


4-19-1996

# A Qualitative Study to Review Community Reactions to Students with Mental Retardation Involved in Community Based Instruction

Annette L. Keatts  
*Longwood University*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.longwood.edu/etd>

 Part of the [Curriculum and Social Inquiry Commons](#), and the [Special Education and Teaching Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Keatts, Annette L., "A Qualitative Study to Review Community Reactions to Students with Mental Retardation Involved in Community Based Instruction" (1996). *Theses, Dissertations & Honors Papers*. Paper 239.

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Longwood University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses, Dissertations & Honors Papers by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Longwood University. For more information, please contact [hinestm@longwood.edu](mailto:hinestm@longwood.edu).

A Qualitative Study to Review Community  
Reactions to Students with Mental Retardation  
Involved in Community Based Instruction  
Annette L. Keatts

This thesis was approved by:

Dr. Ruth Meese (Chair):

Ruth Meese

Dr. Stephen Keith:

Stephen C. Keith

Dr. Peggy Tarpley

Peggy L. Tarpley

Date of Approval:

April 19, 1996

Running Head: COMMUNITY REACTIONS

### Abstract

Community-based instruction (CBI) is an important part of many educational curricula. Through CBI, employees from various service industries come into contact with individuals with mental retardation. Using a qualitative study, the purpose of this research was to identify employees' reactions to customers with mental retardation. Six subjects were randomly selected to participate in the study. Two subjects from the fast food industry, supermarket industry, and the department store industry were selected. One subject from each location had experience working with individuals with mental retardation. Subjects responded to a series of open ended questions. Results indicated five themes: (1) Employees perceive individuals with mental retardation as requiring extra attention and patience, (2) An employee's job responsibility is to assist and help meet the needs of individuals with mental retardation, (3) Employees feel sympathy for individuals with mental retardation, (4) Individuals with mental retardation have the right to participate in the community, and (5) Relations between employees and customers with mental retardation need improving.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my parents for their love and support over the past six years. I thank my mom for proofreading all my papers, for generating ideas when I was struggling for a topic, and listening to me complain constantly. I thank my dad for teaching me to always strive to do better.

I thank my roommate, Shawn, for living with me and dealing with my constant mood swings during the writing of the thesis. She helped me keep my sanity!

I want to thank Dr. Meese for her patience and dedication. Dr. Meese was a great director who demanded excellence and hard work.

I would like to thank Dr. Keith for generating the idea of a qualitative study and for challenging me on every issue. I also want to thank him for playing "phone tag."

I want to thank Dr. Tarpley for always being there when I needed help. I also thank her for her knowledge in qualitative studies.

I thank the Technical Support Crew in the library for being my "Longwood Family" during the past year. I thank them for their laughter and smiles when I didn't have any!!

I want to thank God for answering my prayers and seeing me through the entire program.

Last, but not least, I thank Raymond who was my constant source of support. He was my rock, my shoulder to cry on, my friend to talk to, my handyman around the apartment, and my companion for life. Thank you.

## Table of Contents

List of Appendices by Title	5
List of Tables by Title	6
Literature Review	
Introduction	7
History	8
Community-Based Instruction Curriculum	11
Barriers to Effective Community-Based Instruction	13
Reactions to Community-Based Instruction	16
Statement of Purpose	18
Method	
Participants	19
Materials	19
Design and Procedure	19
Data Analysis	22
Results	
Subjects and Settings	23
Themes	26
Additional Topics	28
Reliability	29
Discussion	31
References	34
Appendices	37
Tables	45

List of Appendices by Title

Appendix A: Letter of Explanation	37
Appendix B: Interview Questions	39
Appendix C: Sign-Up Sheet	41
Appendix D: Thank You Letter	43

## List of Tables by Title

Table 1:	General Information Concerning Subjects	46
Table 2:	Employees Feel Individuals With Mental Retardation Require Extra Attention and Patience	47
Table 3:	An Employee's Job Responsibility is to Assist and Help Meet the Needs of Individuals With Mental Retardation	48
Table 4:	Employees Feel Sympathy for Individuals with Mental Retardation	49
Table 5:	Employees Feel That Individuals With Mental Retardation Are Able and Have the Right to Participate in the Community	50
Table 6:	Employees Feel That Relations With Customers With Mental Retardation Need Improving	51
Table 7:	Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Pilot #1	52
Table 8:	Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Pilot #2	53
Table 9:	Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Pilot #3	54
Table 10:	Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Pilot #4	55
Table 11:	Interrater Reliability Between Pilot #1, #2, #3, and #4	56
Table 12:	Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Expert #1	57
Table 13:	Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Expert #2	58
Table 14:	Interrater Reliability Between Expert #1 and Expert #2	59

A Qualitative Study to Review Community  
Reactions to Students with Mental Retardation  
Involved in Community Based Instruction

Over the past two decades, a common buzzword among special educators has been community-based instruction. According to Csapo (1991) community-based instruction (CBI) is "an educational method providing instruction in the natural environments frequented by students, their families, and by non handicapped peers" (p. 5). As defined by Tourgee and DeClue (1992), community-based instruction takes learning beyond the student's classroom to instruction in the community. In a similar manner, Berkell and LeWinter (1983) defined CBI as direct skill instruction that occurs in the student's natural environment. CBI increases the probability of appropriate behaviors outside of the school setting.

Regardless of the definition used, CBI has been support in the research as an effective teaching tool (McDonnell, Hardman, Hightower, Keifer-O'Donnell, & Drew, 1993). Students with disabilities have poor generalization skills and often find it difficult to transfer those skills to new environments. With the use of CBI, students are trained in the community and do not have to transfer their skills (McDonnell et al., 1993). Unfortunately, many barriers have impeded the success of CBI. Common obstacles include: staffing, scheduling, finances, reactions to change, applicability to all students, transportation (Baumgart & VanWalleghem, 1986), unwilling teachers (Cuvo & Klatt, 1992), and lack of training (Westling & Fleck, 1991). With careful program design and implementation, those barriers can be overcome.



## History

The main goal of special education has been to prepare students with disabilities to function independently and productively in a variety of community settings (Berkell & LeWinter, 1983). However, many students were unable to function independently after graduation. Research by McDonnell et al. (1993), demonstrated that adults with disabilities were not able to generalize the skills they had learned in the classroom. As a result, adults with disabilities were not active members in the community.

In the 1960s society's views of those with disabilities gradually changed. The philosophy of normalization did much to improve the acceptance of people with disabilities (Csapo, 1991). This philosophy permitted those with disabilities to live in close proximity and in a similar manner to the rest of the "normal" population. Individuals with disabilities became consumers and gained the right to determine whether or not they wanted to live independently. Even with this right, many still had a difficult time participating in the community.

In 1975, Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (now known as Individuals with Disabilities ACT [IDEA]), and in 1986, Public Law 99-457, the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments were passed (Csapo, 1991). This legislation improved the rights of students with disabilities in the educational system. Among those rights was the call for educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. School integration was a key component for preparing students to be active members of their community.

Research revealed that even though special education students were integrated with non-disabled peers, success was still limited (Csapo, 1991). Students with mental retardation were not readily accepted in the regular

education classroom. According to a study by Fritz (1990), one-time awareness activities did little to improve attitudes towards individuals with disabilities. The study was a comparison of social interactions among elementary school students with and without disabilities using a friendship awareness activity. The activity involved the students discussing ideas to more fully integrate students with mental retardation. Even though a wealth of ideas were collected from the students without disabilities, interactions did not change over time. Students with disabilities were seen as initiating more interactions than non-disabled students. Fritz commented, "the subjects approached, observed, and attempted interactions more frequently than the non-disabled peers demonstrated toward the subjects" (p. 356). In addition, non-disabled students were seen as ignoring students with disabilities even more so after the awareness activity. According to Fritz, attitudes did not change over time.

In a more recent study, Rothlisberg, Hill, and D'Amato (1994) revealed that students with labels of mental retardation were less likely than non-disabled peers to be chosen as friends. In this study, non-disabled students read a hypothetical situation about a new student. Half of the scenarios identified the new student as having mental retardation. Subjects were then asked to choose a student with whom they would like to be a buddy. The results showed boys were less likely than girls to be buddies to students with mental retardation. However, the girls were seen as more protective towards the same sex peer with a label. As a result, those individuals with labels of mental retardation were not readily accepted by their same aged peers.

In addition to the negative social connotations of labels, students with mental retardation have academic deficits as well. Csapo (1991) asserts that special education students learn slowly, integrate and generalize information

poorly, and forget unused and unreinforced skills. Generalization was best accomplished when natural teaching cues and reinforcement were used. Instruction in the natural setting produced even better results.

Additional studies involving people with mental retardation working on the job site have indicated a strong need for CBI (Fritz, 1990; Baumgart & Askvig, 1992; Ferguson, McDonnell, & Drew, 1993). Adult workers with mental retardation are faced with obstacles in their place of employment. One of the main problem areas for adult employees with mental retardation is the lack of social skills. As a result, individuals with mental retardation must face the same problems that they dealt with during their school years. In research conducted by Ferguson et al., individuals with mental retardation did not have as many social interactions as compared to individuals without disabilities in the work place (i.e., restaurant). Ferguson et al., in contrast to Fritz, found that individuals without disabilities were more likely to initiate social interactions than workers with mental retardation. Non-disabled workers were observed giving more directions, asking more questions, and teasing and joking more frequently. Although individuals with mental retardation were socially accepted, the research indicated that workers with mental retardation were not treated as equals in the work place.

On a more positive scale, Baumgart and Askvig (1992) identified social skills that were seen as important among workers with mental retardation. Employers and employees identified several social skills which they considered as appropriate in the work setting. These skills included asking for assistance, calling in if sick or late, showing enthusiasm, following directions, and refraining from conducting personal business on the job. Inappropriate behaviors were improper hygiene, not cooperating with co-workers, outbursts, and not

accepting criticism. With proper instruction and effective CBI, these areas could be covered in the classroom.

Support for CBI came from a variety of influences (Csapo, 1991). Educational researchers had a better understanding of the learning processes of students with disabilities than previous researchers. This understanding revealed that generalization did indeed occur more often when learning took place in the actual community setting. By expressing a desire for paid employment, productive work, and independent living, individuals with disabilities contributed to the rise of CBI. Other factors such as legislation, consumerism, and community rehabilitation contributed as well. In 1990, Public Law 101-476, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, mandated coordinated planning for transitioning and post-school activities for all students with disabilities (Alberto, Elliott, Taber, Houser, & Andrews, 1993). Transition needs were required to be a part of the individualized education plan for students with disabilities no later than age 16, and 14 or earlier whenever appropriate. Community-based instruction was rapidly becoming a major part of middle and high school curricula.

Community-based instruction was and still is an important aspect of the special education curriculum. Over the past two decades, different CBI programs have developed and new programs will continue to be developed as research grows. Advantages and disadvantages will also continue to surface as CBI is better understood.

#### Community-Based Instruction Curriculum

With careful planning, CBI curricula have produced high success rates among students. Teachers and developers designed programs around skills that were functional or community referenced (Alberto et al., 1993; Csapo,

1991). For example, public transportation, purchasing items, crossing the street, and laundry skills were common areas in CBI associated with high success rates (Csapo, 1991). Curricula were also individualized since each student had different needs. In addition, skills were age appropriate. In contrast, past curricula taught skills which were not age appropriate. As a result, students were unfairly stigmatized.

In support of CBI, researchers provided guidelines to follow when designing a program. Baine (1991) described community outings as more than just "field trips." To help teachers focus on specific activities with a purpose, he identified several steps. First, teachers had to identify reasonable goals that would serve a functional purpose. Second, Baine felt teachers should determine priorities and establish reasonable time lines. A time line would provide the teacher with a predetermined schedule of activities to use as a general guideline. Third, staff members needed to be prepared. Staff needed to know what their role was and whether they would be staying in the classroom or going to the community. Finally, teachers had to be prepared to adjust their programs. Regardless of the amount of time spent planning, adjustments were often required.

In a comparable manner, a research brief for teachers (Designing community-based instruction, 1990) also stressed planning. One important part of planning was observation. Teachers visited the actual site and took notes on what they observed. Variables that may have affected students' mobility and learning were documented. Alberto et al. (1993) described this as an ecological inventory. This type of observation helped the teacher to plan the lesson around those obstacles. Another important item was instilling a correction procedure (Designing community-based instruction, 1990).

Regardless of the procedure used, immediate feedback was crucial to students' success. Data collection and organization was an additional component that was vital. Once the site was evaluated, data forms and student evaluation forms were much easier to construct. Evaluation forms were necessary so that students would not be overtrained.

In a review of research, Csapo (1991) identified other significant guidelines. Csapo stated that family members should be asked for their input about the skills they would like their children to learn. He also encouraged teachers to evaluate the importance of these skills to the child by looking at all the settings where the skill could be helpful. Csapo then asked teachers to focus on skills that would minimize physical harm within the community such as crossing the street and reading road signs.

For teachers who were having difficulties designing a program, even after following the given guidelines, Baumgart and VanWalleghem (1986) suggested seeking a consultant. Consultants have provided weekly service to the teachers and have actually moved with the students to the community. Unfortunately, many school districts were not able to afford a consultant. When funding was unavailable, teachers were asked to work closely with each other following the given guidelines.

#### Barriers to Effective Community-Based Instruction

Although research has indicated that community-based instruction was, and still is, an effective teaching tool, CBI has not been without problems. Teachers who have used CBI in their classes have dealt with difficulties everyday but were able to combat those problems efficiently. According to Baumgart and VanWalleghem (1986), several common barriers to CBI have existed since the beginning of the movement. These problems have included

staffing, scheduling, transportation, availability to all students with disabilities, and financial funding. Such barriers, however, have been overcome with efficient planning. As stated previously, when teachers take time to plan CBI, they include the responsibilities of the staff and scheduling procedures (Baine, 1991). In more recent research by Horner, Diemer, and Brazeau (1992), staffing was not a major concern. In their descriptive analysis, teachers who had students with severe problems were more likely to receive assistance from aides. Ensuring transportation so that students could move from school grounds to the community site proved to be of little importance when proper planning occurred.

Based on a study conducted by McDonnell et al. (1993), every student, regardless of the severity of their disability, enrolled in the special education program was entitled to receive CBI. In their study, they observed 34 high school students with moderate to profound mental retardation who were receiving CBI. The results of the study indicated that the disability level had no significant relationship to students' success rate in CBI. Even those with severe mental retardation had gains from the use of CBI. As for the remaining barrier identified by Baumgart and VanWalleghem (1986), financial funding created varying degrees of difficulty for teachers. For districts without large financial reserves, teachers had to work together to develop programs (Alberto et al., 1993).

Similarly, administrative support has created a significant amount of tension for teachers although it was not identified as one of the common barriers to effective CBI. Administrative support was believed to be one of the keys to success (Beck, Broers, Hogue, Shipstead, & Knowlton, 1994). However, teachers constantly criticized administrators for their lack of support.

In a 1985 study conducted by researchers Center, Ward, Parmenter, and Nash (as cited in Bain & Dolbel, 1991), just the opposite was found. Of the principals surveyed, 88% were supportive of teaching students in the community. As a result, findings on administrative support have been contradictory.

An additional problem associated with CBI has been the actual behaviors of special educators who have implemented CBI in their classes. For undocumented reasons, some teachers would not or could not go into the community (Cuvo & Klatt, 1992). These teachers relied on the use of flash cards to teach functional skills and community vocabulary words. Cuvo and Klatt's research revealed that the students receiving flash card instruction did eventually generalize their skills. For teachers who would not go into the community, classroom instruction was effective, but teaching in the actual setting was much more beneficial for students' rate of learning.

A second problem cited among teachers was a lack of training. Teachers were not trained to implement or carry out a full program. In a study conducted by Gable, Young, and Hendrickson (as cited in Westling & Fleck, 1991), college students enrolled in the special education program received little training in functional skills for secondary students. Instead, college programs focused on training future teachers to work with primary students and academics. This particular problem has taken time to correct, but in-service training and workshops have made great strides in preparing teachers for CBI (Westling & Fleck, 1991).

Furthermore, lack of communication among primary and secondary teachers has been another problem for CBI (Alberto et al., 1993). Alberto and his associates argued that primary and secondary educators should



communicate regularly. They stated that secondary teachers should collaborate with elementary and middle school educators in determining appropriate activities that would prepare the students for future jobs and careers. If this information was given regularly, training could begin earlier than high school, and secondary teachers would not have to spend as much time on training general skills. As research has indicated, barriers to effective CBI do exist. Teachers have struggled to overcome known obstacles and to make CBI effective for most students. Unfortunately, one potential problem area that has been less researched still remains. How does the community's perceptions toward individuals with disabilities affect community-based instruction?

#### Reactions to Community-Based Instruction

Community reactions to CBI are important to consider. One must look not only at teachers' reactions but also at the reactions of the community. Positive perceptions to CBI will do much to keep the program flowing smoothly. Unfortunately, negative remarks could eventually destroy a program.

In an in-service program, Westling and Fleck (1991) trained 15 educators to teach secondary students with moderate to severe disabilities to shop in convenience and department stores. After the training, teachers completed a questionnaire on CBI. Results revealed that 100% believed that CBI was an important part of the curriculum. They also agreed that it would soon be a part of their educational program. CBI was even rated as more beneficial than the traditional curriculum. In this particular study, teachers had favorable opinions of CBI.

In a like manner, community reactions are crucial to the success of the program. According to research, community reactions have been positive (Kleine, 1991; Phillips, Reid, Korabek, & Hursh, 1988), especially after several

visits (Westling & Fleck, 1991) to the job sites. Unfortunately, the majority of research that discusses community reactions to students with disabilities participating in CBI has been based on teachers' perceptions of the community. In other words, teachers respond to how they perceive the community reacts to students with mental retardation. For example, teachers indicated that employees at the community sites were somewhat helpful and had favorable attitudes. Employees were seen as helpful when they gave simple directions, remained patient, led students to items, and acted friendly. However, other employees were not rated as favorably. Employees who did not receive a high rating were often overly helpful, gave incorrect information, ignored students, and/or gave vague directions. As a result, not all community reactions have been positive. Westling and Fleck (1991) noted that community sites need to be chosen carefully because negative reactions could affect the student's behavior.

Because community support is a vital issue, researchers have reviewed methods to improve community perceptions of students with mental retardation. For example, Beck et al. (1994) felt that school administrators should communicate with the community to promote greater acceptance of students with mental retardation. Unfortunately, in the past, administrators have not taken the time to communicate with local businesses on behalf of the special education classes. On a more elaborate note, Kleine (1991) suggested making and distributing video and slide presentations to help increase community awareness. This, too, had a major drawback: funding. Resources were not readily available to produce an adequate number of videos. Berkell and LeWinter (1983) stated that with time community attitudes would change. They felt that the community needed time to adjust to the needs and demands of the

special population. Despairingly, the community's reactions to individuals with mental retardation have changed little.

Unfortunately, many of the changes that have been made have been on the part of the students. Through discipline and behavior management techniques, students have had to change their behaviors. Those with severe behavior problems usually did not get to participate in CBI. Students with disabilities are a part of society and, hopefully, will become more involved in the community as adults. The community, or more importantly, the service industry, must realize that people with disabilities are like any other customer and should be treated as such.

#### Statement of purpose

Previous studies have analyzed reactions to individuals with mental retardation. Research has focused on peer reactions to students with mental retardation as well as co-worker perceptions of workers with mental retardation. Additional studies have analyzed teacher perceptions regarding community reactions to students with mental retardation. But as yet unknown are employee perceptions regarding individuals with mental retardation involved in CBI. The purpose of this research study, therefore, will be to describe specifically, employees' reactions to students with mental retardation. In addition, this research will examine whether or not employees in service industries who are in frequent contact with people with mental retardation are more accepting of these individuals than employees who are in less frequent contact. Through a qualitative study, members of the service industry will voice their own reactions to and perceptions of individuals with mental retardation in the community. Employees will also be asked to identify ways in which relations between people with and without disabilities in the community can be improved.

## Method

### Participants

Six subjects were randomly selected from service industries within small, southern, rural communities. Two subjects were chosen from each of the following service industries known to service individuals with mental retardation: fast food restaurants, supermarkets, and department stores. One subject within each category had prior experience working with or helping customers with mental retardation in their particular job area. Age, gender, and race were not criteria. Participation was completely voluntary, and subjects were able to withdraw at any time. Complete confidentiality was observed in that no names or businesses were disclosed.

### Materials

Materials consisted of 11 questions in an interview format (See Appendix B). Subjects were read a brief statement and answered accordingly. For example, an employee was given the question, "In general, how do you feel about individuals with mental retardation?" Questions covered the subjects' feelings toward those with mental retardation, job responsibilities, and suggestions to improve current relations between employees and individuals with mental retardation. Prompts to elicit more information from the subject were used during the course of the interview. Responses were tape recorded after permission was given by the subject; tapes were erased after the interview was transcribed.

### Design and Procedure

A qualitative research design using an interview format and a standard table of questions was used. A professional in the field of special education validated interview questions. Three trial interviews were also conducted for

additional validation. Three service industries were initially contacted through a formal letter explaining the study (See Appendix A). The letter consisted of an explanation of the study, the managers' responsibilities, the employees' obligations, and a date when the researcher would call to affirm participation (i.e., one to two weeks). Managers were asked to identify workers who had and had not had experience helping individuals with mental retardation. From that list of employees, managers were asked to randomly select two employees, one having contact with individuals and the other having no contact with individuals with mental retardation. One and a half weeks after the initial letter was sent, a phone call was made to the managers to answer questions and to confirm participation. Of the three service industries contacted, only one manager agreed to participate. A date and time for both interviews was made. The two other managers did not participate for different reasons.

As a result of two managers not participating, two additional letters were mailed to two different service industries in a different location. Both businesses were known to service individuals with mental retardation. One week after the letters were mailed, a phone call was made to confirm participation. One manager agreed to the study and set a date for the interviews. The second manager agreed to participate but was unsure of how to select employees for the study. A sign-up sheet (See Appendix C) explaining the study was posted at the service industry. Five days later, a follow-up phone call was made, but no employees had signed to participate. Therefore, another service industry was contacted by a phone call explaining the study. The manager agreed to participate in the study, and a date for the interviews was determined.

On the day of the interview, the researcher arrived early to the job site to meet with the manager and to prepare the interview setting. To ensure

confidentiality, interviews were conducted in quiet, secluded areas of the service industries with little distractions; interviews lasted approximately 7-10 minutes. Before the interview began, the researcher attempted to make subjects feel comfortable by providing a brief description of the study. Participants were then told that for the next ten minutes, they would be asked a series of questions. Subjects were asked to be as honest as possible in that no names or businesses would be disclosed in the study. The subjects were also told that their participation was completely voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. After the preliminary information was provided, the researcher asked the subjects for permission to tape record the interview. Subjects were informed that the tapes would be transcribed and immediately erased following the interview. Finally, subjects were told that a copy of their interview would be mailed in a sealed envelope to them at their place of employment. The researcher explained that the subjects should review the transcription for accuracy and verification. If corrections were needed, subjects were to call the number provided with the transcription. Subjects were also told to call collect if the telephone number was long distance. Once the employees felt comfortable, demographic information such as age, race, and gender was collected.

During the interviews, questions were asked by the interviewer, and subjects were allowed to answer. Subjects were encouraged to expand on their answers, and clarifications were made when subjects did not understand a question. At the end of the interviews, subjects were thanked for their participation and told that a copy of the interview would be mailed to the store in a sealed envelope addressed to them personally.

After the interview, tapes were transcribed and then immediately erased. A copy of the transcriptions were mailed in a sealed envelope to the appropriate subject at their place of employment. Along with the transcription, a letter (See Appendix D) explaining the transcription was included. All subjects were thanked for their participation. Once the transcriptions were mailed, only one subject made corrections. Those corrections involved sentence structure and grammar.

### Data Analysis

Results were analyzed by common recurring themes among subjects' responses. In order to be considered a theme, at least four of the six subjects (67%) had to have made a statement regarding a particular theme. Accuracy of these categories were first verified by a pilot study consisting of four individuals from various backgrounds who were unaware of the study. Raters were asked to match 29 different statements to five different themes (labeled A-E). Once this was completed, scores were compared with the researcher's grouping. Reliability was determined by dividing the number of agreements by the number of agreements plus the number of disagreements and multiplying by 100 to obtain an agreement percentage. This procedure was used for overall reliability and for each individual theme. As a result of this procedure, overall reliability scores were not an average of the theme scores. Six separate scores were obtained for each rater.

Accuracy of the themes was also verified by two experts in the field of psychology who were unaware of the study. As with the pilot study, experts were asked to match 29 different statements with five different themes. Their groupings were then compared to the researcher's initial groupings. Reliability was determined using the same procedure.

## Results

### Subjects and Settings

Three different service industries from different regions in Southern Virginia participated in the study. The service industries represented the fast food restaurants, supermarkets, and department stores. Two subjects from each of the different service industries were selected. One subject from each of the service industries had experience working with individuals with mental retardation in the store, and the other subjects did not have experience. One additional subject was interviewed, but the subject did not meet criteria.

The study consisted of six subjects. Subjects ranged in age from 27 years to 58 years with a mean age of 39.5 years (Table 1). Three of the subjects had experience working with customers or individuals with mental retardation; three of the subjects did not have experience. Although gender and race were recorded during the interview, neither was considered in the analysis.

### Subject #1

Subject #1 was a 28 year old white male. His current position was kitchen manager which he had occupied for approximately four months. He had not had experience working with individuals with mental retardation but felt badly for them. He did feel that it was his job to see that all the customers' needs were met. The kitchen manager also believed it would be frustrating to work with customers with mental retardation, and one would need a lot of patience with those particular customers. He commented that relations between employees and customers did not need improving, and individuals with mental retardation should be allowed to participate in the community.



Subject #2

The second subject was a 27 year old black female whose current position was a day cook. She had been employed in this position for about four months and had experience working with individuals with mental retardation. She did not see anything "different" with individuals with mental retardation. Her job was to serve customers with mental retardation as she would any other customer. She, too, said employees need patience when working with customers with mental retardation. Subject #2 also agreed that relations needed improving, and individuals with mental retardation could function in the community if given the opportunity.

Subject #3

Subject #3 was a 49 year old white female. She had been employed in her position as stocker and cashier for 14 years. During those 14 years, she had had experience working with customers with mental retardation. She felt that mental retardation was something people were born with, and she felt sorry for them. As she viewed it, her job, as well as that of other employees, was to be nice to these individuals and help them all she could. She commented that individuals with mental retardation just wanted attention. Subject #3 did not feel that relations needed improving in her store, but she did say that there should be restrictions on individuals with mental retardation participating in the community.

Subject #4

The fourth subject was a 29 year old white female. Her position of seven years was customer service manager. She did not have experience working with customers with mental retardation. Subject #4 felt sorry for individuals with mental retardation. She commented that it was an employee's responsibility to

provide extra help if it was needed. In addition, she believed that relations did need improving because she had seen employees ignoring customers with mental retardation. She also felt that individuals with mental retardation wanted extra attention. Likewise, she felt some restrictions should be placed on individuals with mental retardation, although overall, they should be allowed to go anywhere.

#### Subject #5

The fifth subject was a 46 year old white female. Since May, 1990, she has been employed as a primary personnel director. Her main position was interviewing and hiring new employees. She had worked with customers with mental retardation and felt sympathy for them. She believed they were looking for some type of entertainment while they were in the store. She also commented that she was "scared to death" on one occasion when she had to assist a group of individuals with mental retardation; she did not know what they wanted. Subject #5 stated that relations could be improved with education. In addition, she felt they should have every opportunity that she has to participate in the community.

#### Subject #6

Subject #6 was a 58 year old black female. Her current position was UPC clerk which involved scanning barcodes and labeling prices. She had been employed in this position for six years. She did not have experience working with individuals with mental retardation. If the need arose, her job responsibility was to try to assist them. She did believe relations could be improved. She felt it was necessary for employees to have patience and time when working with individuals with mental retardation. Likewise, she commented that they should be allowed to participate fully in the community.

## Themes

Themes were constructed by comparing statements that were similar across subjects. Transcriptions were first read to identify possible common themes. Key words and phrases in each transcription were recorded and then combined into ten possible themes. Transcriptions were reread to identify subjects who made comments supporting those issues. The subject's number was then placed next to a theme if at least one comment related to that theme. This process was completed for all transcriptions. A theme was considered a common recurring theme if at least four of the six subjects (67%) made a statement supporting that particular theme. Through this process, five themes were identified, one of which was formed by combining two initial topics.

Finally, transcriptions were reread, and statements matching the identified themes were recorded with the correct theme. Statements were written exactly as they appeared in the transcriptions. If segments of information relating to one theme occurred several times in one answer, the segments were combined and counted as one statement. However, additional statements, by the same subject, which occurred in a different answer but related to that same theme, were counted as a separate statement. In other words, one subject could have more than one statement under a particular theme. This procedure was completed for all transcriptions.

### Theme One

Theme one (Table 2) indicated employees feel that individuals with mental retardation require extra attention and patience. Of the 29 statements collected, 11 (38%) statements supported this particular theme. Each subject commented that extra attention and/or patience was required. Statements relating to theme two included:

Well, it looks like they want more attention when they are, you know, walking around . . . Look like they need attention, wanting someone to pay a little attention to 'em.

I think you would have to have a lot of patience . . . You have to have time because it's going to take time to deal with them . . . They need more attention.

### Theme Two

Theme two (Table 3) consisted of 6 (21%) of the 29 statements. Likewise, each subject felt it was an employee's job responsibility to assist and help meet the needs of individuals with mental retardation. Supporting statements included:

. . . to take care of their needs as much as possible and making things easy for them as possible.

Try to assist them.

### Theme Three

Theme three (Table 4) consisted of 5 of the 29 statements (17%). Five subjects felt sympathy for individuals with mental retardation. Statements supporting this theme included:

I guess I have a lot of sympathy for them . . . I can't really call it pity but more sympathy.

. . . I feel sorry for 'em that they have to be that way . . . I feel sorry for them anyway.

### Theme Four

Theme four (Table 5) consisted of only 4 (14%) of the 29 statements. Four subjects felt individuals with mental retardation had the right to participate fully in the community. Statements supporting the theme included:

. . . I'd definitely think that they need to have every opportunity that I

have. . . yeah, they should have every opportunity I have as an individual.

. . . if they're given the opportunity, you know, I think they could function within the community just like anybody else.

#### Theme Five

Theme five (Table 6) also consisted of only 4 (14%) of the total statements collected. Four subjects believed relations needed improving between employees and customers with mental retardation. Supporting statements included:

Oh I think relations can be improved not only with retardation, but with everyday, normal people.

I feel that sometimes the level of our employees . . . need education as to the fact that these people are the, that way because . . . of just whatever happens to cause these deficiencies . . . I feel that a lot of our employees could, yeah, use some education in that area.

#### Additional Topics

In addition to the five themes, subjects made other comments that were important but did not reach criteria for a theme. One additional topic was frustration. Two subjects commented that it was or would be frustrating or uncomfortable working with individuals with mental retardation. For example, one subject stated, "I think it would kind of be frustrating if you didn't know exactly what they wanted." When asked how it would be working with a customer with mental retardation, another subject commented, "It would be a little . . . uncomfortable. . . "

### Reliability

To validate themes and check for reliability, four pilot studies were initially conducted. Four individuals from various backgrounds who were unaware of the study were asked to match 29 different statements to five different themes labeled A-E. Once this was completed, scores were compared with the researcher's groupings (Tables 7, 8, 9, and 10). In the pilot study, overall interrater reliability ranged from 86.2% to 96.6% with a mean of 91.4%. However, interrater reliability across subjects for a particular theme was somewhat varied. Interrater reliability among themes ranged from 63.75% to 95.83% (Table 11). Raters had a difficult time identifying statements for the following theme: Employees feel that relations with customers with mental retardation need improving. Interrater reliability ranged from 25% to 80% with a mean of 63.75%. Interrater reliability was also low across subjects for the theme, Employees feel that individuals with mental retardation are able and have the right to participate in the community. Reliability ranged from 60% to 100% with a mean of 80.75%.

In addition, accuracy of the themes was also verified by two experts in the field of psychology who were unaware of the study. As with the pilot study, experts were asked to match 29 different statements with five different themes. Expert #1 had an overall reliability rating of 89.7% (Table 12). Agreements among individual themes ranged from 67% to 90.9%. The theme, Employees feel individuals with mental retardation require extra attention and patience, had the highest rating of 90.9%. The lowest rating theme (67%) was An employee's job responsibility is to assist and help meet the needs of individuals with mental retardation. Expert #2 had an overall reliability rating of 100%. Agreements among individuals themes were 100% as well. Between Expert #1 and Expert

#2, average reliability was 94.85% (Table 14). Individual theme reliability between experts ranged from 87.5% to 95.45%.

## Discussion

Results of this research indicated that, overall, employees' reactions to individuals with mental retardation are positive. Employees felt that individuals with mental retardation should be allowed to participate in the community, but these employees also felt sympathy for individuals with mental retardation. In addition, employees stated that their job was to assist and help meet the needs of individuals with mental retardation. However, relations between employees and customers with mental retardation needed improving. Several of the findings in this study are consistent with past research. Other findings are not consistent, but lead to a need for future research.

One of the main findings in this study was an acceptance by employees of individuals with mental retardation (Theme 4). Subjects stated that individuals with mental retardation should be allowed to participate in the community. Few negative comments were made concerning individuals with mental retardation. Although the sample size was small, these findings are supported by research by Kleine (1991) and Phillips et al. (1988) who concluded that community reactions towards individuals with mental retardation were positive. In addition, researchers Westling and Fleck (1991) added that reactions improved after individuals with mental retardation made several visits to the service industry. This study also attempted to identify whether employees who were in frequent contact with individuals with mental retardation were more accepting than employees who were in less frequent contact with individuals with mental retardation. Unfortunately, due to the small sample size, the researcher was unable to identify any possible relationship between frequency of contact and acceptance.



In contrast, research conducted by Fritz (1990) does not support the findings of this qualitative study that employees are accepting of individuals with mental retardation. Fritz's study, however, was based on the perceptions of elementary students. Those students were not readily accepting of individuals with mental retardation and relations were not as positive.

In addition, past research by Westling and Fleck (1991) found that employees were most helpful when employees remained patient and provided clear, simple directions. In the present study, subjects stated, in a consistent manner, that individuals with mental retardation required more attention and patience than other customers. Research has also indicated a need for a correction procedure or some type of discipline among students with disabilities when they visit service industries (Designing community-based instruction, 1990). Similarly, comments were made during the course of the interviews regarding the behaviors of several individuals with mental retardation. One subject praised a teacher for her control over her students. Another subject commented on individuals with mental retardation running around the store uncontrolled. Once again, due to the small sample size, results cannot be generalized, but research does support the need for a correction procedure.

Another major theme among subjects was a need to improve relations among employees and customers with mental retardation. Subjects identified education and taking the time to get to know customers as means of improving relations. Unfortunately, past research does not support one-time awareness activities. In a study conducted by Fritz (1990), school age children discussed ideas to improve relations. After the discussion, however, relations did not improve among students. Due to the nature of this study, the effectiveness of one-time awareness activities was not discussed.

In conclusion, past research does support several of the findings of this qualitative study. Past research also contradicts some of the findings, as well. Ironically, past research is based on teachers' perceptions of employees or students' reactions to individuals with mental retardation.

As with any qualitative study, limitations do exist. The results of this study are not generalizable because it was a qualitative study and only six subjects were interviewed. Subjects may also have skewed their answers somewhat because of the face-to-face interviews. Another limitation is the lack of randomization. Although managers were asked to select individuals randomly, the researcher strongly feels that subjects were not randomly selected, but instead, simply asked to participate. Lack of randomization may have affected results.

In addition, reliability ratings among several themes were low. These themes consisted of only four or five statements which possibly reduced reliability. Also, when taken out of context, statements were somewhat vague. Several statements made by the subjects which were included in a theme were in direct response to a question. Therefore, raters may have had a difficult time understanding the statement without viewing the entire transcription.

Based on the current findings, there is a strong need for future research. Mainly, future research in this area should consist of a much larger sample size to receive a more accurate reflection of employees' thought about their interactions with students with mental retardation. Observational research in the service industry would also provide a more reliable view of employees interacting with customers with mental retardation. An additional area for future research is that of one-time awareness activities. Do educational classes improve relations between employees and customers with mental retardation?

## References

- Alberto, P., Elliott, N., Taber, T., Houser, E., & Andrews, P. (1993). Vocational content for students with moderate and severe disabilities in elementary and middle grades. Focus on Exceptional Children, 25(9), 1-10.
- Bain, A., & Dolbel, S. (1991). Regular and special education principals' perceptions of an integration program for students who are intellectually handicapped. Education and Training in Mental Retardation, 26(1), 33-42.
- Baine, D. (1991). Guide to the development and evaluation of community-based instruction. Instructional Environments for Learners Having Severe Handicaps. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 344 390)
- Baumgart, D., & Askvig, B. (1992). Job-related social skills interventions: Suggestions from managers and employees. Education and Training in Mental Retardation, 27(4), 345-353.
- Baumgart, D., & VanWalleghem, J. (1986). Staffing strategies for implementing community-based instruction. Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 11(2), 92-102.
- Beck, J., Broers, J., Hogue, E., Shipstead, J., & Knowlton, E. (1994). Strategies for functional community-based instruction and inclusion for children with mental retardation. Teaching Exceptional Children, 26(2), 44-48.
- Berkell, D. E., & LeWinter, M. (1983). Community based training for severely handicapped students. San Francisco, CA: Annual Conference of the Association for the Severely Handicapped. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 245 455)
- Csapo, M. (1991). Community-based instruction: Its origin and description. Instructional Environments for Learners Having Severe Handicaps. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 344 389)

Cuvo, A. J., & Klatt, K. P. (1992). Effects of community-based, videotape, and flash card instruction of community-referenced sight words on students with mental retardation. Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 25(2), 499-512.

Designing community-based instruction: Research brief for teachers(1990). Reston, VA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 331 262).

Ferguson, B., McDonnell, J., & Drew, C. (1993). Type and frequency of social interaction among workers with and without mental retardation.

American Journal on Mental Retardation, 97(5), 530-540.

Fritz, M. F. (1990). A comparison of social interactions using a friendship awareness activity. Education and Training in Mental Retardation, 25(4), 352-359.

Horner, R. H., Diemer, S. M., & Brazeau, K. C. (1992). Educational support for students with severe problem behaviors in Oregon: A descriptive analysis from the 1987-1988 school year. Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 17(3), 154-169.

Kleine, K. K. (1991). Transition to independence: A Texas program takes special needs students out of the classroom and into the community. Vocational Educational Journal, 66(3), 24-25, 44.

McDonnell, J., Hardman, M. L., Hightower, J., Keifer-O'Donnell, R., & Drew C. (1993). Impact of community-based instruction on the development of adaptive behavior of secondary level students with mental retardation.

American Journal on Mental Retardation, 97(5), 575-584.

Phillips, J. F., Reid, D. H., Korabek, C. A., Hursh, D. E. (1988). Community-based instruction with profoundly mentally retarded persons: Client and public responsiveness. Research in Developmental Disabilities, 9(1), 3-21.

Rothlisberg, B. A., Hill, R., & D'Amato, R. C. (1994). Social acceptance by their peers of children with mental retardation. Psychological Reports, 74(1), 239-242.

Tourgee, B., & DeClue, L. (1992). Principal leadership. Bloomington, IN: National Academy on the Principalship in Special Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 367 118)

Westling, D. L., & Fleck, L. (1991). Teachers' views of community instruction. Teacher Education and Special Education, 14(2), 127-134.

Appendix A  
Letter of Explanation

604 C Oak Street  
Farmville, Virginia 23901  
Date

Manager's Name  
Position  
Store Address

Dear Manager's Name:

I am currently a graduate student at Longwood college working towards a Master's Degree in Special Education. As part of Longwood's curriculum, I am conducting a research study for my Master's Thesis. The focus of my study is on employee perceptions of students with mental retardation.

The format of this study will consist of brief interviews (approximately 15 minutes) involving two employees. One employee must have had previous experience working with individuals with mental retardation within your store. The second employee must have had no contact with individuals with mental retardation in your store. Granted permission is given, the interviews will take place preferably in the employee lounge while the employee is still "on the clock."

If permission is given, I do ask that a list of employees who have had contact and a list of employees who have not had contact with individuals with mental retardation be compiled. There is minimal to no risk involved for subjects, and participation is completely voluntary.

Please consider allowing me to conduct my study in your business. In approximately two weeks, I will contact you by phone to receive your decision and to clarify any questions you may have. During that time, please feel free to contact me regarding your concerns.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Annette L. Keatts

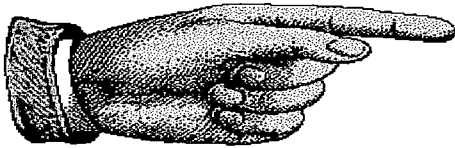
Appendix B  
Interview Questions



Interview Questions

1. What is your current position?
2. How long have you been employed in this position?
3. In general, how do you feel about individuals with mental retardation?
4. As an employee what are your responsibilities to an individual or customer with mental retardation?
5. To what degree are employees receptive of these individuals?
6. Do you feel that relations between employees and costumers with mental retardation need improving?
7. If so, how would you suggest improving those relations? (training, education, etc.)
8. Have you had the opportunity to work with customers with mental retardation and, if so, what were your reactions?  
If not, what do you think it would be like if you had to help an individual with mental retardation?
9. How often do you have this opportunity to work with customers with mental retardation? (daily, weekly, monthly)
10. How do you see individuals with mental retardation interacting in the store? (with other employees, with other customers, with other friends)
11. To what extent, if any, should individuals with mental retardation participate in the community as regular community members?

Appendix C  
Sign-Up Sheet



## I NEED YOUR HELP TO GRADUATE!!

Have you had the opportunity to work with customers with mental retardation? I am conducting a study on how employees (you) feel about customers with mental retardation. If you are interested please sign below in the appropriate column. Only one person from each column will be chosen. Those two people will each participate in a 10 minute interview.

Participation is completely voluntary and all responses are confidential.

Yes, I have waited on a customer with mental retardation.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

No, I have not waited on a customer with mental retardation.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix D  
Thank You Letter

604 C Oak Street  
Farmville, Virginia 23901  
Date of transcription

Subject's Name  
Subject's Address  
City, State Zip Code

Dear subject's name:

I appreciate you taking time to answer my questions regarding the service industries' perceptions of individuals with mental retardation. Enclosed in the envelope is a copy of your statements along with my questions. Any questions or comments I may have spoken during the interview were typed in bold letters. Your statements are anything not in bold letters. I also typed everything word-for-word as it was spoken.

Please read over the statements and make corrections if any are needed. If corrections are needed, please call me collect at (804)392-7476. Due to a strict time frame, I do ask that you try to call by \_\_\_\_\_ (one week after transcription).

Once again, thank you for your time and answers.

Sincerely,

Annette L. Keatts

Enc.

Tables

Table 1

General Information Concerning Subjects

General Topics	Subjects					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Age in years	28	27	49	29	46	58
Gender (M=Male, F=Female)	M	F	F	F	F	F
Race (W=White, A=African-American)	W	A	W	W	W	A
Experiencing Working with Individuals						
with Mental Retardation	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Relations Need Improving	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Frequency of Contact	0	1/wk	5/wk	0	2-3/ year	0

Table 2

Employees Feel Individuals With Mental Retardation Require Extra Attention and Patience

Subject	Statements
1	... you would just need a lot of patience.
2	... you got to extend your patience a little bit more ... show them a little more patience.
2	... you have to show a little bit more patience ...
3	... pay a little attention to him.
3	Well, it looks like they want more attention when they are, you know, walking around ... Look like they need attention, wanting someone to pay a little attention to 'em.
4	... it seems like he wants the extra attention ... They just want, want extra attention. They want people to be nice to them.
5	... they're looking for entertainment ... They loved to be loved back. They want someone to be friendly with them ... They all want to come in here just to speak to somebody and make their rounds every morning or every day ... They mostly looking for that attention.
6	I think you would have to have a lot of patience ... You have to have time because it's going to take time to deal with them ... They need more attention.
6	... patience is a big part in it.
6	... give more attention and [be] more receptive to them ...



Table 3

An Employees Job Responsibility is to Assist and Help Meet the Needs of  
Individuals with Mental Retardation

Subjects	Statements
1	[My job is] Just to see that all their needs are met.
2	. . . to make sure they get, uhh, clean, fast service, uhh, fresh food, not burnt, and not cold . . .
3	Help them all I can.
4	. . . we need to be aware of them and help them all we can . . . if they need any extra, we help 'em extra and . . . go out of our way.
5	. . . to take care of their needs as much as possible and making things easy for them as possible.
6	Try to assist them.

Table 4

Employees Feel Sympathy For Individuals With Mental Retardation

---

Subjects	Statements
1	. . . I feel bad for them I guess.
3	I feel sorry for him.
4	. . . I feel sorry for 'em that they have to be that way . . . I feel sorry for them anyway.
5	I guess I have a lot of sympathy for them . . . I can't really call it pity but more sympathy.
6	. . . some people feel sympathy.

Table 5

Employees Feel That Individuals With Mental Retardation are Able and Have the Right to Participate Fully in the Community

Subjects	Statements
1	[They should go] As far as they can be allowed to go.
2	. . . if they're given the opportunity, you know, I think they could function within the community just like anybody else.
5	. . . I'd definitely think that they need to have every opportunity that I have . . . yeah, they should have every opportunity I have as an individual.
6	To the best that they can do. I think that they should be allowed in there.

Table 6

Employees Feel That Relations With Customers With Mental Retardation Need Improving

Subjects	Statements
2	In some aspects, yes . . . just try to make them [employees] a little more understanding instead of just jumping the gun . . .
4	I do yeah, I feel everywhere it [relations] does.
5	I feel that sometimes the level of our employees . . . need education as to the fact that these people are the, that way because . . . of just whatever happens to cause these deficiencies . . . I feel that a lot of our employees could, yeah, use some education in that area.
6	Oh I think relations can be improved not only with retardation, but with everyday normal people.

Table 7

Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Pilot #1

	Themes	Reliability
1	Employees Feel Individuals With Mental Retardation Require Extra Attention and Patience	75.0
2	An Employee's Job Responsibility Is To Assist and Help Meet the Needs of Individuals With Mental Retardation	75.0
3	Employees Feel Sympathy For Individuals With Mental Retardation	100
4	Employees Feel That Individuals With Mental Retardation Are Able and Have the Right to Participate in the Community	100
5	Employees Feel That Relations With Customers With Mental Retardation Need Improving	25.0
Overall		86.2

Note. Values represent percentages determined by the number of agreements divided by the number of agreements plus the number of disagreements multiplied by 100.

Table 8

Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Pilot #2

	Themes	Reliability
1	Employees Feel Individuals With Mental Retardation Require Extra Attention and Patience	100
2	An Employee's Job Responsibility Is To Assist and Help Meet the Needs of Individuals With Mental Retardation	100
3	Employees Feel Sympathy For Individuals With Mental Retardation	100
4	Employees Feel That Individuals With Mental Retardation Are Able and Have the Right to Participate in the Community	80.0
5	Employees Feel That Relations With Customers With Mental Retardation Need Improving	75.0
Overall		96.6

Note. Values represent percentages determined by the number of agreements divided by the number of agreements plus the number of disagreements multiplied by 100.

Table 9

Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Pilot #3

	Themes	Reliability
1	Employees Feel Individuals With Mental Retardation Require Extra Attention and Patience	90.9
2	An Employee's Job Responsibility Is To Assist and Help Meet the Needs of Individuals With Mental Retardation	83.3
3	Employees Feel Sympathy For Individuals With Mental Retardation	83.3
4	Employees Feel That Individuals With Mental Retardation Are Able and Have the Right to Participate in the Community	60.0
5	Employees Feel That Relations With Customers With Mental Retardation Need Improving	75.0
Overall		89.7

Note. Values represent percentages determined by the number of agreements divided by the number of agreements plus the number of disagreements multiplied by 100.

Table 10

Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Pilot #4

	Themes	Reliability
1	Employees Feel Individuals With Mental Retardation Require Extra Attention and Patience	100
2	An Employee's Job Responsibility Is To Assist and Help Meet the Needs of Individuals With Mental Retardation	66.7
3	Employees Feel Sympathy For Individuals With Mental Retardation	100
4	Employees Feel That Individuals With Mental Retardation Are Able and Have the Right to Participate in the Community	83.3
5	Employees Feel That Relations With Customers With Mental Retardation Need Improving	80.0
Overall		93.1

Note. Values represent percentages determined by the number of agreements divided by the number of agreements plus the number of disagreements multiplied by 100.



Table 11

Interrater Reliability Between Pilot #1, #2, #3, and #4

	Themes	Reliability
1	Employees Feel Individuals With Mental Retardation Require Extra Attention and Patience	91.50
2	An Employee's Job Responsibility Is To Assist and Help Meet the Needs of Individuals With Mental Retardation	81.25
3	Employees Feel Sympathy For Individuals With Mental Retardation	95.83
4	Employees Feel That Individuals With Mental Retardation Are Able and Have the Right to Participate in the Community	80.83
5	Employees Feel That Relations With Customers With Mental Retardation Need Improving	63.75
Overall		91.40

Note. Values represent percentages determined by the number of agreements divided by the number of agreements plus the number of disagreements multiplied by 100.

Table 12

Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Expert #1

	Themes	Reliability
1	Employees Feel Individuals With Mental Retardation Require Extra Attention and Patience	90.9
2	An Employee's Job Responsibility Is To Assist and Help Meet the Needs of Individuals With Mental Retardation	67.0
3	Employees Feel Sympathy For Individuals With Mental Retardation	83.0
4	Employees Feel That Individuals With Mental Retardation Are Able and Have the Right to Participate in the Community	80.0
5	Employees Feel That Relations With Customers With Mental Retardation Need Improving	75.0
Overall		89.7

Note. Values represent percentages determined by the number of agreements divided by the number of agreements plus the number of disagreements multiplied by 100.

Table 13

Interrater Reliability Between Researcher and Expert #2

	Themes	Reliability
1	Employees Feel Individuals With Mental Retardation Require Extra Attention and Patience	100
2	An Employee's Job Responsibility Is To Assist and Help Meet the Needs of Individuals With Mental Retardation	100
3	Employees Feel Sympathy For Individuals With Mental Retardation	100
4	Employees Feel That Individuals With Mental Retardation Are Able and Have the Right to Participate in the Community	100
5	Employees Feel That Relations With Customers With Mental Retardation Need Improving	100
Overall		100

Note. Values represent percentages determined by the number of agreements divided by the number of agreements plus the number of disagreements multiplied by 100.

Table 14

Interrater Reliability Between Expert #1 and Expert #2

	Themes	Reliability
1	Employees Feel Individuals With Mental Retardation Require Extra Attention and Patience	95.45
2	An Employee's Job Responsibility Is To Assist and Help Meet the Needs of Individuals With Mental Retardation	83.50
3	Employees Feel Sympathy For Individuals With Mental Retardation	91.50
4	Employees Feel That Individuals With Mental Retardation Are Able and Have the Right to Participate in the Community	90.00
5	Employees Feel That Relations With Customers With Mental Retardation Need Improving	87.50
Overall		94.85

Note. Values represent percentages determined by the number of agreements divided by the number of agreements plus the number of disagreements multiplied by 100.