning the four theoretical

perspectives for educators' attitudes concerning inclusion: academic needs, socialization

issues, legal concerns and integrative philosophy. The need to explore these perspectives

through the medium of subjective research and the feasibility of the utilization of Q methodology is examined.

Historical Perspective

Since the recognition of normalization and egalitarianism in the 1970's, emphasis has been placed on the integration of people with disabilities into the mainstream community. Wolfensberger defined normalization as the right of people with disabilities to live and be treated in the same manner as non-disabled people (Turnbull, 1993). Included within this treatment is the right to an education. Federal legislation in the 1970's, specifically, Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 334 F. Supp. 1257 (1971, 1972)) and Mills v. DC Board of Education, 348 F. Supp. 866 (1972), established the right of disabled children to a public education (Turnbull, 1993). With the advent of the Education of all Handicapped Children Act in 1975 (EHA; now renamed Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA), Public Law 94-142, the federal government protected and mandated education of all children with disabilities in a public school setting. Included within this law was the zero reject policy, that no child with a disability be excluded from a school setting, and that each be guaranteed the right to a free, appropriate public education.

The term "appropriate" was defined in several ways (Skrtic & Meyen, 1995; Turnbull, 1993). Schools were required to formulate an individualized education program for each child, to evaluate on a nondiscriminatory basis, to engage in a due

process hearing if necessary, to inform and include parents when designing a child's educational plan, and to furnish a barrier-free environment so that the child with a disability could be integrated, or educated with nondisabled peers, into the local public school. Additionally, schools were to furnish this "appropriate" education with any special education and related services deemed necessary for successful education of the child with a disability in the public school. Perhaps the best definition of an "appropriate" education is the concept of individualization. Appropriate education for a child with a disability means the focus of the educational plan centers on the individual needs of the child. Need is defined as those support services necessary for the child to derive educational benefit in the classroom. Individualization requires an examination of each child, allowing no blanket services to be required or denied by category. The education of the child is only appropriate when it conforms to the specific, individual requirements of the student with a disability.

One need established by court decisions is the preference of education within an integrative setting with developmental or age-appropriate peers (Turnbull, 1993). In Tatro v. State of Texas, 625 F. 2d 557 (1980), the school district of Irving, Texas sought to homebound a student requiring catheterization procedures. The court decided that the "burden" of the catheterization procedure did not outweigh the harm resulting from excluding the student from the classroom. In Board of Education v. Rowley, 458 U.S. 176 (1982), the court defined appropriate education to be an education that provides the student with disabilities a reasonable (not necessarily the maximum) opportunity to learn in the school setting.

18

Least Restrictive Environment

In establishing the right of an appropriate education, IDEA referred to education of children with disabilities in the "least restrictive environment." Exactly what constitutes the "least restrictive environment"(LRE) has been the subject of exhaustive debate (Osborne & Dimaltia, 1994). No clear agreement has been reached concerning the definition of LRE (Yell, 1995) but the legal principle established by the federal mandate is to prohibit exclusion of children with special needs from the opportunity for a meaningful education (Turnbull, 1993) with non-disabled peers. Legal statues do not delineate how schools are to determine the LRE, so great uncertainty exists as to how to operationalize the mandate. In establishing the principle of LRE, the law sought to protect special needs children from the stereotypical belief that they were different and deficient by guaranteeing placement in regular education until determination was made that such placement was not effective. Separate, self-contained special education placement was not to be preferred to the general education classroom, another recognition of the value of integrative schooling for children with disabilities.

Daniel R.R. v. State Board of Education, 874 F. 2d 1036 (1989) established the two-pronged test for determining compliance with the LRE principle. Daniel was a six year old child with Down Syndrome who was removed from general prekindergarten class for failing to master any skills taught although special attention was given by the classroom teacher and paraprofessional aide. The Fifth Circuit US Court of Appeals set precedence for compliance with LRE, requiring school districts to prove that the (1) education in a general classroom with use of supportive aides and services could not be

achieved satisfactorily and, (2) that the child was mainstreamed to the maximum extent appropriate. By instigating the two-pronged test, the court created a presumption in favor of inclusionary practice (Yell, 1995).

Mainstream Model

. The principle of the least restrictive environment became the backbone for the mainstream model (Osborne & Dimaltia, 1994). In this widely accepted model for placement of children with disabilities in the 1970's and 1980's, children may be placed in the general classroom for all or part of the day or placed in a segregated, special education classroom when a multidisciplinary team deems such placement necessary for an appropriate education. The mainstream model is based on the belief that education of children with disabilities with nondisabled students is desirable and will prevent the stigma attached to children who are separated from the regular program. This principle, therefore, supports the concept of inclusion, at least to the maximum extent appropriate for the individual child.

The mainstream model became the preferred method for legal compliance with Public Law 94-142. Implementation of the model, however, did not result in the solution to the problems existing with the education of children with disabilities. Critics of the mainstream model continued to see problems within the special education field (Skrtic & Meyen, 1995; Stainback & Stainback, 1992). The same types of problems associated with education of children with disabilities prior to the enactment of EHA, racial, cultural

and linguistic bias, instructional ineffectiveness, and negative psychological and social impact, continued to be identified with the mainstream model (Skrtic, 1991).

A study conducted by Madden and Slavin (1983) revealed special education classes failed to provide the type of quality schooling needed for special needs students. Students with mild mental retardation and emotional disturbances were randomly assigned to full time special education or general education classes. The general class placement showed more positive effects on achievement for the children with disabilities. A second study conducted for reading students again showed similar results even though special class placement had a lower teacher-pupil ratio. General class placement did not prove to be either detrimental or beneficial regarding socioemotional growth in this study.

Consistent results regarding benefits of either general or special class placement have not been obtained. In a study conducted by Alves and Gottlieb (1986), less effective learning conditions were observed in 38 mainstreamed classes due to a reduced amount of involved time in academic exchanges between teacher and student. Students with disabilities received fewer questions and were provided with less feedback. No benefits of mainstreaming were noted.

Inclusion Model

With the apparent failure of the mainstreaming model to adequately educate children with disabilities, a new method of educating special needs children was proposed. Initially referred to as the Regular Education Initiative (Will, 1986) and more currently called the inclusion movement, this proposition calls for a combining of the

21

dual system of regular and special education into one comprehensive system where all children are educated in regular classroom settings, with appropriate services available for children with special needs within that setting. Proponents see inclusion as an equality issue for children with special needs, as an answer to the psychological and social stigma resulting from separate placement, and as a method of insuring children do not receive a "watered down" curriculum alleged to be found in special education classrooms (Reganick, 1993).

Proponents of inclusion maintain all students are special and different and are thus entitled to whatever students need, including services or instruction, to accommodate for individual differences in the general education classroom (Stainback & Stainback, 1984). From their position, no classification or eligibility requirements should be necessary to insure instructional needs are met.

Additionally, proponents maintain no detriment to students without disabilities results from inclusion of special needs students in general education classes. In a study conducted by Hollowood, Salisbury, Rainforth, and Palombaro (1994), the use of instructional time in classrooms serving students with and without severe disability was investigated. Three groups of students- one group of students with severe disabilities, one group of nondisabled students enrolled in classes with severely disabled students, and one group of nondisabled students enrolled in classes without disabled students- were compared. The study results showed time allocated to instruction was equitable for all groups of students. Instructional time was unaffected by the presence of students with

severe disabilities, and no detriment to peers without disabilities who were mainstreamed with students with disabilities was observed.

A similar report by Slavin (1987) showed low achieving students did better in heterogeneous groups such as are found in general education classrooms. The presence of low achievers neither proved beneficial nor detrimental to nondisabled peers within the classroom. After studying thirteen matched equivalent studies and one randomized study, Slavin concluded that assigning students by achievement or ability (such as in a pull-out program) did not enhance student achievement in elementary school.

Opponents of inclusion, however, fear the loss of hard-won rights, a discontinuation of services, and ineffective classroom instruction due to less teacher preparation and greater student-teacher ratio will be the result of denying children the right to a continuum of educational placements. Skrtic (1991) felt that those who oppose the regular education initiative and inclusion movement are justifiably concerned that this new revolution could mean a loss of the rights established under Public Law 94-142 and could even result in a return to the unacceptable conditions that existed before EHA. Shanker (1994) identified problems with inclusion centering around a lack of teacher training in instructional methods for students with disabilities and putting students with increased time demands in general education classroom, thus robbing regular students of needed teacher time.

<u>Attitudes of Teachers Toward Inclusion</u>

Studies involving the attitudes of teachers toward inclusion vary in their conclusions. Opponents of inclusion cite research that has confirmed general education teachers do not feel comfortable with the inclusion of special needs children in their classes. In a study investigating attitudes of general education teachers toward students with learning disabilities included in their classrooms, teachers expressed negative reactions to inclusion. They felt that students with learning difficulties should fit in with the educational program implemented for the class as a whole and not receive a specially designed, individualized program (Schumm, et al, 1994). Since success of mainstreaming is dependent on general education teachers' ability and willingness to make adaptations to accommodate individual differences, forcing students with learning difficulties to fit in with whole class instruction seems unlikely to lead to successful inclusion. Even teachers considered most successful in the classroom have been resistant to placement of special education students in their general education classrooms because the students were perceived as being demanding of teacher time and less likely to succeed academically (Schumm, et al, 1994).

A second study investigating teachers' attitudes toward increased mainstreaming (Bender, Vail, & Scott, 1995) showed thirty-six percent of teachers either did not support mainstreaming or felt no strong commitment to the philosophy of mainstreaming. Although the majority of reporting teachers did use some type of individual instruction

technique, such as varied instructional levels, other recommended techniques (e.g., advanced organizers) were not used.

A study by Schumm and Vaughn (1991) also investigated general classroom teachers' perspectives concerning adaptations for mainstreamed students and found that adaptations involving social or motivational adjustments (i.e., reinforcement and encouragement) were considered more desirable, while adaptations involving systematic evaluation of goals and adjustment of materials and instructional practices (i.e., adapting regular materials, using different grading criteria) were not determined to be desirable for implementation in the classroom. The researchers hypothesized that general education teachers may lack skills necessary to make such adaptations.

General education teachers were also unlikely to plan for adaptations for students with learning disabilities (Schumm, et al., 1994). Based on surveys, observations and case studies examining how well teachers planned and made adaptations for students with learning disabilities, research showed that teachers relied on incidental, situation driven instruction to accommodate for differences more consistently than on any long-range planning. The results also showed that even when teachers perceive adaptations as valuable, and possess the skills necessary to make these adaptations, the feasibility of implementation is often low.

Perspectives from Research

Currently, in the majority of school districts, interdisciplinary teams composed of teachers, administrators, psychometrists, and parents continue to make decisions about

educational placements for special needs children. Decisions concerning placement

range from full inclusion without support services, inclusion with support services, partial

inclusion in general education classrooms with tutorial assistance, and inclusion into

nonacademic subjects only. Upon what basis, however, do these professional educators

make placement decisions? Upon what foundation of beliefs do the general education

teachers who design instructional strategies and implement the individualized educational

plan make their decisions? The willingness of teachers to adopt new practices in the

classroom, such as inclusion, and the method of implementing these new practices are

related to whether their beliefs match the assumptions inherent in the new program

(Hollingsworth, 1989). Thus, understanding the teachers' beliefs should prove helpful in

the development and implementation of any new programs and increase effectiveness of

in-service education. In the Hollingsworth study, researchers interviewed and observed

fourteen elementary and secondary preserve teachers. Findings showed the importance

of understanding teachers belief systems, as these beliefs played a critical role in

dynamically interacting with both program content and classroom practice. If

interventions were perceived as unnecessary or burdensome by teachers, they were less

likely to implement or were found to implement the intervention ineffectively in the

classroom.

Four philosophical perspectives emerge from the research to identify why

educational professionals base decisions about integration of students with disabilities

into regular education classes. These four perspectives may be labeled legal rights issues;

socialization concerns; instructional or academic efficacy; and philosophical integration emphasizing resources for all youth.

Academic Perspective

One perspective that forms the basis for decisions about integration is the likelihood of academic benefit for the student with disabilities. Proponents for inclusion argue that children with special needs can be successfully educated alongside their nondisabled peers. Various studies have been conducted which highlight successful inclusion of children with disabilities, even those with severe or profound disability. Proponents argue that no compelling body of evidence exists which convincingly proves segregated special education programs have any significant benefits for all students (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). One study (Baker, Wang, & Walberg, 1994) measured a "small to moderate" beneficial effect of inclusive education on the academic and social outcomes of special needs children when compared to students in noninclusive settings. Another study (Madden & Slavin, 1983) showed regular class placement of students with mild disabilities had a positive effect upon achievement results.

A study conducted by Fishbaugh and Gum (1994) in a school district in Billings, Montana, reported academic and social growth for students with disabilities. Students who qualified for special education met most of the goals from their IEPs in inclusive settings. General education students also showed achievement results in inclusive classrooms. Teachers reported increase social development for both students with and

without disabilities, as well as a change in teacher attitude from a negative feeling toward inclusion to a more positive one after involvement with students with disabilities.

Sheppo, Hartsfield, Ruff, Jones and Holinga (1994) cited similar results in the Lincoln School in the district of Springfield, Illinois. Twenty percent of the children in the district have some type of disability and are included in general education classes. Positive academic and social results were cited as a result of an integrated curriculum where heterogeneous groups of students use diverse skills and abilities to solve problems.

Results of a study researching the integration of severely handicapped students and the proportion of the objectives specified on the individualized educational plans (IEP) also supported inclusion (Brinker & Thorpe, 1984). The rate of interaction with nondisabled students accounted for a significant percentage of variance in the proportion of IEP objectives met. The rate of interaction with other severely disabled students in integrated settings did not account for a significant proportion of the variance. Integration was seen, therefore, as a positive academic benefit.

Those in opposition to an all inclusive school system feel that trying to force all children into the inclusion model is as coercive as trying to force everybody into the mold of special classes. Opponents feel wide differences in children's needs require a continuum of placements (O'Neil, 1994) that provide an individual education plan for maximum student growth through special education programs (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994).

A research study, using a small sample size of four, studied student's adaptation to task environments in resource rooms and regular class settings (Howard-Rose & Rose, 1994). Instruction in the resource room was found to foster greater cognitive engagement

in students and was designed to hold students more accountable for assignments. The resource room also proved to hold greater opportunity for self-regulation, individual instruction, and self-monitoring. Students with disabilities mainstreamed in the general classroom were found to respond more impulsively to tasks, perhaps because of an attempt to match nondisabled students' rate of assignment completion.

Opponents feel that special education teachers are more trained to respond to the instructional needs of students with disabilities. In an exploratory study of how general and special education teachers think and make instructional decisions for students with special needs (Richardson, Anders, Tidwell & Lloyd, 1991), general and special education teachers responded differently to a videotape of a reading lesson involving a student classified as learning disabled. Teachers were asked to identify the strengths and needs of the student and to recommend instructional strategies for intervention. General education teachers thought more in terms of social/behavioral aspects of interventions while special education teachers thought in terms of curriculum and instructional needs. Special education teachers were seen as more skilled in making necessary academic interventions than general education teachers.

Socialization

Another perspective utilized for decision making concerning inclusion focuses on the social benefit of integrating special needs children with nondisabled peers. For many years, research studies have shown students with disabilities to lack important social skills that assist in peer acceptance. A study conducted by Sabornie (1994) investigated

the social affective characteristics of early adolescents identified as learning disabled. Thirty-eight middle school students showed significant discrepancies from nondisabled students on ratings purporting to measure loneliness, victimization, and participation. General education teachers reported a lack of social competencies from observations made within the classroom setting, although the students with learning difficulties did not seem to differ in self-concept. A second study (Sabornie, 1985) also showed students with disabilities were not popular among general education peers. Peer nomination techniques where used to identify classmates on positive and negative criteria involving play interaction and physical proximity. Students with disabilities appeared lacking in critical social skills.

Some recent studies show inclusionary practices benefited students with disabilities through increased independence, increased interest and alertness, acquiring age-appropriate behaviors and tastes, developing friendships, increasing self-esteem, and developing a sense of belonging to the school community. Individual case studies are often cited as success stories for inclusion of students with disabilities. Stainback and Stainback (1988) cite three individual cases of students with disabilities who were included in general classes and were successful in forming friendships and preparing for post-school employment.

A study conducted by Voeltz (1982) with general education children in grades four through six studied the effects of structured interactions with severely handicapped peers on children's attitudes. Nondisabled children participated in a social situation with a student with severe disability before being administered an attitude survey. Results

30

showed a higher acceptance of individual differences with nondisabled children schooled with special needs children. Integration of students with modified and severe disabilities into general education classes was researched by interviewing fifty-three teachers concerning benefits of inclusion for students with disabilities (Janney, Snell, Beers, & Reynes, 1995). Teachers reported increased independence, improved functional skills, increased alertness, and increased interest among students with disabilities. Students also acquired more age-appropriate behaviors and tastes through modeling, developed friendships, and increased self-esteem. For students without disabilities, inclusion was also responsible for increasing self-esteem and awareness of others.

Hamre-Hietupski and Shokoohi-Yekta (1994) also surveyed three hundred and twelve general education teachers who likewise reported friendships developed between children with disabilities and nondisabled peers in inclusive settings. Advancement of social skills was seen as beneficial to both sets of students.

Transformational experiences of teachers educating students with disabilities are described in a study by Giangreco, Dennis, Coninger, Edelman and Schattman (1993). At the beginning of the study, general education teachers were anxious about their ability to meet the needs of children with severe disabilities. After inclusion of the special needs students in classrooms for a one-year period, teachers experienced a greater acceptance of the student as a valuable member of the class and were more willing to learn additional skills to benefit the student. The teachers also noted an improvement in awareness and responsiveness to both themselves and peers by the students with disabilities. Communications skills learned in the classroom enhanced the participation of special

31

needs students in other activities. Nondisabled students evidenced an awareness of the needs of people with disabilities and most displayed an accepting attitude.

A study conducted by Logan, et al., (1995) investigated how inclusion built a community of learners in the district of Gwinnett County Public Schools in Georgia. After inclusionary practices were in place, teachers recognized the value of inclusion to all students and noted that nondisabled students appeared to develop compassion from interactions with children with disabilities.

Opponents to inclusion see socialization as a possible negative consequence of integration of special needs children. Increased peer rejection and isolation can occur in the environment of the regular education classroom. One study showed students profited from placement in special education classrooms (McMillan, Keogh, & Jones, 1986). The protection of special class placement with peer groups of similar categorical characteristics permitted favorable self-comparisons and therefore was seen to enhance the self-concept of children with disabilities.

A study by McCarty (1993) surveyed Ohio teachers concerning their reactions to facts or myths concerning inclusion. Only 39% saw inclusion as a method of improving social skills of students or raising academic progress. The majority did not see any social benefit to inclusionary practices.

Within the socialization perspective, modeling is often cited as one reason for inclusion of students with disabilities into general education classes, although results of research studies are not consistent. A study by Barry (1994) found that students with emotional and learning disabilities in self-contained classes reinforced each other's

disruptive behavior. Once inclusion occurred, albeit on a slow time scale, behavior of students with disabilities improved. When behavior was more acceptable, the special needs students became more acceptable to nondisabled peers. Teachers reported that nondisabled students developed compassion for those who struggled academically, and a strong spirit of cooperation evolved.

Another study concerning vicarious learning was conducted by Bol and Steinhauer (1990). Vicarious learning was defined as behavior changes of individuals who observe others but are not themselves directly exposed to reinforcement and punishment contingencies. In this study, a group of kindergarten students were given verbal praise during a puzzle task. Subjects in the vicarious learning group did not show an improved performance. A similar study by Deguchi, Fujita, and Sato (1988) studied six children involved in button pressing tasks. Subjects in the vicarious or observational learning group showed early gains but a rapid decrease in desired behavior followed. No conclusive results of long-term effects of modeling have been recognized.

Legal Issues

Another perspective upon which decisions are based is the establishment of the legal rights of the individual with disabilities. Legal justice for people with disabilities has been and is continuing to be determined in the courtrooms of our justice system. Many important precedents have resulted from legal jurisprudence, beginning with Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954) which established the framework for inherent inequality of separate education. Proponents of inclusion cite this critical civil

33

rights case to declare that any educational experience that is deemed separate can not be considered equal, thus violating the right to equality under the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. Proponents argue that students with special needs were assured a right to education in the regular classroom under the "least restrictive environment" clause of Public Law 94-142 (Gerrard, 1994). They see special classrooms as a denial of a child's right to develop the social and academic skills necessary to function in the mainstream of society. The separate education of special needs students is perceived not only as unequal, but detrimental to the development of all students by fostering views of superiority and inequality (Gerrard, 1994).

Opponents view the inclusion of all disabled students in regular classrooms, regardless of the severity and nature of their difficulty, as replacing one injustice with another (Shanker, 1994). Time needed by the teacher to devote to classmates with disabilities infringes on the rights of the majority of children to an appropriate education. Additionally, when a much larger proportion of funds is dedicated to special education, even though children with disabilities represent a small percentage of the school population, opponents to inclusion fear regular programs will be scaled down, thereby also infringing on the rights of regular education students to an appropriate education. One example is New York City, where 60% of all new money for education is dedicated to special education, even though only 20 percent of students qualify for special services (Shanker, 1994).

A recent court case supported the legal rights of students with disabilities to inclusive education. <u>Greer v. Rome City School District</u>, 762 F. Supp. 936 (1990)

stressed the placement of mainstreaming over a special education setting since the child

with the disability was making some progress in the general education setting. Inclusion

was seen as a right, not a privilege for a select few. The right to associate with peers

without disabilities is viewed as a fundamental value of the right to public education

(Osborne & Dimaltia, 1994).

Philosophical Integration

Another perspective that emerged from the literature is the philosophical

interpretation of integration. Integration is not seen as a placement issue, but as a

function of a school where every student, including those with significant learning,

behavioral, and physical disabilities, participates in learning and the educational

community (Jorgensen, 1994). Heterogeneous classes reflect a fundamental philosophy

modeled after a society that accepts and appreciates differences. Reformers supporting

the philosophical integration perspective require a fundamental belief change in the way

schools are organized and the purpose of education. Schools exist to serve all students in

a normal, expected manner, rather than in a special or different manner. Inclusion, then,

becomes a tool of integration that creates a sense of community within the school based

on shared differences (Klassen, 1994). Integration is a process, not a goal in itself,

involving both physical and social aspects that creates a positive learning environment for

all students (Stainback & Stainback, 1984).

A study by Johnston, Proctor, and Corey (1994) depict a school dedicated to the

integrative philosophy. The Christine School District of Neward, Delaware, uses team

teaching, learning centers, ego groups, and teacher cadres to teach all children effectively in general education classrooms. No resource rooms exist. Teachers are prepared to teach all students. Knowing that the "one size fits all" approach does not work academically, teachers address individual learning needs through centers. Since merely including students with disabilities in general education classes does not enhance self-concept, ego groups focus on issues related to self-esteem. Through using these types of techniques, achievement of nondisabled students in inclusive classrooms is equal to, and in some instances higher than, nondisabled students in other general education classes. Students with disabilities develop a sense of belonging to the classroom community.

With the federal mandate through EHA (or IDEA) incorporating the value of integrative settings, whether the model is mainstreaming or inclusion, many students once educated in segregated settings, will now be educated in general education classrooms. The success of these integrative placements is dependent, in great part, on the general education teacher's ability and willingness to make adaptations to accommodate individual differences (Schumm, et al., 1994). As reported by Schumm, a study by Clark and Peterson found that the theories and beliefs of teachers interact with teacher planning and decision-making to impact actions in the classroom. A second study by Smey-Richman (1989) found that teacher expectations of student performances may alter ways that teachers treat students in the classroom. This differential treatment can negatively affect behavior and learning of students for whom teachers hold low expectations. Such adverse treatment includes seating children in more isolated settings farther from the teacher; criticizing more often; providing briefer, less detailed feedback; not pursuing

cognitive processing in failure situations; being called on less often; interacting less frequently; and demanding less work and effort from low-achieving students.

Subjective Research

Given the possible impact, therefore, of teacher's beliefs and attitudes upon low achieving students, a clearer and deeper understanding of the perspective that underlies a teacher's attitude or belief system toward the principle of inclusion is warranted. This deeper understanding, however, is difficult to explore with traditional research methodology. Until recently, most research was based on the positivist theory of knowledge that employs the scientific method in controlled experimentation to additively expand a cumulation of basic truths about reality and eliminate false hypotheses. This cumulative knowledge was seen as objective since control was enacted to distance the researcher from the observation and theoretically eliminate error, thus arriving at the reality of the researched construct (or dependent variable). Through positivism, objective knowledge was accepted as the highest form of knowledge attainable.

With the advent of Kuhn's reconceptualization of the theoretical basis of knowledge acquisition (Hoyningen-Huene, 1993), the importance of the contribution of subjectivism was established. Kuhn's work promoted the idea of knowledge being dependent upon cultural context for meaning and interpretation, a subjective view. The image of science changed from an independent, objective and impersonal view to a culturally and temporally dependent one (Skrtic & Meyen, 1995).

With the emergence of the subjectivist view of science, the distance between the researcher and the object under study disappears and is replaced by an interaction involving the observer. In many objective studies, the differences that exist among the respondents not accountable for by the independent variables, are relegated to the error term. With the study of subjectivity, individual interactions are no longer contained within the error term of an experiment, but become a necessary component worth of examination.

Interpretive or qualitative studies also allow the respondent more freedom of response. Traditional objective research studies encompass the external standpoint of the investigator. He or she invisions a dependent variable, a construct, and then measures in respect to that variable By defining what trait or attitude will be measured by what instrument, the researcher measures reality based on his own definition. The operational definition that the scale measures places constraints upon the meaning of the subject's response. The possibility exists that the subject's response on the scale item in reality differs significantly from the researcher's initial concept, especially since language used in the measurement may have many different meanings.

An important classical study of subjectivity was conducted by the philosopher Descartes, who defined subjectivity as self-consciousness (Caton, 1973). In his opening statement of the <u>Discourse of Method</u>, he acknowledges that the differences of opinion that occur among individuals are not a result of an inequality of reasoning but rather a consequence of thinking in diverse ways about the same objects. He acknowledges the existence of a diversity of judgment in his statement: "Nevertheless, it is possible that I

deceive myself, and that what I take to be gold and diamonds is no more than copper and glass." Descartes viewed the knowledge of the consciousness as subjective knowledge. Reality became based on this knowledge, "I think, therefore I am" (p. 121).

Hegel, another philosopher who studied subjectivity, viewed the goal of philosophy as the solving of the conflict between objectivity as viewed externally and subjectivity from the self-consciousness viewpoint (Navickas, 1976). In his Lectures on the History of Philosophy, he stated, "The ultimate aim and business of philosophy is to reconcile thought or the notion with reality" (p. 140). In Hegel's theory of subjectivity, basic truths cannot be conceived through a knowledge of the substance of an object alone, but must also be realized in terms of the subject also. "In my view..., everything depends on grasping and expressing the ultimate truth not as Substance but as Subject as well" (p. 40). For Hegel, substance could only be realized to exist through the medium of subjectivity.

Although the study of subjectivity by Descartes and Hegel centered on metaphysical application, Stephenson (Brown, 1980) envisioned subjectivity differently. He defined the relationship between the objective and subjective, when he wrote, "The fundamental difference between objective and subjective, however, is merely a matter of self-reference" (p. 20). Subjectivity employs the personal viewpoint, designated and defined by the respondent's independent understanding. Each idea, emotion, or belief can be represented by an infinite number of statements, all having self-referent meaning to the respondent. Through the use of subjective research, then, the attitudes and belief systems of teachers toward the philosophy of inclusion can be fully investigated.

<u>Q Methodology</u>

By employing the techniques of Q methodology, subjective viewpoints can be explored. Q techniques allow the individual respondent to use judgment, reason and comprehension to quantify feelings and beliefs (Brown, 1980). The outcome of the technique will be the communication of a belief system based on self-reference. Although the researcher may construct a theoretically based measure, the individual respondent will restructure the item statements to represent his or her own interpretation. Research shows that people are unable to define their own interpersonal communication processes (Brown, 1980). Through Q methodology, a highway or medium is provided to transform implicit viewpoints into a physical manifestation of their beliefs (a factor structure) which enables the researcher to discover patterns of beliefs that may be undiscoverable in any other way (Aiken, 1988).

Johnson (1993) used Q methodology to study teachers' attitudes toward integration of special education students. The study was designed to identify the subjective views of teachers concerning the inclusion movement as well as any appreciable differences between the viewpoints of special education and general education teachers. Fifty-two teachers in two metropolitan school districts participated in the study. The teachers were asked to Q-sort thirty-six statements reflecting perceptions of the three major categories of education models: regular, pull-out categorical, and integration. The item statements were adapted from "A Survey of Teacher's Opinions

Relative to Mainstreaming Special Needs Children." The resultant three factor solution accounted for 51% of the variance and identified three consensus opinions. One consensus opinion included those teachers clearly in support of integration of students in special education and the combining of special and general education into one system. Another consensus opinion was defined by those teachers who reflect the view of pull-out categorical programs and deny the possibility that all students belong in the general education classroom. The third consensus supported the pull-out program or mainstreaming approach, seeing benefit in part-time placement of students with disabilities in the general classroom.

In contrast to the Johnson study, the current study did not investigate specific educational model preference, but rather the subjective perspectives of both inservice and preservice teachers toward the inclusion model of education. Q-sort item statements were designed not to reveal whether the teacher supported pull-out programs or mainstreaming or felt qualified to engage in inclusion practices, but rather what viewpoints concerning the importance of cognitive ability, socialization, legal aspects, or philosophy the teacher might hold which would lead to decisions concerning inclusive practices within the general education classroom.

As in the Johnson study, the employment of Q methodology in the current study allows the respondent to represent his or her personal viewpoint. Q methodology permits a scientific approach to the study of subjectivity and as such is ideally suited to the investigation and description of the attitudes and belief structures of educators towards inclusion.

41

This chapter has provided rationale for investigating teachers' attitudes and beliefs toward the changing focus of special education from a mainstream model to an inclusion model of education. Theoretical investigation provides four perspectives rationalizing decisions concerning the inclusion movement: cognitive ability, socialization, legal aspects, and integrative philosophy. Research has been cited showing that the success or failure of the inclusion of special needs children in a general education classroom will depend upon teacher attitudes. Examination of teacher attitudes toward inclusion is therefore warranted.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

In this chapter, there is a discussion of a methodology employed in investigating the subjective belief structure of educators toward inclusion. The study utilized Q methodology, a research method designed to study subjectivity among individuals. After a description of the subjects who were invited to participate in the study, the design of the instrument to describe educators' attitudes and beliefs concerning inclusion; the procedures and conditions of Q-sorting; and the technique used for data analysis is described.

The increasing number of general education placements for students with disabilities under the inclusion model warrants a careful study of the classroom environment into which these children are being placed. A teacher's attitudes and beliefs impact teacher behavior and resultant student behavior and achievement. Investigation of the fundamental perspectives concerning inclusion upon which educators base their attitudes and beliefs was accomplished using Q method techniques. Q methodology explores the subjectivity of the educator concerning inclusion of students with special needs in general education classrooms. Employing both quantitative correlational and factor-analytic techniques with an in-depth qualitative search for subjective meaning, Q methodology allows respondents to self-define tacit knowledge (McKeown & Thomas, 1988).

The study of subjectivity, an individual's personal viewpoint, can be accomplished through Q methodology. Q methodology involves a systematic quantitative approach for examining human subjectivity using statistical methods of factor analysis. Since Q methodology is based on the belief that subjective viewpoints are both communicable and self-referent, it preserves the nature and intent of qualitative research by allowing the respondent to self-define the meaning of the terms in the statements using his or her own internal frame of reference. Brown (1980) noted, that while subjective opinions are typically unproveable, they can be shown to have structure and form, and Q-technique allows this form to be manifested for purposes of observation and study.

<u>Subjects</u>

Q methodology permits an intense study of the self-referent perspectives of a particular group of individuals in order to understand human behavior (McKeown & Thomas, 1988). Specific types of sampling procedures necessary in more typical quantitative research are not as fundamental to Q techniques. For example, a small number of respondents is permissible because of the intensive orientation of the research. Some Q-studies involve a one-person sample who is studied from various perspectives. Samples of respondents can be either theoretical (consisting of persons chosen for a particular relevance) or pragmatic (consisting of persons chosen randomly). The sample employed in this study was theoretical, chosen because of employment as educators and therefore concerned with the current inclusion movement. Persons forming the sample

population were involved in the education of students with disabilities within a public and private school setting.

The purpose of the study was to investigate subjective attitudes and beliefs from a representative sample of teachers (McKeown & Thomas, 1988). Volunteers were selected from the educational field and formed the sample population (called the P-set in Q methodology). Teachers with elementary, middle school, secondary and higher education experience from both metropolitan and rural school districts, preservice teachers, and administrators were invited to participate. Sixty-two people were invited to participate in the study. Three people did not respond, leaving fifty-nine who formed the P-set. The specific sample number of sixty was chosen to reflect adequate representation of the two categories of general and special educators (approximately thirty from the inservice and preservice groups, respectively). McKeown and Thomas (1988), discussing Q sample size, cite a sample of 50-100 persons as being considered extensive enough to determine a variety of views on a subject.

Demographic data were collected from each member of the P set. Data included gender, ethnicity, age, parenthood, current position, years of teaching experience, type of certification, education level, and grade level taught. Additionally, each respondent was asked to evaluate the policy of his or her own school district on inclusion. A copy of the demographic data solicited from each respondent is included in Appendix A. Forty-one percent of the graduate segment of the P-set sampled were directly associated with special education, either as teachers or administrators with backgrounds in the special education field (see Table I). Fifty-nine percent of the graduate P-set serve in general

education. Experience by grade level was as follows: ten percent of the graduates are

serving with elementary age children, fifty-five percent of the graduates are either middle

or secondary level, ten percent of the graduates serve in higher education at the university

level, fourteen percent are administrators (1 elementary and 3 from middle/secondary

level); and ten percent of the graduate sample are counselors. Ninety percent of the

graduate sample serve in a metropolitan location, while ten percent serve at rural schools.

All thirty undergraduate respondents attend a rural university in the southwestern United

States and are preparing to teach in general education. Seventy-nine percent of the

graduate sample are parents, while forty percent of the undergraduates serve as the parent

of a child. Among the respondents of the total sample, 35 percent of the graduates and 8

percent of the undergraduates are a parent of a child with disabilities. Table I refers to the

demographic composition of the sample.

The proposal for this study was submitted to the Institutional Review Board for

approval in meeting the regulatory requirements for research involving human subjects.

Informed consent of each subject was obtained (See Appendix B). An identification

number was assigned each participant for maintaining confidentiality in collecting and

reporting data. By using an identification number in data analysis, appropriate safeguards

protected the privacy of each subject.

Instrumentation

A concourse was developed by the researcher to be used for describing the range

in belief for regular and special educators regarding inclusion. A concourse is a set of

opinion statements that represent the main effect of an issue (Brown, 1980). For this

study, over 150 opinions were identified through an investigation of literature pertaining

to the issue of inclusion from the teachers' perspective. Sources for these statements

included published articles from recognized theorists in the fields of general and special

education as well as research findings. As part of a project for a doctoral seminar in

research, these statements were developed into items to be used in a Q-sort and formed

TABLE I

DEMOGRAPHICS OF GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SAMPLES

	Graduate	Undergraduate
Field:		
Special Education	41%	
General Education	59%	
Position:		
Elementary Teachers	10%	
Secondary Teachers	55%	
University Teachers	10%	
Counselors	10%	
Administrators	14%	
Location:		
Metropolitan	90%	
Rural	10%	100%
Parenthood:		
Parents of children	79%	35%
Parents of children with disabilities	35%	8%

the initial concourse for a pilot study. The development of the Q-sort items was reviewed

by teachers in the field of special education as well as by university faculty. Each

reviewer was an experienced educator with combined academic expertise and practical

classroom experience in the field of special education. A hybrid (McKeown & Thomas,

1988) form of concourse (called a Q sample) was constructed by combining the

naturalistic item statements proposed by the research seminar with those gleamed from

the literature review.

Forty-four statements were selected, chosen to represent the four perspectives of

academic, social, legal, and philosophical integration presented in literature. An equal

number of item statements for each perspective was necessary for accurate representation

of theory. Criteria for incorporation of the forty-four statements in the Q sample included

communicability, representation of the meaning of inclusion, complete and exhaustive

thought of the universe of viewpoints concerning inclusion, and portrayal of views in the

literature. The selection process involved combining those statements deemed most

representative of educators' views of inclusion by the research class. The final set of

statements includes four sets of eleven statements representing academic aspects of

inclusion, socialization factors, legal rights issues, and integrative principles.

The academic perspective centers on the likelihood of intellectual gain as a result

of inclusion of special needs children into the general education classroom. Effort was

made to include all viewpoints within this perspective. For example, since two studies

(Baker, Wang, & Walberg, 1994; Madden & Slavin, 1983) recorded positive gains in

achievement for those students with disabilities included in general education classes, the concourse item AC-1 was designed to state "Children with disabilities learn better when included in general education classes than resource rooms (See Appendix C)." A study by Howard-Rose and Rose (1994), however, found instruction in a resource room fostered greater cognitive growth through individual instruction; thus, concourse item AC-7 declares, "Since general classes have more students than resource rooms, children with disabilities will not have the individual attention they need."

Another perspective represented in the design of the instrument focuses on socialization aspects. Studies by Sabornie (1985; 1994) detected a lack of social adjustment among students with disabilities. Concourse item SO-8 reflected this viewpoint, "I think children with disabilities in general education classes are often isolated and ostracized because of a lack of socially appropriate behavior" (see Appendix C). In opposition to resource room placement, Stainback and Stainback (1988) cite three individual cases of students with disabilities who were included in general education classes, successfully forming friendships and preparing for post-school employment. Concourse item SO-5, "Children with disabilities have a clearer understanding of normal behavior when in an included setting" represents the positive social aspects of inclusion.

Within the legal perspective, proponents argue that Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954) clearly establishes the principle of "separate being unequal." Alternative placements then violate the issue of equality as established by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. Concourse item LE-2, "Segregation of children because of the existence or degree of a disability is unconstitutional," was written to respond to

this viewpoint. Another legal issue is the amount of teacher time needed for students with disabilities included in general education classes (Shanker, 1994). Concourse item LE-5 responds to this issue, "I feel placement of special needs children in general classes who demand excess teacher time violates the rights of nondisabled children to an equal education."

Embedded in the philosophical integration perspective is the need for the school to reflect a community that accepts and appreciates differences (Jorgensen, 1994). Acceptance of diversity is the theme of concourse item PH-7, "The goal of inclusion is the positive acceptance of diversity," and item PH-2, "Our schools should model a society which accepts all human diversity." Each of the items within the concourse reflects results of research studies, viewpoints from educational theorists or input from practicing teachers. All item statements of the Q-sort are included in Appendix B.

Procedure

Educators were invited to participate in the study from metropolitan and rural southwestern schools, serving elementary students (kindergarten through fifth grade) and middle level students (sixth through eighth grade). One undergraduate class from a rural southwestern university composed of general and special education preservice teachers was invited to participate in the study also. Each student was asked to sign an informed consent form that describes their participation in the research study.

The respondents were asked to rank-order all items in the Q sample along a continuum according to a specific condition of instruction. A condition of instruction is a

guide for respondents in sorting the opinion statements. The specific condition of

instruction for this research study is: "Sort the statement items according to which items

are most like (+5) or most unlike (-5) your attitudes and beliefs about inclusion."

Although theoretically the item statements are ordered along a continuum from positive 5

to negative 5, for data analysis the continuum ranges from one to eleven. A sample matrix

depicting the continuum arrangement was provided for ease of sorting. A copy of the

matrix form is included in Appendix D.

When performing a Q-sort, the respondent was asked to first divide all forty-four

statements into three sets: those which are in agreement with the respondent's self-held

opinions, those which are unlike personal opinions, and those about which the respondent

holds no strong opinions, feels neutral or about which he or she is confused. The

respondent then ranks each set until all opinion statements lie on the continuum. The

data is then reported on a data sheet that represents the Q distribution by recording the

item statement number in the appropriate matrix box. A copy of the Data Record Sheet

(matrix) is included in Appendix D.

As each Q-sort was administered, the following script was used:

"This research study is designed to investigate your views concerning inclusion.

You will be given a set of statements and asked to rank them in order from those which

are most like your own opinions concerning inclusion to those which are least like your

views. Confidentiality is granted all participants in the study. Because this particular

type of research requires a confirmation of finding and interpretation from those

participants which are said to define a particular viewpoint, anonymity will be granted all

participants at the completion of the study. In any publication of the results of this study, confidentiality and anonymity will be preserved.

Please read the forty-four item statements to become familiar with them. As you read them, sort them into three piles. A right pile will consist of statements with which you agree. A left pile will contain statements with which you disagree. The center pile will consist of statements about which you are either neutral or uncertain. As you sort, remember this condition of instruction. "Sort the statement items according to which items are most like or most unlike your attitudes and beliefs about inclusion."

An oversized distribution matrix will be provided you to facilitate the Q-sorting. The matrix will enable you to visualize the rank-ordering. After you have completed your three piles, study the items in the right pile. Select the two items most like your own opinion of inclusion and place them vertically in the right column. The order of the items is not important. Looking now at the pile containing those items with which you most disagree, select two items and place them in the column to the left. Continue this process until all items are placed on the matrix. Once all statements have been placed in the matrix, please review the Q-sort for accuracy. Record the statement scores on the data sheet provided and complete the demographic sheet. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study."

In addition to the administration of a Q-sort, a certain number of respondents were interviewed upon completion of data analysis to provide confirmation of the results. The interview consisted of three parts: a summary of the viewpoint, probing questions designed to supplement the summary, and an outline of a fictitious situation for

commentary. The summary of the viewpoint capsulated those statements about which the respondents felt strongly--either a +5 or a -5 on the continuum, indicating strong consensus or dissension with the statement. The questions designed to supplement the summary included the following:

1) Are there statements in the summary with which you would disagree?

. 2) Would you wish to add more to the statement?

3) Would you support full inclusion?

4) What criteria do you feel would be important to determine placement?

The fictitious situation was described to the selected respondent as follows: "You have been invited to sit on a committee at your local school that has been given the task of defining the guidelines for including students with disabilities in general education classes. Members of your committee have voiced viewpoints for discussion and possible implementation into practice at your school. How would you summarize your viewpoint? What important factors would your wish included in your school's policy?"

Data Analysis

Once all respondent Q sorts were collected, data were analyzed using three statistical procedures: correlation, factor analysis and computation of factor scores. Initially, the sorts were coded and entered into the computer program pcq3 by Stricklin (1993). The computer program calculated the correlation matrix. Reflection was performed by the program, and factors were identified for varimax rotation. In Q

53

methodology, the presence of factors represents a unique point of view (McKeown &

Thomas, 1988). The association of each person with a factor, or unique point of view, is

indicated by the magnitude of the loading on the factor. Persons with high correlations,

or significant loadings, are said to share similar opinions. Factor loadings are correlation

coefficients which indicate the similarity of viewpoints among certain members of the

sample.

Completion of rotation produced Q arrays for each factor, with some Q-sorts

identifying more closely than others with a certain factor. Factor scores were computed

as z-scores, a procedure called wrapping. These scores were compared to determine the

distinguishing items for each factor. The z-scores were arranged in a representation of

the consensus opinion, or factor array. The array provided results to be interpreted by the

researcher for factor or type descriptions of belief.

Interpretation of Factors

Interpretation of the findings involved describing the factors, or distinct clusters

of opinions. In Q methodology, the presence of independent factors points to the

existence of different viewpoints within the sampled population. A positive loading, or

correlation, on a certain factor for an individual respondent indicates the individual shares

subjectivity or holds like viewpoints with others on that factor (McKeown & Thomas,

1988).

Factor arrays, corresponding to the sample +5 and -5 values used in the original Q

sort continuum, were generated using the factor scores. Each factor array becomes a

visual representation of a distinct set of viewpoints concerning inclusion. One factor array was generated for each significant factor. Factors were interpreted first by providing a thumbnail sketch of the factor array. The demographic information from the respondents was subsequently connected to the factor scores (the weighted z-scores) for each statement in the Q-sample. Conclusions concerning these viewpoints as representative of a sample of educators' beliefs were then interpreted qualitatively.

Confirmability, credibility and transferability are relevant to qualitative investigations. Confirmability, the degree to which the data are free of inquirer bias, were established through interviews conducted by the researcher. Respondents who attained the highest loading on each factor array were contacted in order to confirm the credibility of the findings. Post interviews were conducted with each of the respondents loading highest on a factor to analyze accuracy of interpretative results. Since post interviews were necessary for credibility, respondents were granted anonymity after the completion of the study and prior to any reporting. Confidentiality was granted throughout the study. Transferability was sought through purposeful sampling. Various levels of experience, background, and age were represented within the sample in order to establish transferability.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Results of this investigative study describing the beliefs of educators concerning

inclusion are discussed in this chapter. Respondents of the study included inservice and

preservice educators from both the general and special education fields and represent

elementary through university level experience. Educators completed a Q-sort on the

topic of inclusion. Observations resulting from the Q-sorts are premised on a common

unit of measurement, "self-importance." The respondent in the study based his or her

decisions concerning statements about inclusion on how important a statement item was

by rank-ordering all items on a matrix.

Factor Solutions

The analysis of the 59 Q-sorts collected (correlation, factor rotating) was

completed for three possible factor solutions: a four factor solution accounting for 52

percent of the variance, a five factor solution accounting for 55 percent of the variance

and a six factor solution accounting for 58 percent of the variance. Further exploration of

the five factor solution displayed a single Q-sort loading on one factor and only two

loading on a second factor, as well as nine nonsignificant sorts, leading to the

abandonment of this solution. Analysis of the six factor solution likewise had two factors

with only two loadings showing only minor theoretical differences. Brown (1980)

suggests that contextual or theoretical differences are more important in determining

significance of factors in Q-methodology than eigenvalues.

The four factor solution, therefore, seemed to be the strongest of the three

solutions and was chosen as most appropriate for further analysis and interpretation.

Twenty-three respondents showed significant loadings on factor A; eleven respondents

loaded significantly on factor B; two respondents loaded significantly on factor C; and

six respondents loaded significantly on factor D. Nine respondents were confounded,

showing significance on two sorts simultaneously, and 8 sorts did not load significantly

on any factor (see Table II). Significance level was set at .45, as recommended by

Stricklin (1993).

TABLE II

FACTOR SUMMARY

Respondent	Loading on Factor A	Loading on Factor B	Loading on Factor C	Loading on Factor D
Graduate 1	75	20	10	8
Graduate 2	61	46	-1	-20
Graduate 3	46	22	36	-20
Graduate 4	2	0	-8	-59
Graduate 5	-36	67	4	-36
Graduate 6	74	-16	44	-9
Graduate 7	-24	36	8	-60
Graduate 8	-11	42	-9	-33
Graduate 9	-25	77	-2	-7
Graduate 10	-24	75	-6	-7
Graduate 11	15	67	28	31
Graduate 12	52	-21	32	-18
Graduate 13	23	78	17	-12
Graduate 14	49	15	-4	-26
Graduate 15	35	45	26	-53
Graduate 16	-24	47	57	-24
Graduate 17	30	1	24	-36
Graduate 18	31	67	20	-37
Graduate 19	65	3	-28	-22

Respondent	Loading on Factor A	Loading on Factor B	Loading on Factor C	Loading on Factor D
Graduate 20	30	26	32	-16
Graduate 21	22	32	48	-20
Graduate 22	28	42	29	-60
Graduate 23	70	15	45	-9
Graduate 24	28	36	49	-49
Graduate 25	66	14	12	-17
Graduate 26	51	39	20	-42
Graduate 27	12	49	13	-47
Graduate 28	70	9	19	7
Graduate 29	-15	64	8	-46
Undergrad. 1	56	26	22	-12
Undergrad 2	17	22	48	-7
Undergrad. 3	61	-9	23	-9
Undergrad. 4	25	28	17	-66
Undergrad. 5	82	-8	10	-6
Undergrad. 6	60	-16	8	-14
Undergrad. 7	5	25	-8	-34
Undergrad. 8	55	0	41	-4
Undergrad. 9	6	60	13	1
Undergrad. 10	8	8	23	-37
Undergrad. 11	36	-5	34	-43
Undergrad. 12	62	-6	4	-39
Undergrad. 13	73	33	18	-17
Undergrad. 14	21	54	2	2
Undergrad. 15	45	-21	-10	-29
Undergrad. 16	69	1	-24	-1
Undergrad. 17	28	35	35	-23
Undergrad. 18	73	1	-4	-2
Undergrad. 19	55	8	6	-38
Undergrad. 20	-54	15	48	-13
Undergrad. 21	28	34	25	-42
Undergrad. 22	79	-28	29	-6
Undergrad. 23	72	-26	29	12
Undergrad. 24	-4	49	23	-46
Undergrad. 25	39	52	38	-26
Undergrad. 26	60	12	-2	-24
Undergrad. 27	-32	62	24	-30
Undergrad. 28	16	22	9	-46
Undergrad. 29	0	48	35	6
Undergrad. 30	37	-8	33	-46

The four factors will be described by first labeling the factor and providing a thumbnail sketch of the viewpoint represented by the factor. Supporting item statements will present the rationale behind the thumbnail sketch. Each supporting statement is preceded by a code: AC, SO, LE or PH. The code represents one of the four perspectives previously identified through the literature review: academics, socialization, legal aspects, and integrative philosophy. The number in parentheses at the conclusion of the statement indicates the amount of agreement or disagreement with the item statement, based on a continuum from -5 indicating views must unlike the statement to a +5 indicating attitudes most like the statement. Finally, the confirmation interview conducted with the respondent obtaining the highest correlation on the factor will be discussed. Table III shows the statement array position on all four factors.

TABLE III

STATEMENT ARRAY POSITION

ITEMS: FACTORS	A	B	C	D
1. AC1 Children with disabilities learn better when included in general education classes than in resource rooms.	0	-3	+1	-3
2. AC2 I believe a general classroom teacher is not sufficiently trained to teach children with disabilities but a special education teacher knows the right way.	0	+3	0	0
3. AC3 Watching nondisabled children as they learn is better for children with disabilities than being in a resource room with all disabled children.	0	-2	0	-1
4. AC4 Schools can only achieve better learning outcomes for children with disabilities with inclusion; special education programs do not achieve desired outcomes.	-2	-5	-4	-4
5. AC5 I think resource rooms do not challenge or motivate children with disabilities to their highest ability; inclusive classrooms do.	0	-4	-2	-4

ITEMS: FACTORS	A	B	C	D
6. AC6 Children with disabilities will fail because they can't adjust to the pace of the general classroom and should be placed in resource rooms.	-4	-1	-3	-1
7. AC7 Since general classes have more students than resource rooms, children with disabilities will not have the individual attention they need.	-1	+4	+2	+3
8. AC8 I feel students with disabilities should only be placed in general classrooms based on their performance and if they can do the same class work as the other students.	-2	+3	-3	+2
9. AC9 Inclusion denies the individual needs of children by promoting the "one setting fits all' idea.	-2	+2	-5	+2
10. AC10 It is my responsibility to meet all student's needs by adapting instruction and using techniques that develop the uniqueness and creativity of each child.	+5	+3	+4	+4
11. AC11 Individualized instruction is more effective than group instruction; group work is often a waste of time.	-4	-2	+1	0
12. SO1 Socialization is the most important aspect of inclusion.	0	-3	0	+5
13. SO2 I feel inclusion allows nondisabled children to become comfortable with children who have disabilities and learn to accept differences.	+4	-1	-3	+2
14. SO3 Segregation results in better emotional and social adjustment for children with disabilities by providing a safe social environment where they are not forced to compete with nondisabled peers.	-3	+1	-1	-2
15. SO4 Separation of children with disabilities to a resource room creates feelings of inferiority.	+1	-2	-4	-2
16. SO5 Children with disabilities have a clearer understanding of normal behavior when in an integrated setting.	+2	-2	-1	+1
17. SO6 I think placement in general education classes adds additional stress on children with disabilities to conform and can harm them socially.	-3	+4	-3	-3
18. SO7 By including children with disabilities in nondisabled classrooms, compassion for others can develop.	+4	0	-2	+1
19. SO8 I think children with disabilities in general education classes are often isolated and ostracized because of a lack of socially appropriate behavior.	-1	0	0	0
20. SO9 Curriculum modifications in general classes increase a special student's feeling of difference.	-3	+1	+1	-4
21. SO10 My responsibility to a child with a disability is to teach him/her how to fit into the society and meets its expectation.	+1	+1	0	+1

ITEMS:	FACTORS	A	B	C	D
22. SO11 I am not a psychologist so I feel I should confine my teaching to subject matter.		-5	-1	-1	-2
23. LE 1 All children are of equal worth and deserve the right to an equal opportunity for an education.		+5	+2	+5	+3
24. LE2 Segregation of children because of the existence or degree of a disability is unconstitutional.		+1	+3	+2	+2
25. LE5 Because educators are trained to provide the best education for each child, schools should have the right to decide the most appropriate placement for a child with a disability to be successful.		+2	+5	+2	-1
26. LE4 Because educators are trained to provide the best education for each child, schools should have the right to decide the most appropriate placement for child with a disability to be successful.		+2	+5	+2	-1
27. LE5 I feel placement of special needs children in general classes who demand excess teacher time violates the rights of nondisabled children to an equal education.		-1	+4	+1	+4
28. LE6 To educate children in any other setting besides the general classroom violates the birthright of each child to an equal opportunity for an education.		-2	-3	-1	-5
29. LE7 The education of one student in an integrated class is not worth jeopardizing the education of all children.		-5	+1	+3	+4
30. LE8 Different discipline strategies for children with and without disabilities lead to reverse discrimination.		-3	-2	+1	-2
31. LE9 Inclusion is a right, not a privilege, for a select few.		-1	-3	-4	-3
32. LE10 Dumping all children with disabilities in special education classes leads to a segregated society.		+2	-4	-5	0
33. LE11 It is unfair to everyone involved to place a child with severe disabilities in a general education classroom just to make a stand on inclusion.		-1	+5	+3	+5
34. PH1 I think inclusion is a philosophical issue, not a placement issue.		-2	0	+2	-1
35. PH2 Our schools should model a society that accepts all human diversity.		+3	0	+4	+2
36. PH3 Inclusion creates more opportunity for individual growth of the student.		+2	-1	+2	+1
37. PH4 Children have a wide range of individual traits that require a wide range of possible placements to adequately meet all their needs.		+3	+2	+4	+3
38. PH5 Inclusion requires school services to concentrate on the whole child rather than on individual differences.		+1	0	-1	0
39. PH 6 Integration reflects a need to increase professional responsibility for all children by everyone involved in education (i.e. administrators, teachers, staff, etc.)		+2	+2	0	-1

ITEMS:	FACTORS	A	B	C	D
40. PH7 The goal of inclusion is the positive acceptance of diversity.		+3	0	+3	+3
41. PH8 Inclusion changes attitudes from "one of them" to "one of us."		+3	-1	+3	+1
42. PH9 There is too much experimentation in our schools and too little respect for traditional approaches.		-4	+1	-2	-3
43. PH10 My first concern as a teacher should be to gain knowledge of each individual child as a person, whether or not there is a disability.		+4	+2	+5	0
44. PH11 Inclusion will remove stigmatizing labels and prevent stereotyping.		0	-5	-2	-2

Factor A: Philosophists

Respondents who showed a significant loading on factor A have been labeled "philosophists." Philosophists have staunch idealistic viewpoints as demonstrated by their strongly held belief in the equal worth and opportunity of each child. Philosophists view inclusion as a means of establishing rapport between children with and without disabilities. Respondents holding this view feel strongly concerning teacher responsibility within the general education classroom and feel teachers must provide the proper atmosphere for inclusion to be successful. Teachers must meet the needs of all students, and not only in the field of academics.

Philosophists support the inclusive movement in our public schools. Their strongest impetus for inclusion appears to be based on the need to promote acceptance for all students within the school community. This viewpoint may be a reaction to the infringement of rights that existed for so many years within the disabled community when people with disabilities were either hidden from sight in the home setting or segregated in asylums or "special schools." People sharing the philosophist view may

promote inclusion as a means of righting historical wrongs. The most potent evidence

supporting this conclusion comes from the strong (-5) disagreement with item 29 in the

concourse that states that the education of one child in an included class is not worth

jeopardizing the education of all other children. Philosophists see the education of any

child with a disability as equally important as the education of all children without

disabilities. Placement decisions, therefore, would seem to be made on a theoretical

classification basis-- all children have the right to be treated equally--rather than on an

individual basis; hence, the name, philosophists.

Two item statements with high positive array positions that support the idealism

of philosophists are listed below. The array position is given in parentheses.

23. LE1 All children are of equal worth and deserve the right to an equal

opportunity for an education. (+5)

35. Our schools should model a society that accepts all human diversity. (+3)

In addition to their idealistic views, philosophists find basic benefits in the

inclusion of children with disabilities in general education classes. Among these benefits

is generation of compassion for and acceptance of children with disabilities. Statements

showing belief in this increased acceptance include the following:

18. SO7 By including children with disabilities in nondisabled classrooms,

compassion for others can develop. (+4)

13. SO2 I feel inclusion allows nondisabled children to become comfortable with

children who have disabilities and learn to accept differences.

41. PH8 Inclusion changes attitudes from "one of them" to "one of us."

Philosophists appear to feel strongly (-5) that the education of one student may outweigh any detrimental affect felt by the other children in the class. This sentiment is reflected in the following statement:

29. LE 7 The education of one student in an integrated class is not worth jeopardizing the education of all children. (-5)

Consistent with their support of the inclusion movement, philosophists disagree about possible negative affects of inclusion, although research studies such as the one conducted by McMillan, Keogh and Jones (1986) have shown that increased peer rejection and isolation can occur in the environment of the general education class. Support for the denial of negative effects is seen in the disagreement with the statement that segregation is beneficial to students with disabilities (#14) and general education placement may promote stress among children with disabilities (#17). Similarly, philosophists disagree that modifications made by teachers within the general classroom whether pertaining to curriculum differences or different discipline strategies may create difficulties for children with disabilities (items #30 and #20, respectively).

Equally important to philosophists is their strong belief in the responsibility of teachers toward children. The obligation of teachers to meet all needs of children within the general education classroom is strongly felt (+5), as is the responsibility of a teacher to gain knowledge of each individual child whether or not that child has a disability (+4). Philosophists would expect teachers of classes containing children with disabilities to provide an educational plan which would meet academic, social, and legal expectations as

part of their contractual obligations. They see the role of a teacher as encompassing far more than academics.

Confirmation of the importance of teacher responsibility to philosophists was further seen in the interview with the highest loader on Factor A. This respondent, a thirty-one year old male undergraduate, had interviewed a member of his family with spina bifida after he had completed his Q-sort. The family member disclosed that the most singular incident of ostracizing he had felt in his life occurred in a general physical education class. He was unable to participate with the nondisabled children and, at that time, no modifications of the curriculum or adaptive physical education was offered by the teacher. Feelings of difference, loneliness and abandonment were greater at that time than at any other during the life of the family member. This interview clarified the viewpoint of the respondent, who previously had not considered the possibility of inclusion causing stress and feelings of inadequacy in a student with a disability. At the time of the confirmation interview he would not support full inclusion, since a child might not wish to be included with nondisabled peers. He now felt that the most important criteria for determining placement should be the possibility of adaptations being made that would discourage feelings of ostracizing.

The interview confirmed the importance of subjective analysis. The respondent had completed the Q-sort initially; but was unable to articulate his belief adequately. Further exploration revealed his tacit belief concerning inclusion. He felt, in general, that inclusion is beneficial for all students and especially those with disabilities. Specifically,

however, individual cases exist that prove the general education classroom to be the less desirable educational environment for a child.

This interview provided further evidence of the philosophists' belief in teacher responsibility. The respondent felt the teacher failed in his responsibility to adequately teach all children included in his physical education class. No modifications were made for the child, resulting in the child feeling lonely and isolated.

A teacher holding the philosophist viewpoint would welcome special needs children into a general education class and feel compelled to provide modifications necessary to make the inclusion of the child successful. All needs of the child, be they academic or social, would be addressed within the class. Attention necessary for the child would be extended, even to the possible detriment of others within the class. However, philosophists do not hold the extreme view of inclusion, which accepts all children no matter the disability. Philosophists recognize that some children will be unable to attend general education classes successfully.

Respondents on Factor A

Twenty-three respondents identified with the philosophist view of Factor A, more than any other view designated in the research study. Almost half of the undergraduate sample included in this study identified with this factor. The large number of respondents on this factor indicates the prevalence of educators who support inclusive placements. Fourteen of the respondents were undergraduates and nine were graduates. Among the graduates were two counselors, three special education teachers, two administrators with

66

a background in special education, and two experienced teachers. Six of the graduate

respondents were parents of children, with two of the respondents being parents of

children with disabilities. Table IV shows the respondents' characteristics on Factor A:

Philosophists.

The variety of positions among the graduate sample which had significant

loadings as Philosophists indicates that this general support of inclusive classrooms exists

among many types of positions in the education field. The belief in inclusion is not

limited to any one specific position in education, but representatives of all areas of

education see benefits to inclusion. Belief in inclusionary practice appears to exist

among many types of educators within and out of the special education field.

Support for inclusion practices is also seen in this study among undergraduates

seeking a degree in education. More undergraduates loaded significantly on this factor

than on any other factor identified in the study. Although lacking the experience of the

classroom, these undergraduates seem to see inclusion as a viable practice, with benefits

for both children with and without disabilities, as evidenced by their support of the

philosophist viewpoint.

TABLE IV

FACTOR A: RESPONDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS

Respondent Number	Factor Loading	Gender	Teach	Years In Education
1-Graduate	+75	F	Counselor	15
3-Graduate	+46	F	Sp. Ed.	15
6-Graduate	+74	F	Sp.Ed. Admin.	7
12-Graduate	+52	F	Counselor	16
14-Graduate	+49	F	Sp. Ed.	10
19-Graduate	+65	F	Sp. Ed.	10
26-Graduate	+66	F	Gen. Ed.	16

Respondent Number	Factor Loading	Gender	Teach	Years In Education
28-Graduate	+70	F	Sp. Ed.	4
30-Undergrad.	+56	F		
32-Undergrad.	+61	F		
34-Undergrad	+82	M		
35-Undergrad.	+60	M		
37-Undergrad.	+55	F		
41-Undergrad.	+62	F		
42-Undergrad	+72	F		
44-Undergrad	+45	M		
45-Undergrad	+69	F		
47-Undergrad	+73	F		
48-Undergrad	+55	F		
51-Undergrad	+79	F		
52-Undergrad	+72	F		
53-Undergrad	+60	F		

Factor B: Local Decision-Makers

Respondents loading significantly on factor B have been labeled "Local Decision-Makers." Of premium importance to persons designated on this factor is the perceived unfairness of forced placements and their desire to retain local control of all educational placements. Schools, they feel, should make placement decisions, and not be forced by either law, district practice, or parental pressure.

Respondents identified with Factor B would not be considered proponents of the inclusion movement. Reaction is great within this factor to the legal and judicial demands made upon educators in recent years to promote greater diversity within the general education classroom. Legislation, such as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and American Disabilities Act, has been enacted providing protection for the rights of people with disabilities. Interpretation of these laws suggests students with

disabilities have equal right to be educated within the identical environment as students without any disabling conditions. Application of this interpretation results in greater pressure being felt among general education teachers to accommodate for differences in students extreme enough to warrant separate placement. Decision-makers feel strongly that determination of placement should remain at the local, or building, level and not be legally mandated. This conclusion is supported by their intense belief (+5) in item statement #33 which declares that it is unfair to everyone involved to place a child with severe disabilities in a general education classroom just to make a stand on inclusion. A second supporting statement can be seen in the strong agreement (+5) with item #26, "Because educators are trained to provide the best education for each child, schools should have the right to decide the most appropriate placement for a child with a disability to be successful."

In addition to wishing to retain the right of placement determinations, decision-makers place importance on academic performance of students included in a general education classroom. While the other three factors view socialization of students of primary importance, decision-makers would base placements on a student's ability to perform the same assignments as nondisabled students. This stipulation would severely limit the number of inclusive placements. Excepting physical handicaps, most students with disabilities come under categorical placements of emotional disturbance, mental retardation, or learning disabilities. Considerations of placement for children with mental retardation or learning disabilities occur initially because students are unable to perform successfully within the general classroom. Review of placement for children with

emotional or behavioral disturbance occurs because the disability is preventing learning within the general classroom. Placements for these three categories, the most common among students with disabilities, would not be within a general education environment if local decision-makers sat on the multidisciplinary placement team.

The local decision-maker typically believes that inclusion may not be right for each child. This is evidenced by supporting statements which emphasize the desire to retain control at the school level in order to place a child with disabilities in a resource room rather than a general education classroom. Those supporting statements include:

33. LE 11 It is unfair to everyone involved to place a child with severe disabilities in a general education classroom just to make a stand on inclusion. (+5)

26. LE4 Because educators are trained to provide the best education for each child, schools should have the right to decide the most appropriate placement for a child with a disability to be successful. (+5)

25. LE3 The law (P.L. 94-142) gives each child with a disability the right to the most appropriate placement, even if it is in a separate classroom. (+3)

A local decision-maker would stress academic achievement over socialization goals. If placement were to occur, it would be because the child with a disability was able to succeed academically at the same level as his or her peers in the general education classroom, and not because of a desire for the child with a disability to be with nondisabled children. It would likewise not occur because of parental pressure.

In addition to wishing to retain right of placement, local decision makers see no harm in alternative educational placement, such as the resource room. Neither the fear of

stigmatizing labels or stereotyping, nor the feeling of inferior curriculum seems to impede any placement decision. Decision-makers feel strongly inclusion will not remove any stigmatizing labels (#43). Additionally, they do not feel that better learning outcomes occur within inclusive classrooms compared to resource room environments (#4 and #5).

Respondents to this factor, as might be predicted from their need to retain control of educational decisions, do not feel that segregated classes deny any constitutional rights (#24). As long as children with disabilities have opportunity to perform equally, decision-makers feel that all constitutional obligations have been met. Resource room placement is seen as being legally permissible (#24), acceptable to society (#32), and better for many children with disabilities in relieving stress (#17).

A teacher holding beliefs consistent with this factor would resist placement of any child with special needs within a general education class and would resent any placement made. A child with a disability would require more curricula planning; the teacher would probably feel that valuable time was wasted which could be spent in providing better educational opportunity for the majority of students in the class. The teacher might rationalize that students with disabilities would have greater self-respect, feel less stress, and accomplish greater academic gains within a segregated environment. If a child with extreme disabilities were placed in a class directed by a decision maker, it seems likely that little time would be spent either on academics (which would be judged futile) or socialization (since it is not deemed important). As with the philosophists, placement is made on a categorical basis rather than individually.

This lack of support for inclusion among local decision-makers is evidenced not only by supporting statements, but is further substantiated by the interview data of a high loader on this factor. This high loader believed that inclusion was not right for every child, nor is it a right of every child. If placement occurs, socialization is not the prime motivator; academics must be considered. Inclusion is seen as viable only when money is made available for adequate aides and resources for the general education teacher. Likewise, a reduction in class size must be mandated to provide the teacher with sufficient time to meet the needs of special students. Local decision-makers are concerned about the mechanics, the day-to-day concerns, of teachers in a classroom. Their belief is not based on idealism, or righting some historical wrong. Rather, their belief centers on survival issues, both for the teacher and for all students in the classroom.

Respondents on Factor B

Eleven respondents identified with the decision-maker factor. Five were undergraduates, two of which serve as parents of children. Among the six graduate respondents, one was an inexperienced teacher in the first year of teaching, three were experienced teachers (with one teacher having worked with Chapter 1 students), one serves as a counselor, and one is an administrator with a special education background. The counselor is not a parent of a child. Two of the experienced teachers are parents of a child with disabilities.

This factor also seems to be represented among all types of educators as well as twenty percent of the undergraduate sample. Correlation between factor A and B is only

seven percent, suggesting that these two almost diametrically opposed convictions occur

both within our schools and within our teacher education classrooms simultaneously.

Tension and dissension could certainly occur within schools when teachers hold such

divergent views on a subject involving responsibility and workload. Table V lists the

characteristics of those representing the local decision makers.

TABLE V

FACTOR B: RESPONDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS

Respondent Number	Factor Loading	Gender	Teach	Years In Education
5-Graduate	+67	M	College	1
9-Graduate	+77	F	Gen. Ed.	11
10-Graduate	+75	M	Gen. Ed.	25
11-Graduate	+67	F	Counselor	6
13-Graduate	+78	F	Admin.Sp. Ed.	12
18-Graduate	+67	F	Gen. Ed.	16
38-Undergrad	+60	F		
43-Undergrad	+54	F		
54-Undergrad	+52	M		
56-Undergrad	+62	M		
59-Undergrad	+48	F		

Factor C: Individualists

Respondents loading significantly on factor C have been designated as

"individualists." Prominence is given to the individual rights of each student and

placement is determined on a singular, personal basis. Individualists refuse to place

children for the sake of inclusion alone, but will place on the basis of promoting

acceptance of children with disabilities (socialization aspect). Unlike philosophists who

consider inclusion a beneficial placement of the clear majority of children, individualists

73

see the likelihood for a successful educational plan for some children in inclusive classrooms while others would find success within the resource room environment. No generalizations are made, nor movement followed. Each case demands individual consideration.

Like Philosophists, individualists hold resolute opinions about the individual worth of each child and individual opportunity for each to succeed. This is evidenced in their strong (+5) belief in item statement #23 as well as their conviction that each teacher much take responsibility for gaining knowledge of the individual child and not rely on classification. Individualists feel that the diverse traits of children require the possibility of different placements, as defined in Public Law 94-142. The requirement that a child's education by appropriate is mandated by IDEA. Appropriate education has been defined as that which is individually suitable to the student (Turnbull, 1993).

Individualists would believe in the individualized educational plan process. The individualized educational plan, or IEP, is a written statement for each student with a disability developed by those educators, service staff and parents involved in the welfare of the student. The IEP provides a method for assessing the child and prescribing an appropriate program to meet the singular needs of the student. By engaging in the IEP process, attention focuses first on the child, and then on the means by which the educational plan may be enacted, a procedure individualists would endorse.

Since individualists see the need for a continuum of placement possibilities to meet particular needs, benefits to both inclusive and separate placements are acknowledged. Resource room placement is not seen as leading to a segregated society

(#32), but inclusion does not deny the individual needs of the child. Separation into a resource room placement will not create feelings of inferiority (#15), but children in included classrooms do not suffer from unusual stress or too swift a pace (#17 and #6, respectively). Benefits from both types of placements are evidenced within the individualists views.

When appropriate placement is made, inclusion is perceived as promoting acceptance. Supporting statements to this idea are seen in agreement with statement #40, "The goal of inclusion is the positive acceptance of diversity," and #41, "Inclusion changes attitudes from 'one of them' to 'one of us.'" Individualists may not be totally convinced that inclusion will in reality promote acceptance, however. Item statement #13, with which individualists disagree, states, "I feel inclusion allows nondisabled children to become comfortable with children who have disabilities and learn to accept differences.

Although the individualist factor reflects closely the legal requirements mandated by IDEA, few respondents loaded significantly on this factor. This lack of identifying respondents seems to indicate that the legal mandate of appropriate education for children with disabilities often becomes clouded with tangential issues, such as the forcing of placements.

Teachers holding individualistic beliefs would make decisions about placement and educational plans only after direct and meaningful contact with the child. A teacher would not support inclusion or alternative placement as a rationale for placement. If a teacher felt that the best educational environment for a child was a resource room, he or

she would seek that placement. Alternatively, if the best environment was a general education class, that placement would be supported. Within the integrated class, the teacher would probably seek to follow the educational plan exactly, since it is designed to meet individual needs.

An unusual aspect of this factor concerns the acceptance of diversity which may be promoted with inclusion. Individualists perceive the positive acceptance of diversity as the goal of inclusion (see item #40), but do not feel that inclusion allows nondisabled children to be comfortable with children who have disabilities or promotes acceptance of differences (see item #13). This seeming contradiction reflects the difference between a goal and reality as seen in the classroom. The goal of inclusion may be acceptance of diversity, but in practice, children without disabilities do not always accept those with disabilities simply because they are placed together in a general education classroom.

Individualists will protect the rights of all children. This view was supported in the interview with the highest loader on this factor, an experienced teacher, who stated that all children have rights to be protected. Inclusion should not occur if it supersedes rights of others in the class.

Respondents on Factor C

Only two respondents in the study identified with the individualist factor, one graduate and one undergraduate (see Table VI). The undergraduate was a twenty-year old student not serving as a parent of a child. The limited number of respondents on this

factor is somewhat surprising, since this factor so closely aligns with the legal

requirements for educational placement of children with disabilities.

TABLE VI

FACTOR C: RESPONDENT'S CHARACTERISTICS

Respondent Number	Factor Loading	Gender	Teach	Years In Education
21-Graduate	+48	F	Gen. Ed.	15
31-Undergrad.	+48	F		

Correlation between the individualist factor and the philosophist factor was 37

percent. Agreement was primarily in the area of teacher responsibility and individual

worth of each child. Correlation between the individualist factor and the decision-maker

factor was 44 percent. Both factors concurred on statements about the benefits of

resource rooms and denial of inclusion as a right of a few students.

Factor D: Socialists

Respondents who loaded significantly on factor D have been labeled "socialists"

because they perceive socialization as the most important factor pertaining to inclusion.

This factor is the only one which views the need for socialization among children with

disabilities with nondisabled children as the primary impetus for inclusion. Socialists

have reservations about the inclusion movement, however, as expressed in item statement

#33 that states placement for the sake of inclusion is unfair.

Socialists do not seem to feel as strongly about teacher responsibility to know each individual child as did the other factors. Item statement #43 states that the first concern of a teacher should be to gain knowledge of each individual child as a person. Both philosophists and individualists feel very strongly about this opinion (+4 and +5, respectively), and local decision-makers also express general agreement (+3). Socialists did not feel either a strong similarity or difference with this statement (0). However, socialists do believe it is a teacher's responsibility to adapt instruction and techniques to develop the uniqueness and creativity of each child (#10).

Like individualists, socialists see the need for a wide range of individual placements to meet the needs of all children. They acknowledge that inclusion may promote acceptance of diversity, but also see alternative placement as viable, not violating any academic or legal rights of children.

Teachers adhering to this viewpoint would wish a child with disabilities to have their socialization needs met, such as being included in group work within a general education class. Less importance might be placed on academics, and IEP academic goals would not seem as important as being able to relate to peers socially. If a student were interacting socially with peers in the general education classroom, inclusion would be deemed successful, whether or not the student accomplished anything academically.

Respondents to Factor D

A total of six respondents identified with the socialist factor. Among the three undergraduates loading on this factor, two were parents. Of the three graduates classified

with this factor, one is an experienced teacher of 27 years with secondary experience, and

two are university professors in a non-educational discipline. All of the graduates are

parents of children, with one of the professors having two children with disabilities.

Table VII shows the respondents' characteristics for this factor.

TABLE VII

FACTOR D: RESPONDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS

RESPONDENT NUMBER	FACTOR LOADING	GENDER	TEACH	YEARS IN EDUCATION
4-Graduate	-59	M	College	14
7-Graduate	-60	M	College	10
22-Graduate	-60	F	Gen. Ed.	27
33-Undergrad	-66	M		
57-Undergrad	-46	M		
59-Undergrad	-46	F		

High correlation exists between the three factors identified as Philosophists,

Individualists and Socialists. Correlation between Philosophists and Socialists is 33

percent, with respondents on both factors feeling strongly about teacher responsibility

and worth of each student. Correlation between Local Decision-Makers and Socialists is

52 percent, with respondents agreeing on (1) forced placement being unfair, (2) inclusive

placements requiring more teacher time, (3) teachers needing to adapt instructional

techniques, (4) alternative placements not violating constitutional rights, and (5) inclusive

placement not necessarily providing a better learning environment.

Correlation between Individualists and Socialists was 44 percent, with agreement

reached on (1) adapting materials, (2) placement of inclusive students not jeopardizing

the education of nondisabled students, (3) inclusion promoting acceptance of diversity,

(4) individual traits of children needing multiple possible placements, and (5) all children

being of equal worth and deserving of equal opportunity.

These high correlations show commonalties in beliefs held between respondents.

This high correlation was expected because all subjects were educators dedicated to

serving children. Although views certainly differ on the most appropriate means of

serving children, and especially children with disabilities, all members of the sample wish

children to succeed educationally.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This research study was designed to investigate the subjective viewpoints of

educators toward the inclusion movement currently impacting the field of education

throughout the United States. Although at present the movement has not been addressed

by legislation, many recent court cases have seemed to support the rise in general

education placements of children with disabilities. This study identified four distinct

viewpoints through Q-methodology. These four viewpoints were subsequently assigned

the designations of Philosophists, Local Decision-Makers, Individualists and Socialists.

In addition to identifying these viewpoints held by educators, conclusions can be drawn

concerning the issue of full inclusion, a movement which places all children regardless of

the type of disability in the general education class.

Issue of Full Inclusion

Some theorists have urged the discontinuance of any alternative settings and have

promoted the concept of "full inclusion" for all children, no matter the type of disability

a child may have. Because this extreme position on the inclusive debate has gained

prominence among certain theorists, such as the Stainbacks (1988), this research study

investigated whether any respondents would support the idea of full inclusion in general

education classrooms. Individualists, philosophists, and socialists did not support full

inclusion, as they expressed agreement with item statement #37, which maintains that

children need a wide range of possible placements to accommodate individual traits. Local decision-makers obviously did not support full inclusion, as they agreed that placement should be based on academic performance, a condition that special needs children are generally unable to meet. From this particular sample of educators, therefore, no factor identified with full inclusion.

Views of Parents of Children with Disabilities

Support for inclusive placement has often originated with parents of children with disabilities. Indeed, parents of special needs children have actively sought legal mandates. Parent advocacy groups played a powerful role in bringing about the litigation and legislation concerning children with learning disabilities (Smith, 1991).

In this research study, parents of children with disabilities identified on all four factors. The assumption could, therefore, be drawn that no one unified perspective can be found among parents of special needs children, just as no one unified perspective can be found among educators. The issue of inclusion is not easily categorized by occupation or status.

Connections Between Academic, Social, Legal and Philosophical Perspectives

The representation of the four perspectives derived from the review of literature was determined for each factor array. Eleven item statements from each perspective composed the concourse. Item statements that the respondent placed in the six extreme

columns (+5, +4, +3, -3, -4, -5) were analyzed for correspondence with the four perspectives to determine what, if any, basis was used by participants.

Philosophists, who believe strongly in inclusion, made their decisions based upon socialistic and philosophical viewpoints. Of the eighteen statements occurring in the definitive columns, six statements were based upon the social view and six were centered around the philosophical viewpoint. Three statements each were based upon legal or academic reasoning. Philosophists might be expected to base decisions upon integrative philosophy which highlights idealism. Although respondents on this factor did not appear to place major importance on socialization, statements responding to social needs were used as rationale.

Local decision-makers decided upon their determining statements from a totally opposite viewpoint than philosophists. Of the eighteen statements used to define this factor, seven were based upon academic views and eight were based in legalistic judgments. Only one statement was based within the philosophical view and two centered on socialistic ideas. Clearly, decision-makers make judgments based on academic views, as they see this as being a central issue for placement. Legal rationale is also of primary importance, as they do not wish to be forced to comply with legal mandates for placement.

Individualists, being concerned with the singular child and not a category, classification, or movement, based their decisions in the most balanced representation of the four perspectives. Five statements exemplified academics, three socialization, five

represent legalistic views, and five designate the philosophical position. This balance

seems to reinforce the interest in the whole child seen within this factor.

The socialists who might be expected to make their decisions from a socialistic

viewpoint, instead chose more responses portraying a legal view. Seven statements were

based upon the legal perspective, five upon academics, and only three each displayed a

socialistic or philosophical view. While socialization may be the most important factor in

designating placement of a child with disabilities, according to the respondents on this

factor, rationale for decisions appears to be more legalistic and concerned with denial of

rights. This conflict may exist because of the fear of forced placement, similar to that

held by local decision-makers. Respondents may wish to support inclusion for

socialization purposes, but are anxious about the reality of inclusion on a legal basis.

Conclusions

Three research questions were investigated within this study.

1. What types of beliefs about inclusion of children with disabilities in general

education classrooms exist among educators?

2. In what ways do the types of beliefs concerning inclusion differ between

inservice teachers and preservice teachers?

3. In what ways do the types of beliefs concerning inclusion differ between

general education teachers and special education teachers?

Types of Beliefs Among Educators

Through Q-methodology, this research study has identified four unique beliefs which exist among the sampled population of educators. These beliefs have been described as philosophists, local decision-makers, individualists, and socialists. Each belief is represented by a set of statements which respondents feel are like or unlike their own beliefs concerning inclusion.

One set of respondents, the philosophists, support inclusive classrooms as an appropriate educational setting for the majority of children. This view corresponds to the philosophical interpretation of integration as portrayed in the study by Jorgenson (1994) where the school was visualized as a community of learners. All children were accepted as part of the community and recognized for their uniqueness. Heterogeneous classes reflected a society where diversity is accepted and welcomed.

A second group of respondents, the local decision-makers, are primarily concerned with not being coerced when making placement determinations, and support resource room placements. A study by Schumm, et al. (1994) also identified teachers who were reluctant to make adaptations and modifications for students within a general education classroom. Even if these teachers possessed skills necessary to accommodate differences in the classroom, they were reluctant to do so. Local decision-makers likewise are convinced that general education teachers might not possess necessary skills and resent the necessity to use such skills because of inclusion.

Individualists, a third assemblage of respondents, also support a variety of placements because each child has unique needs that cannot be met with a "one size fits

85

all" approach. Opponents to the inclusion model feel the need to protect the rights now granted under IDEA for individualized treatment. Skrtic (1991) felt that those opposed to inclusion were justifiably concerned about a possible loss of hard-won rights that could lead to a return to the segregated conditions existing prior to 1975. Individualists respond to the legal mandate by making placement decisions on an individual basis.

The fourth group of respondents identified in this study, the socialists, base placement decisions on a child's need for socialization. Several studies confirm the importance of socialization with special needs students. Studies such as those conducted by Sabornie (1984, 1985) have shown many students with disabilities lack critical social skills. Stainback and Stainback (1988) cite 3 cases where inclusion of students resulted in increased skills necessary for post-school employment. Janney, et al. (1985) reported an increased in independence, alertness and age-appropriate behaviors from students included in general education classes.

Differences Between Inservice and Preservice Teachers

Although logic would seem to indicate that experience within the classroom would create a more realistic and therefore different perspective concerning inclusion of children with disabilities in the general education classroom, this proved not to be the case. Graduate and undergraduate respondents loaded on all four factors identified within this study. On factor A, the philosophists, 42 percent of the respondents were graduates, and 58 percent were undergraduates. On factor B, the decision makers, graduates made up 55 percent of the respondents, and undergraduates 45 percent. On

factors C and D, the individualists and socialists, the graduates and undergraduates each composed fifty percent of the significant loadings. Therefore, on each factor, approximately fifty percent of the significant loadings were undergraduates and fifty percent from the graduate segment of the sample. No consistent difference is perceived between the beliefs of inservice and preservice teachers regarding inclusion.

Differences Between General Education Teachers and Special Education Teachers

Differences were noted between the beliefs of general education and special education teachers in this research study. No one factor contained all general education or all special education respondents. However, of the twelve graduate educators who either taught or held certification in the area of special education,

a) five identified as philosophists;

b) two identified as local decision makers;

c) one identified as an individualist;

d) none identified as a socialist,

e) two sorts were confounded, showing significance on two factors,

f) two sorts were not significant on any factor.

Clearly, more educators identified with special education were described as supporting the philosophist viewpoint.

Of the seventeen graduate educators who work primarily in the area of general education, the following were identified:

a) three were identified as philosophists;

b) four were identified as local decision makers;

c) none were identified as individualists;

d) three were identified as socialists;

e) five sorts were confounded; and

f) one was not significant on any factor.

More teachers identified with general education seem to want the right to decide

placement to remain at the local level and be based on academic performance, but there is

also support given for integrative philosophy.

In the study by Richardson, et al. (1991), general education and special education

teachers were shown to respond differently to the needs of special students. General

education teachers thought more in terms of social and behavioral aspects of

interventions. Special education teachers planned interventions with more thought to the

academic aspects. In this study, however, more general education teachers were

concerned with academics (as seen among local decision-makers). Special education

teachers based their decisions upon integrative philosophy, rather than socialization

needs.

No clear conclusions can be drawn to indicate major differences between general

education teachers and special education teachers on the subject of inclusion. It seems

evident that decisions concerning placement of children with disabilities are based more

on subjective beliefs than on a field of teaching specialization.

<u>Implications</u>

Educators in this study did base decisions about inclusion upon a combination of the four perspectives identified in the literature. No one factor, however, was totally consistent with a single perspective, but rather combined viewpoints to rationalize decisions. As with the theorists within the field, this topic continues to be divisive. Educators within the same building, with adjoining classrooms, hold almost diametrically opposing views. This dissension can create tension within the school community.

Even more serious, however, than the unease that opposing views may cause is the likelihood that some teachers may base educational interventions solely on socialization or academic needs, rather than achieving a balance of needs more ideally suited for a child with disabilities. Emphasis can not be solely on socialization, or academics suffer. Likewise, a teacher must be concerned with the social needs of a student to enable the child to become part of a community. Schumm, et al. (1994) showed teachers were more likely to make incidental, situation-driven instruction rather than any designated, planned interventions necessary for children with disabilities. Even when teachers saw modifications as valuable, they were unlikely to implement these modifications. Without modifications, successful inclusion of special needs children seems unlikely to be successful.

Larrivee (1982) concluded from his research that the "manner in which the classroom teacher responds to the needs of special children may be a far more potent variable in ultimately determining the success of mainstreaming than any other administration or curriculum strategy" (p. 374). Garver-Pinhas and Schmelkin (1989)

likewise reported attitudes of teacher to be the most significant factor accelerating or hindering integration efforts. The findings in this current study show a range of beliefs concerning children with special needs which would influence teacher behavior in the classroom. Some teachers demonstrated willingness to welcome children with disabilities and strive to meet their complete educational goals. Others indicated resentment towards inclusion, especially of those children who are unable to perform at equal levels with their peers and who demand considerable modifications and interventions to meet academic needs.

If the number of placements in general education classes continues to rise, results of this study imply the need for greater training in educational modifications for children with disabilities at both the preservice and inservice levels. Adequate preparation is necessary to overcome the unease and resentment felt by some teachers. Prior to inclusion, interaction with special needs students in and out of the classroom setting can result in reducing resentment and promoting a feeling of community within the school. Studies such as the one described by Giangreco, Dennis, Coninger, Edelman and Schattman (1993) have shown that contact and interaction with special needs students often changes attitudes of teachers from resentment to acceptance.

Additional Research

Further research on the topic of inclusion is warranted. By law, placement of children to the maximum extent possible with nondisabled peers is mandated, and special class placement only occurs when the nature or severity of the disability prevents students

from successfully being educated in general classes with the use of supplementary aids and services. As indicated by this research study, a sizable number of educators feel placement should only occur if the student with a disability is able to perform academically with their peers. Other respondents seem to place too much importance on the socialization aspect of inclusion and may ignore academic needs.

Further research into an accepted meaning for the definition of inclusion is also warranted. Educators are still struggling with exactness of definition. As part of the demographic data collected on each respondent, graduates were asked to indicate the placement policy for students with disabilities at their school site as either segregated, mainstreamed, or included. Within the same school site, eleven respondents described their placement policy as mainstreamed and six described the same policy as included. Within the same district, six described the district philosophy as practicing inclusion while nine described it as moving toward inclusion. Clearly, no consistent definition of inclusion is recognized by all educators.

The difference between the practice of mainstreaming and inclusion has been only vaguely defined. Both practices are in response to legislative mandates. Both procedures are methods of educational reform. Perhaps the greatest difference, however, lies in the acknowledgment of responsibility and ownership of the educational plan for a student. Under the practice of mainstreaming, students with disabilities are removed from the general education classroom and placed in an alternative setting under a certified teacher of special education. Students may be allowed to attend a general education classroom if the multidiscipline team who write the individualized educational plan deems such

91

placement appropriate for the student. The primary responsibility, however, for the education of the child remains under the direction of the special education teacher.

With the practice of inclusion, the student with a disability remains in a classroom with nondisabled students and under the guidance of the general education teacher. The student may receive special services, such as occupational therapy, or may exit the general class to receive special instruction from a teacher certified in a certain categorization. However, the primary responsibility for the education of the student remains with the general education teacher.

Conclusions reached in this study are based upon a sample size of fifty-nine. While Q-methodology is geared to small samples, the sample size of this study could be extended to include a district wide sample of educators. Results could then be drawn concerning educators within a particular district, rather than the mixture of districts represented in this study. Resultant factor structures would then apply across a district and could be used for designing inservice training to impact decisions concerning placements and intervention when inclusion does occur.

In speaking to several respondents concerning their Q-sorts, an additional aspect of inclusion was brought to light which is also worthy of further study. Some educators, and it is assumed some of the general public also, are concerned about the expense of special education when monetary resources are limited. Given the shortage of available resources with which education must be funded today, some educators feel that available funds must be spent on that part of the student population able to contribute back to society. Many students with severe disabilities would not fall within this category and

therefore would not be eligible for many of the expensive services available to them today. Exploration of the issue of financing of special education is also needed.

The inclusion movement appears to be more than a temporary reform which appears one year in educational journals and within a short period of time vanishes. Students lives are being affected today, as some are being placed in general education classes with untrained teachers who are angry at being forced to receive within their class a student with disabilities. Decisions concerning these students arise from the subjective viewpoints of these educators. The results of this study show that no clear distinctions can be drawn based on the area of certification or type of professional position within the field. However, extremely opposing viewpoints concerning inclusion exist within a single school setting, which could at best create tension among the faculty, and at worst, foster poor educational plans for children with special needs.

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Name:_____
Identification Number:___

Q-SORT DATA SHEET

Please complete the following data.

Age: Current Position: Gen. Ed. Teacher_____
                                   Special Ed. Teacher_____
                                   Gen. Ed. Admin. _____
                                   Sp. Ed. Admin. _____
                                   Preservice _____
                                   Other (please specify) ___

Gender:____M____F   Teaching Level   K-5 grade _____
                                        6-8 grade _____
                                        9-12 grade _____
                                        College _____

Degree Earned: Bach.____Masters _____Masters + 30
                  Ed. Specialist _____ Doc _____

Completed Degree Area(s):_____
Areas of Certification _____

Years of Experience in Education _____
Ethnicity: White_____   Black _____   Native American
(optional)   Hispanic _____   Asian_____   Other (specify) _____

Are you presently serving or have served as a parent of a child? Yes____No___
If yes, please indicate number of children.   1 Child _____ 2 children_____
                                              3 children_____   4 or more_____
Do you serve as a parent of a child with disabilities? Yes _____No_____
The school at which I work has a placement policy for students with disabilities that could be described as:
_____1. not at a school site   _____2. segreated
_____3. mainstreamed   _____4. included.

The philosophy of our school district on the issue of inclusion could be described as:
_____1. moving toward inclusion
_____2. rejecting inclusion
_____3. practicing inclusion

I, _____, hereby authorize or direct _____
or associates or assistants of her choosing, to perform the following treatment or
procedure. This is done as aprt of an investigation entitled "Attitudes of Educators
Toward Inclusion: A Q Methodological Study."

This study will investigate the subject attitudes and beliefs of educators toward the topic
of inclusion. Its purpose is to describe educator's attitudes toward inclusion from a self-
referent perspective. Participation in the study will take approximately thirty minutes and
involves the subject rank-ordering forty-four opinion statements according to personal
agreement or disagreement with the statement. All records of participation and results of
this study are confidential. Identification of each participant will be by an assigned
number during the study. Because the findings and interpretation of the study must be
confirmed through interviews, anonymity will be granted each participant at the
completion of the study. Prior to any publication of the findings, confidentiality and
anonymity will be preserved.

I understand that participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to
participante, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at
any time without penalty after notifying the project director.

I may contact Denise Cutbirth at (405) 340-9459. I may also contact Jennifer Moore,
IRB Executive Secretary, 305 Whitehurst, Stillwater, Ok 74074 at (405) 744-5700.

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign freely and voluntarily. A copy
has been given to me.

Date: _____ Time _____(a.m. p.m.)

Signed:_____
         (signature of subject)

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject before
requesting the subject to sign it.

CONCOURSE

ACADEMIC

AC-1. Children with disabilities learn better when included in general education classes than in resource rooms.

AC-2. I believe a general classroom teacher is not sufficiently trained to teach children with disabilities but a special education teacher knows the right way.

AC-3. Watching nondisabled children as they learn is better for children with disabilities than being in a resource room with all disabled children.

AC-4. Schools can only achieve better learning outcomes for children with disabilities with inclusion; special education programs do not achieve desired outcomes.

AC-5. I think resource rooms do not challenge or motivate children with disabilities to their highest ability; inclusive classrooms do..

AC-6. Children with disabilities will fail because they cannot adjust to the pace of the general education class and should be placed in resource rooms where peers have a more limited range of abilities.

AC-7. Since general classes have more students than resource rooms, children with disabilities will not have the individual attention they need.

AC-8. I feel students with disabilities should only be placed in general education classrooms based on their performance and if they can do the same classwork as the other students.

AC-9. Inclusion denies the individual needs of children by promoting the "one setting fits all" idea.

AC-10. It is my responsibility to meet all students' needs by adapting instruction and using techniques that develop the uniqueness and creativity of each child.

AC-11. Individualized instruction is more effective than group instruction; group work is often a waste of time.

SOCIALIZATION

SO-1. Socialization is the most important aspect of inclusion.

SO-2. I feel inclusion allows nondisabled children to become comfortable with children who have disabilities and learn to accept differences.

SO-3. Segregation results in better emotional and social adjustment for children with disabilities by providing a safe social environment where they are not forced to compete with nondisabled peers.

SO-4. Separation of children with disabilities to a resource room creates feelings of inferiority.

SO-5. Children with disabilities have a clearer understanding of normal behavior when in an integrated setting.

SO-6. I think placement in general education classes adds additional stress on children with disabilities to conform and can harm them socially.

SO-7. By including children with disabilities in nondisabled classrooms, compassion for others can develop.

SO-8. I think children with disabilities in general education classes are often isolated and ostracized because of a lack of socially appropriate behavior.

SO-9. Curriculum modifications in general classes increase a special student's feelings of difference.

SO-10. My responsibility to the child with a disability is to teach him/her how to fit into the society and meet its expectations.

SO-11. I am not a psychologist so I feel I should confine my teaching to subject matter.

LEGAL RIGHTS

LE-1. All children are of equal worth and deserve the right to an equal opportunity for an education.

LE-2. Segregation of children because of the existence or degree of a disability is unconstitutional.

LE-3. The law (Public Law 94-142) gives each child with a disability the right to the most appropriate placement, even if it is in a separate classroom.

LE-4. Because educators are trained to provide the best education for each child, schools should have the right to decide the most appropriate placement for each child with a disability to be successful.

LE-5. I feel placement of special needs children in general classes who demand excess teacher time violates the rights of nondisabled children to an equal education.

LE-6. To educate children in any other setting besides the general classroom violates the birthright of each child to an equal opportunity for an education.

LE-7. The education of one student in an integrated class is not worth jeopardizing the education of all children.

LE-8. Different discipline strategies for children with and without disabilities lead to reverse discrimination.

LE-9. Inclusion is a right, not a privilege, for a select few.

LE-10. Dumping all children with disabilities in special education classrooms leads to a segregated society.

LE-11. It is unfair to everyone involved to place a child with severe disabilities in a general education class just to make a stand on inclusion.

PHILOSOPHICAL INTEGRATION

PH-1. I think inclusion is a philosophical issue, not a placement issue.

PH-2. Our schools should model a society that accepts all human diversity.

PH-3. Inclusion creates more opportunity for individual growth of the student.

PH-4. Children have a wide range of individual traits that require a wide range of possible placements to adequately meet all their needs..

PH-5. Inclusion requires school services to concentrate on the whole child rather than concentrate on individual deficiencies.

PH-6. Integration reflects a need to increase professional responsibility for all children by everyone involved in education (i.e. administrators, teachers, staff, etc.)

PH-7. The goal of inclusion is the positive acceptance of diversity.

PH-8. Inclusion changes attitudes from "one of them" to "one of us."

PH-9. There is too much experimentation in our schools and too little respect for traditional approaches.

PH-10. My first concern as a teacher should be to gain knowledge of each individual child as a person, whether or not there is a disability.

PH-11. Inclusion will remove stigmatizing labels and prevent stereotyping.

DATA RECORD SHEET

Place the number of the item statements in the Q-sort distribution below.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
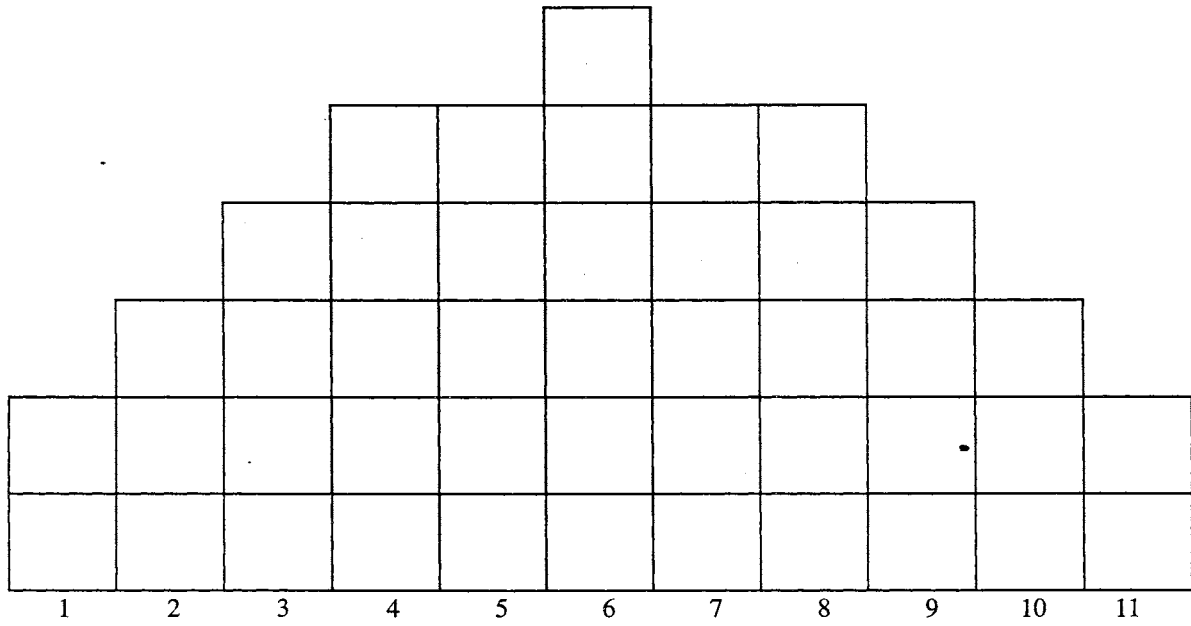
-5   +5

Most unlike   Most like

FACTOR ARRAYS

FACTOR A - PHILOSOPHISTS

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
22	6	14	8	27	1	15	16	40	18	10
29	11	30	28	31	5	24	36	37	43	23
	42	17	34	19	2	25	32	35	13	
		20	4	7	12	38	26	41		
			9	7	12	38	26	41		
				33	44	21	39			
					3					

FACTOR B -LOCAL DECISION-MAKERS

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
44	5	28	11	41	18	42	39	8	27	33
4	24	31	15	13	34	20	23	10	7	26
	32	1	3	36	38	21	9	2	17	
		12	16	22	35	29	43	25		
			30	6	40	14	37			
					19					

FACTOR C - INDIVIDUALISTS

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
32	15	6	24	22	2	30	34	29	35	23
9	4	8	44	16	12	27	36	33	37	43
	31	17	18	14	39	1	7	40	10	
		13	42	28	3	11	26	41		
			5	38	19	20	25			
					21					

FACTOR D - SOCIALISTS

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
28	4	1	14	39	11	21	9	37	29	12
24	5	17	35	26	43	41	35	40	10	33
	20	31	22	3	19	18	25	7	27	
		42	44	6	38	36	8	23		
			30	34	32	16	13			
					2					

2

VITA

Denise M. Cutbirth

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: ATTITUDES OF EDUCATORS TOWARD INCLUSION:
A Q-METHODOLOGICAL STUDY

Major Field: Applied Behavioral Studies

Biographical:

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Oklahoma, Edmond, Oklahoma in May, 1992. Completed requirements
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Oklahoma State University in May, 1996.

Experience: Public School teacher for 10 years in Edmond, Oklahoma.
Employed as an adjunct teacher at University of Central Oklahoma in the
area of Reading; Employed as a Research Assistant and Teaching
Assistant at Oklahoma State University.

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: 10-02-95   **IRB#:** ED-96-029

Proposal Title: ATTITUDES OF EDUCATORS TOWARDS INCLUSION: A Q-METHODOLOGICAL STUDY

Principal Investigator(s): Diane Montgomery, Denise Cutbirth

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt
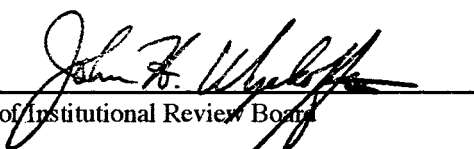
Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
AT NEXT MEETING.
APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A
CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD
APPROVAL.
ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR
APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for Deferral or Disapproval
are as follows:

Signature: _____   Date: October 17, 1995

Chair of Institutional Review Board